

**Craig and Kristen Heil – Parents of Carlie (GPL '19), Andrew (GPL '21), Alex (GPL '24), Jacob (GPL '26)**

What led up to enrolling your child/ren at GPL? Was it a long process or short? Smooth or back and forth?

*Our kids attended a Christian grade school, as we place a high value on Christian education. Knowing Great Plains has a great reputation and high success with academics, coupled with the fact our kids wanted to go there, the decision was relatively easy. The enrollment process was fairly smooth.*

Describe what you were thinking and feeling when you dropped your child/ren off at the dorm for the first time?

*This was a comfortable experience for us for the most part. Our kids had played a large part in the decision to go which helps, and they were excited for the experience. It also helped that we had already known some of the staff at the high school and dormitory. That all said, there was of course some amount of hesitation that one experiences with any significant changes in life. All of that however quickly dissipates as you see your child flourish in an environment rich in opportunities they may not have had in a larger public school, all of which centers around Christ.*

Talk about some of the challenges you have worked through and some of the blessings you have experienced.

*No major challenges, some smaller things include getting used to distance with attending events, transporting kids back and forth, not being able to hug your child at times when they are stressed. However, balancing those things out are spending quality face time when we are together with our kids (including windshield time when travelling).*

How has having your child/ren away from home at GPL affected your relationship with your child/ren?

*We believe we have grown much closer in many regards. Our kids recognized our trust and confidence in them in being able to handle the early independence, taking on responsibilities of balancing school, extra-curricular activities and personal lives away from home and as a result we feel our kids appreciation for us as parents was greater than it would have been if we were there at every turn.*

If you had to choose just one, what one thing do you want people to know about GPL?

*The called workers and staff at Great Plains value our kids beyond any measure we can describe in words. These are individuals that have devoted their careers to teaching God's Word and setting a God-pleasing example for our kids. This allows our kids to strengthen the foundation that started in the home and prepare them for their adult lives as Christians.*