

September 2017

Welcome to 6th grade and Team One! We are looking forward to a great school year and meeting all of our new students. The Team One teachers are eager to make this a rewarding year for everyone. We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves.

Penny Straub is returning to Highcrest for her thirteenth year and her fifteenth year in education. She received her BA in Psychology from Western Illinois University and earned her Masters in Education from Concordia University. Mrs. Straub teaches math and social studies. Mrs. Straub enjoys the outdoors with her family, especially swimming, walking, and running. This summer she spent lots of time at the lake, visiting with family and friends, and taking weekend road trips with her husband and two children.

Chad Deininger will be teaching ELA and social studies. This Mr. Deininger's first year at Highcrest, but he student taught 6th grade here last spring. He attended Columbia College in Chicago and majored in journalism. Prior to becoming a teacher, he spent time writing and editing professionally, and for the last 10 years, worked in the non-profit sector, specifically with homeless women and children in Chicago. Some things Mr. Deininger enjoys include going for runs with his dog, Otis, traveling and exploring, going to Cubs games, and spending with his wife and their five-month-old daughter Elliott.

Mrs. Walker can hardly wait for the new year to start! This will be her eleventh year at Highcrest. She graduated from University of Illinois and is earned her Masters in Education from National Louis University. Albert Einstein once said, "Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think." Sixth grade will be an exciting year of thinking, laughing, learning, and growing together. In addition to getting married this summer, Mrs. Walker also enjoyed

traveling to Mexico and Wisconsin, bike riding, a few projects around the house, and sleeping in!

Kristin Reese, Learning Behavior Specialist, is starting her twelfth year of teaching at Highcrest and is excited to be joining the 6th grade for the first time! Mrs. Reese received her BA in Education from The University of Iowa (Go Hawks!) and her Masters in Special Education from National Louis University. She will be teaching instructional reading & writing, two academic strategies classes, and two math classes. In her free time, Mrs. Reese enjoys spending time with her two kids: Addison (age 6) and Calvin (22 months). This summer she spent time at the pool, took a family trip to Michigan and purchased a new home in Wilmette!

We have a great year planned with many challenging learning opportunities and fun experiences ahead. An integral part of a successful year is communication between school and home. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have throughout the year.

Penny, Chad, Alison & Kristin