

Dear DLHS Family,

The Battle for our Children

Deuteronomy 4:9

⁹ Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

I went to a small Lutheran high school in Springfield, Illinois. LHS had 140 students at the time and the majority of classes were taught in portables. I look back on those four years and three events immediately come to mind.

1. My senior year Bible class was centered around apologetics. For a 17-year-old kid who was starting to have intellectual doubts about his faith, that class was literally the best thing that ever happened to me in school. I taught the same material 10 years later.

2. I had a teacher/coach who had the courage to speak the truth in love to me and call me out about my work ethic when I thought I knew better. I hated it at the time, but he was right and taught me how to be loyal and passionate about the things that matter.

3. During one three-week stretch of extreme difficulty, I wanted *out*. I was tired of LHS and wanted to bail. I prepared a list of reasons to present to my parents about why the bigger public high school was a better fit for me. I praise God for parents who looked me dead in the eye and said, "No way – you will stay where the Lord is present. Your attitude will determine your situation, not the other way around."

All three of those accounts are 100% true. I also think that they encapsulate what spiritual development at the high school level is all about. It's

hard to be a high school student in today's world. The basic message of the world to our kids is "keep your faith in a box." The faith of our Christian youth is held down, questioned, and mocked.

A battle is being waged for our kids. Satan doesn't want them to be around God's Word. He would prefer we find an excuse to not educate them with Jesus Christ. And yet, I am convinced that we as parents and educators owe it to our kids to:

1. Encourage their growth in Christ and teach them how to defend their faith.
2. Speak the truth in love to them and guide them Scripturally through adolescence.
3. Teach them what it means to "Be in the world, and not of it," – to not take the easy/wide path that leads to destruction, but rather the narrow path that leads to eternal life.

In essence, this is the very reason why some students start at DLHS and choose to leave. The sinful nature in all of us rebels against the truth of Scripture. Deep down, we would prefer not to walk the narrow path. When parents give their kids the option of choosing where to go to high school, it never surprises me when they don't choose DLHS. The allure of a place in which moral relativism reigns supreme, where accountability doesn't really matter, and where virtually any behavior goes is too hard to pass up.

Looking back, I thank God that my parents never gave me that choice.

I know the tuition of DLHS is not an easy task. Our current economy certainly isn't making it any easier. But I believe that God has commanded us to *watch ourselves closely, to never let His greatness slip from our hearts and minds, and to teach that to our children.*

The battle for our kids is on . . . I am honored that you allow DLHS to wage it with you. Fortunately, we know that it is a war that has already been won by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christian education isn't perfect, but it is a 35-50 hour a week immersion in the truth of Jesus Christ, found in His Word.

Our financial situation

After months of extensive preparation, the Board of Directors of the Colorado Lutheran High School Association, Pastor Clausen (LHSP principal and Interim Executive Director), and I met with the President of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund concerning our difficulties handling our debt in relationship with a stagnant economy and stagnant enrollment at both high schools.

Praise God that due to efforts on both sides, a plan has been put in place to ease the immediate burden of the debt load and make budgeting much more doable for the immediate future.

While we must work to maintain current enrollment numbers and increase our level of sustainable third-source funding, you may squash any rumors that DLHS will be closing its doors. The Colorado Lutheran High School Association will continue to serve the families that value the academic excellence and spiritual development that we provide.

Our Giving Programs

In an attempt to increase the financial support for DLHS, we have streamlined our giving to three main giving programs:

1. ***The Ron Brandhorst Tuition Angel Network***, which provide tuition assistance for students who could not otherwise afford DLHS.
2. ***The Gemstone Initiative***, which seeks to target those whom God has blessed with the means to provide large yearly gifts.
3. ***The Many Hands Appeal***, which is being continually promoted in all of our Association congregations and with our alumni as well.

Information on all of these programs can be found at www.GrowingInHIM.org. Secure online donations can also be made at that site.

Growing In HIM Tours

In an effort to increase enrollment or donations, we need to get people to see our ministry. Therefore,

every two weeks we are conducting tours of our facility which will showcase our mission and connect people to DLHS.

