



## Q&A with new Providence Principal Melodie McKenzie

**Q. You've been at Providence for several years now. What have been your general observations from your time on the faculty?**

**A.** Providence Christian Academy is an excellent school! God has so greatly blessed our school, it is a privilege to be part of a work where honoring God is the top priority. Our community of families is a blessing to serve because each and every person gives of themselves to make Providence a thriving school.

**Q. In your time at Providence you have contributed to the school's leadership in several ways. Can you talk a little bit about what you currently do as a member of the Education Committee?**

**A.** On the Education Committee, the majority of our work centers around developing curriculum for the new grade we add each year. Currently, we have our science and logic in place through eighth grade. We have spent much time working on Bible curriculum that meets our desire to thoroughly ground our students in the truth with a Christian worldview. This year, we will also be deciding the course that our history and literature will take.

**Q. When you joined the faculty two years ago, you came to us with experience as a school Principal at Oak Park Christian Academy. How long were you Principal there, and what kind of a school was Oak Park?**

**A.** I was Principal of Oak Park Christian Academy for three years from 2005 – 2008. It was a traditional Christian school from K – 8 that served families from many non-denominational churches in the suburbs surrounding Oak Park as well as students from the city. The school had gone through a difficult patch, so my first year there was a year of healing and building community. During the second year, we planned a move out of the church where the school had been meeting. For the last year, we collaborated with another school to try to meet both of our needs. OPCA was a really great school with very sincere people.

**Q. The role of Principal at Providence is notable as we've not had an Administrator before. What do you think is notable about this transition from a Board-Faculty structure to a Board-Principal-Faculty structure?**

**A.** God has blessed us so greatly at our school with a Board and Faculty who have worked so well together to enable the school to fulfill all its goals thus far. This growth of adding a Principal is the next stage of development for our young school. My hope is that it will strengthen what we already have going and enable each person in our community to fulfill their own task better. Communication is one area that will flow easier.

**Q. As you think about assuming the Principal role next year what are the most important elements of that transition for you? Are there new things you'd like to implement?**

**A.** Moving into the Principal role is really about serving our community. I'm excited about our school strengthening ourselves to move into the next step of growth. This will be a year of organizing and formalizing what we are already doing. We will cling to our founding purpose to promote and provide an education to equip our students to faithfully honor God in the home, church, society, and vocation. Anything new will be an outpouring of the foundation that we already have firmly established at Providence.



Q. You will also be teaching 1st/2nd grades next year. How do you see splitting your time between teaching and school Administration?

A. There are several classes each week that I will not be teaching in order to have time devoted to administration. I'm excited that for the first time in 13 years I'll be teaching the same thing that I've taught before! This is what a teacher longs for so that you can expand and improve on what you did last time. The other benefit is that a lot of preparation is already done which will again give me time to devote to the whole school.

Q. I think the students know (at least I've heard) that you are a HUGE Bears fan. What is maybe something else that we don't know about you?

A. Yes, I do love the Bears! Something that I'm not sure everyone knows is that I've been to Legoland. Not just any one of them but the original one in Denmark where Legos were invented. It was legendary!

## Q&A with newest Providence Faculty Member Emily DeBoer

Q. You come to Providence as an experienced teacher as you've taught in Latin America most recently. Can you tell us a little bit about your last year teaching in Honduras?

A. The majority of my teaching responsibilities were in a 5th grade classroom of 33 students. My students were all native Hondurans who were learning English as a second language. The conditions in the school were similar to conditions you might find in an inner city, Title I school, which, along with other factors, made it a very challenging year. It is, however, in difficulty that our best learning can happen. The year I spent there taught me much about myself, teaching, culture, and God. Ask me in person about it!

Q. You've attended Reformed, Christian schools yourself throughout your education background. Can you talk a little bit about your perspective on the importance of that?

A. Comparing my own education to others I've had a chance to witness, I'm very impressed with and appreciative of the quality of my own education, particularly in regards to a focus on Biblical knowledge and a Christian worldview on all of life. The value of that education is immeasurable, and I am so thankful for the privilege of participating in it—first as a student and now as a teacher.



# Board Update

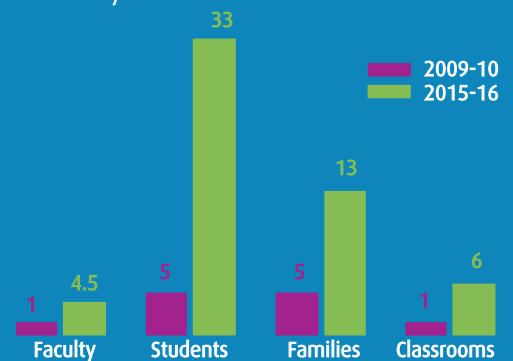
## TAKING STOCK

Dan Bruinsma, Board President

*1 Corinthians 3:7 "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."*

The text above is a familiar one for Christians and one that is often applied to mission work where those who begin a work are commonly not the same as those who continue it and see the Lord's increase over time. I was thinking about this verse in light of this update as I tried to give a snapshot of the last 6-7 years of Providence Christian Academy.