Those tour dates and times are also found at www.GrowingInHIM.org. I am asking all of you to invite your relatives, friends, and co-workers to come to one of our tours. Help us make connections to others who may not even know yet that they could be passionate about Christian education.

A new marketing plan will be unveiled in June which will stress our efforts to get people to visit our campus and see our ministry close up. Look for that soon.

Faculty and Staff

Not much changed by way of staffing from last year to this year. Ms. Denise Noffze moved into a full-time college and career guidance role at both DLHS and LHSP. We then welcomed Mrs. Tera Thomas to our staff as a part time English teacher and admissions coordinator. Mr. Paul Blomenberg joined our staff as our new chemistry and physics teacher.

The engagement bug has infected two members of our staff as both Mr. Hellmers and Miss Strohschein got engaged this year. Miss Strohschein will not be returning to DLHS next year as her life and career plans are taking her in a different direction. Other changes for next year include Mr. Bredow taking over the admissions coordinator role and Mr. Parrott and Mr. Hollenbeck switching levels of theology.

Sadly, Nicole Patterson is moving, so we are in need of a varsity cheerleading coach for the fall and winter seasons and are also in need of a head track coach for the spring. Please contact Athletic Director Loren Larrabee with any interested and qualified candidates.

Highlights of the 2008-2009 School Year

It is an impossibility to list all of the student, staff, and team achievements during the school year. Inevitably I will leave something of significance off this list. My apologies to anyone who deserves to be featured and is not. Here we go:

- The First Annual LutherWalk/Run was held at Sloan's Lake Park in October. DLHS students netted almost \$58,000 for tuition assistance and technology through donations and pledges made by family members and friends. Mark the 2nd Annual LutherWalk/Run on your calendars for October 23, 2009!
- DLHS dominated Lutheran High School Parker to win the Clausen Cup in its inaugural year of the competition. DLHS scored victories in football, volleyball, boys and girls basketball, girls' soccer, and baseball. You can see the trophy on display in the middle display case in the front lobby of the school.
- Two seniors, Logan Doi and John Leintz, heroically saved two younger kids who had fallen through the ice on the lake at Garfield Park. Their story was featured in the April issue of the *Lutheran Witness*.
- DLHS had three quality student teachers this year that helped out in the areas of music and math.
- Senior Jeff Young was a national merit semifinalist for his quality work on his PSAT last year as a junior.
- Senior Blaise Lake had the greatest state track individual performance in DLHS history by winning the 3A state title in the 200 m and the 400 m. He also finished second in the 100 m and won the state title in the 4 by 200 relay with Brian Sunday, Nate Robinson, and Wes Crane.
- The DLHS boys' track team finished 5th at the 3A state meet. The total team score placed the Lights 13th at the state competition. Strong performances by Jon Swan, Jared Hock, and the girls' medley relay team of Taylor Gager, Taylor Sturms, Destiny Forrester, and Conni Gokey supported the performance of Blaise Lake and the 4 by 200 relay team to propel the team to its best finish in years.
- Sophomore Malinda DeBell is a dedicated figure skater in both singles and team competition. Her synchronized skating team qualified for the national competition in Maine and finished 8th out of 90.
- Junior Nathan Von Rentzell landscaped the south end of the football field this last summer. This project was done as a part of his Eagle Scout project.
- Group Work Camps (Week of Hope) used the DLHS campus last summer to host weekly youth gatherings of volunteers who did mission service work in the Denver metro area. In exchange for the use of our facilities, they did projects on our campus as well. We are looking forward to having them back this summer.
- Dean Von Holdt graciously volunteered his time to paint the brick in Great Hall last summer, giving the east end of the building a fresh clean look. Special thanks to Rob Sturms and Sandy Rossi for their help as well.
- The trophy cases were moved from the cafeteria to Great Hall so more people can view the accomplishments of past and current DLHS students. Special thanks to Andy Schlager for mounting the cases in Great Hall.
- Lance Polzin spent countless volunteer hours at DLHS expanding and remodeling the drama tool and paint room located next to the kitchen.
- The baseball team won the Metro League South Division, finished 15-4 overall, and was ranked #6 in the regional tournament. Head coach Dave Smith was named coach of the year in the Metro League for the second year in a row. They also enjoyed a spring trip to Phoenix, Arizona.
- DLHS partnered with area LCMS youth directors and DCE's and instituted "small group chapels" at DLHS. Students were randomly placed in small groups and

participated in devotions/discussion ten times during the school year.

- The DLHS chapter of National Honor Society had 40 members this year.
- The wrestling team had its largest number of participants in years and had four wrestlers advance to the state tournament: Drew Greer, Josh Sees, Tyler Roberts, and Cameron Chainhalt.
- Mrs. Alicia Oates participated in a triathlon this May and finished in the top 25%.
- Mr. Zoeller took a group of Spanish students to the LCMS Hispanic church again last February. They attended the service then talked with some of the members. Afterwards they ate some authentic Mexican food and everyone tried their first taste of cow tongue, as well as Menudo (intestine soup.)
- The drama department had several "firsts" this spring with their production of the *Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*. The Denver Herald Dispatch photographed the cast and crew and ran an article that also included interviews with several cast members. The publisher of *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*, Playscripts, Inc. New York, NY. requested photos of the production to be used in future promotional publications.
- Freshmen Hope Davis served as a volunteer member of the teen jury in Arvada, which hands down decisions about teen criminal cases.
- DLHS students again brought a different worldview perspective to *Youth and Government*, three days of bills and bureaucracy played out the Colorado state capitol building.
- Freshmen Taylor Sturms was chosen as a AVCA player of the Week for the state of Colorado in volleyball.
- The boys' basketball team also won the Metro League South Division and advanced to the regional final. Senior Trevor Williams was a MacDonald's All-American nominee.
- The majority of our sophomores took Public Speaking this year opposite their Christian Sexuality class. This will allow them to take further English electives during their junior and senior years.
- 20 students took online high school courses through our OLO (Orange County Online) program – those courses were Economics, Writing Experience, Contemporary Math, Music Appreciation, Government, U.S. History, and World History.
- The shuttle van that brings students down and back up to the north part of the city every day is a moving billboard with our school advertised on it.
- Senior Mallory Hicks was part of a press conference along with a Colorado state representative to change the legal age of blood donors from 17 to 16. She testified in front of the health and human services committee and witnessed the law being signed by the Governor. She also received the Outstanding Youth Leadership Award from Bonifils and was honored at a banquet in January.
- Sophomore Emily Walter participated in the National Bible Bowl Competition and her team finished in the top 3 consistently in competition. Competing in Nationals in Indiana is a possibility this summer.
- Three DLHS students were baptized this school year: Martin and Edgar Gonzalez and Destiny Forrester. We rejoice at their inclusion in God's family.
- DLHS was renewed full accreditation for both NLSA (National Lutheran Schools Accreditation) and NCA (North Central Accreditation) for the 2008-2009 school

year. We will go through the re-accreditation process next school year.