Now I admit that I'm a bit of a linear 'rows and columns' thinker so I apologize for the chart below, but I felt it did a nice job of capturing the changes to the school that supporters have witnessed in its brief 6 years of existence.



In 2009 Providence Christian Academy began as a one-room schoolhouse meeting at Village Woods in Crete, IL. Today the school has a large multi-classroom footprint at Community United Reformed Church. The growth of the school has brought encouragement for supporters while also creating some new challenges like space requirements. 2015/2016 will mark Providence's last year at Community United Reformed Church having now outgrown that facility. The Board has appointed a committee to find another temporary home for the school in 2016/2017 and beyond until we are able to build a permanent home.

You may remember that in November of 2013 Providence purchased 10 acres of land in unincorporated Lake County IN on Calumet

### Q. What was it about Providence that particularly attracted you?

A. As a student who received a degree in the liberal arts and has interests in a wide variety of subjects, I was attracted to Providence's emphasis on a well-rounded, integrated education and especially its recognition that truth, beauty, and goodness can be found in both Christian and secular sources. I'd also be lying if I didn't mention the appeal that Providence's small class sizes had for me.

### Q. Beyond what the curriculum states, what do you hope to instill in your students through your teaching?

A. About a year ago, I chose Philippians 1: 9-11 as my teaching theme verse. I pray this verse regularly both for my students and for myself, and it expresses my desire for my students far better than I am able. Ultimately, I want my students to understand that learning is done not just for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of love—increasing love for God, others, and creation.

"And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

### Q. At Providence, Latin is core to our curriculum. While I know you don't have experience learning or teaching Latin specifically, I'm wondering if you have any broader observations to share about language and the benefit of Latin specifically to share having spent the last year in a Spanish speaking culture?

A. I am really passionate about the value of learning a second language in today's increasingly global society. I've heard a lot about how helpful Latin is in laying the foundation of learning a second modern language, and I'm excited to see the connections between Latin and Spanish. I'm also hopeful that I'll be able to encourage my students with those connections.

### Q. At Providence you will be teaching 6th & 8th grade next year. What do you look forward to most in terms of teaching the older grades at the school?

A. One of the things I appreciate the most about older students is their growing ability to view and relate to the world not in simplistic, concrete terms, but in more complex, abstract ways. I'm eager to get to know my students and to encourage their developing minds and hearts to think critically and discerningly about creation, culture, and their place as a Christian in it.

### Q. No doubt this Summer will be very busy for you as you prepare to teach a curriculum that is new to you. That said, can you tell us something you enjoy to do in your free time?

A. I really enjoy being active, especially in group sports, and so I'm hoping to find groups that play soccer, ultimate frisbee, or volleyball that I'm able to join. Otherwise, you might normally find me reading, baking, running, or Netflixing.



# Providence Christian Academy

P.O. Box 122  
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"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

--Proverbs 22:6 ESV

## Board Update CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Avenue near 121st Street. Through the generous financial support of our constituents we were able to pay off the loan on this land purchase last year. The Building Committee, in its work to prepare plans for the land, has identified significant future costs for water and sewer and as such has advised the Board it is unlikely we could build on this land in the near term. Given this, the Board is planning that Providence will most likely need to rent a facility for the next couple of years yet. While we had originally hoped to be moving more quickly toward a permanent home, we trust in the Lord and know that His plan is perfect.

This is a very exciting newsletter to be preparing as we've welcomed not only our fourth full time faculty member but have also appointed the school's first Principal as you no doubt read in earlier pages. Please continue to raise up in prayer not only these new faculty members but also the returning faculty members in their new tasks. Our faculty for 2015/2016 is:

- Mrs. Valerie Knoll: Kindergarten
- Mrs. Melodie McKenzie: Principal & 1st/2nd
- Mrs. Doris Trester: 3rd/4th/5th
- Ms. Emily DeBoer: 6th/8th
- Ms. Leann Lange: Music/PE
- Mr. Ed VanderWoude: Upper grades - History/Logic

I'd also ask that you continue in prayer for the work of the Board as we have many important tasks from month to month that we need the Lord's imparted wisdom to us. Providence's Board for 2015/2016 is: President: Dan Bruinsma - Oak Glen URC; Vice President: Ed VanderWoude - Lynwood URC; Secretary: Bill Regnerus - Oak Glen URC; Treasurer: Jordan Hoekstra - Community URC; Building Committee: Jeff Huizenga - Faith URC.

Lastly, a sincere thanks to all of you reading this newsletter. Providence's Association members have given greatly over the years in prayer, contributions to committees and financial support. For this the Board is very grateful. This is particularly true in that we have confidence that your support through these ways will not waver as our need increases. May the Lord bless you.

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### We are currently meeting at:

Community United  
Reformed Church  
8405 Alexander Street  
Schererville, Indiana

\*\*If you would like information about setting up a classroom visit, please contact us by phone or email.



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