- The DLHS band took a successful trip to San Diego, performing at four different churches and enjoying the southern California sun. The Concert Choir is busy planning its spring trip for next year.
- The football team finished 6-4 and made the state playoffs. The softball team finished 11-9 and made the state playoffs as well.
- Mr. Craig Parrott, DLHS Spiritual Director, led the DLHS faculty in an in-depth Bible study that laid the foundation for each small-group chapel that the staff had with the students. Mr. Parrott was also a featured presenter at the national Lutheran Religion Teacher symposium held at Valparaiso University this past October.
- Freshly retired Ron Brandhorst taught second semester Advanced Science and is looking forward to teaching it again next year! Advanced Science students also served as judges for the Gethsemane Lutheran School Science Fair.
- Junior Honors English was renamed as Advanced Placement Language and Composition. The majority of students in the class took the AP test this May.
- The Advanced Science/Aquatics Research class took a field trip to the Aquarium in downtown Denver and got a behind the scenes look at how the aquarium operates.
- Senior Eric Breithaupt played lacrosse at Golden High School and served as one of the captains, led the team in goals scored and total points, was selected first team all-conference, and was been chosen to play in the All-State game. He was also nominated for the Zach Hills Award, an annual recognition of outstanding Lacrosse players in Colorado that have overcome a personal tragedy or hardship.
- Junior Allie Reetz advanced another level as a rider in Westernaires, an organization that teaches western riding, precision, and horse care.
- DLHS art students showed off their talents designing street art at the Lutheran Schools Field Day.
- Mr. Hollenbeck was one of the featured artists in the La Piazza del Arte downtown last summer, and will be again June 7-8 at Larimer square. He was also a featured artist in the Houston street art Festival in September. Mr. Hollenbeck was also commissioned to do two large paintings for the DNC's Media event at Elitches in October, which he completed with the help of his son Micah, and his daughter Grace, both DLHS students. He was commissioned to paint 18 pieces in downtown Colorado Springs for last years' Senior U.S. Open. He also has been contacted to paint a picture on the street for the June cover of Denver Magazine, which will feature the La Piazza del Arte.
- Mr. Ryan Bredow spent two weeks of his summer working Coach K's basketball camp at Duke University. He will help at Duke again this summer and work UConn's camp as well.

The accomplishments of our students and staff during the course of the 2008-2009 school year certainly speak for themselves. The Lord has blessed our community with many gifts and talents.

Looking Ahead

My goals remain the same for DLHS as we look ahead to the 2009-2010 school year:

1. **Continue to have an outstanding Theology department.** I continue to want our graduates to have the skills and knowledge to "give a reason for the hope that they have" and be disciples to their peers in college. I want our school to be known for

developing spiritual champions for the world.

2. **Be a school that truly does *nurture academic excellence for all students, whether they excel academically or need tutoring and assistance.*** The academics at DLHS are not easy. We have to continue to find ways to challenge our gifted students and assist the students that need extra help. While this challenge is not an easy one, the DLHS staff will continue to explore avenues to accomplish this goal.
3. **Smartly integrate technology throughout the building and the curriculum.** DLHS is now wireless in several areas throughout the building. Students with laptops can make use of that during the course of the school day if desired. We used money raised through the LutherWalk/Run to purchase several new desktops, new laptops, and new video equipment for our video editing class. Next year will see a change in our school software as we phase out an outdated k12planet.com and provide parents and students with a better method of viewing grades and other information.
4. **Have an outstanding career and college guidance program.** Parents and students should be making constant use of the information found on the college and career page of our website. Denise Noffze has provided a plethora of information to assist families in the process of getting ready for the next level of education. Look for the continuation of the financial aid nights that were a big success this year in the next school year.
5. **Dominate at extra-curricular activities.** What a year DLHS athletics and performing arts had in 2008-2009! I hope 2009-2010 can be even better! I've said it before - I don't want DLHS to just *have* a wide range of activities; I want us to *be excellent* at those activities. I want our kids to graduate knowing how to be passionate and dedicated to being the best at what they do.

The sad irony of education in America today is that the need for Christian education has never been larger, and yet paying for it has never been more difficult. I would love to give our product away for free – I believe in it that much. High school students need to be centered and rooted in God's Word. Raising kids to be spiritual champions starts in the home and is supported by the church . . . but the battle for our kids is being lost in the public schools. I pray daily that the families in our community will continue to find a way to give their children the gift of Christian education.

I commend those of you, students and parents, who value the mission of Denver Lutheran High School: to nurture academic excellence and encourage growth in Christ. I commend those of you that have a desire to know Jesus Christ and have Him be living and active in your daily life. DLHS provides this opportunity. Our God is truly great, and He will continue to provide for all of our needs.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any concerns, suggestions, or expertise – your input is always welcome.

In Christ,

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