

The Prin Post

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Unpacking The Meaning of Family Weekend

by Nora Berdeaux-Webster



Concert Choir and Director Justin Moore take the stage for the concert on Family Weekend, October 11, 2025 (Photo Credit: Principia Live Stream)

Family weekend is designed to bring the day and boarding students' parents into the heart of our campus life. It was a time for families to connect, experience what their students had been up to during the first semester, and celebrate the lively community we share.

Throughout the weekend, a variety of events showcased student life and achievements. Key highlights include the Senior Nights for fall sports, such as volleyball, soccer, and football. Senior Night honors the senior athletes, recognizing their dedication and accomplishments as they walk out onto the field or court with their families, celebrating their final semester of these high school fall sports.

"They get to celebrate everything that they brought to the team, everything they contributed, and send them off to whatever's next," said Natalie Davenport, Varsity Volleyball Coach. "I think it's a reminder for them to be in the moment and cherish the experience."

One of the most exciting traditions is the family weekend concert, which features performances by the school's band and choir, along with the Inter-House Choir competition. Each of the four houses competed by singing songs to win first through fourth place, which boosted school spirit and friendly

rivalry. To add to the excitement of the concert, the teachers and faculty performed a mash-up of songs from Hamilton, the stunning performance left the rest of the crowd in silent awe as the student section cheered wildly.

For many students, the concert was a highlight, especially those involved in the music program. "It's one of the only concerts at least my parents get to come to, which is really special for me." Said Milo Broadhurst, a 10th-grade boarding student. "Especially for people that are actually like, in choir and band, showing what they've been working on for the past month or two."

"I think it's a reminder for them to be in the moment and cherish the experience."

The concert night also included the much-anticipated announcement of the spring production. This year, students and families found out that the upcoming production will be Into The Woods. The announcement added to the excitement and anticipation for the months ahead.

Family weekend was equally

meaningful for day students, who enjoyed sharing their school experiences with their families. "I feel like the families got to experience what all the students get to do and what the teachers get to do, so they got a better understanding of how the school worked," said Micheala Coles, a 10th-grade day student. She also reflected on the time her house spent preparing for the competition. "Being in my house, I feel like we all grew closer to being a family, 'cause we spent a lot of time together working on our song for Family Weekend."

The weekend ended with student-led conferences on Monday. These conferences gave a meaningful opportunity for students to meet with their parents and crew leaders to discuss their academic progress and personal growth. They highlighted their achievements, collaboration on projects, and how they embodied the school's core value LOVE.

What was very clear is that family weekend isn't just a schedule of activities; it was a heartfelt celebration of community, personal growth, and lasting connections between students, families, and the school. Whether boarding or day student, parent or teacher, everyone was reminded of the important role that connection and support play in education and life.

After a Tough Loss, What's Next For Principia Football?

The Principia football team lost 72-0 on Family Weekend. How will this setback affect their season moving forward?

By Quentin Coleman



Coach Mauk gives a speech to the team after a tough loss against Orchard Farm on October 10, 2025. (Photo used with permission from Principia Media)

The Principia football team faced the toughest team they played all year on Friday, October 10. Before the game one of the coaches, Dante Lewis, took time for an interview about how he thinks the game will go. He states that "Orchard Farm is the best team that we are going to play so far." With that said, under the bright lights and roaring crowd Principia lost in a blowout 72-0 loss. It was a difficult game for players, coaches and fans. It got so bad that even one of the fans left the game during halftime.

Senior Neo Swanson, wide receiver for the Panthers, shook his head with frustration walking into the locker room. "This game definitely hurts the

most cause this is my first time getting blown out like this" he said. "We will bounce back against our rivals, Priory."

This loss was the worst one this whole season, but the coaching staff is planning to learn and plan for the next one. Head Coach for the Panthers, Mathew Mauk, emphasized that setbacks like this one can be powerful learning experiences. "Every great team has moments like these. Now it's on us on how we are going to respond," he said.

Mathew Mauk is moving forward and said "We plan to focus on improving communication on the field, bettering the defense and finding more consistency in their offense." Lewis

said" Practices this week are expected to be intense but constructive."

Some players are already using the loss as motivation. Senior Captain JJ Marshall said "We know we can do better."

Fans and students are rallying behind the team as well showing school pride despite the loss on Friday. Cheerleaders have been being loud at games, doing their best to support the football team.

The road ahead won't be easy, but if Principia can turn this defeat into motivation, there are still a lot of games ahead in the season to bounce back.

Principia Focuses on the Road to Redemption

By Ben Conner

The Principia Panthers played Orchard Farm and lost 72-0 during Family Weekend. Orchard Farms is currently in class five, while Principia is in class three. After the 2024 season, Principia was also beaten brutally by Orchard Farm by 72-0 on Principia's home field. After the 2024 hard loss, the Panthers, with new players, were ready to strike back at the Eagles. The Panthers are on a roll not seen in a while, with a score of 3-3. With the influx of new players and coaches, this team has achieved wins not seen in the past. Principia is ranked #258 in Missouri

for football for the 2025-2026 season. This is based on the team's 3-3 overall record for the current season and its current rank

within the state's rankings. Orchard Farm High School's football team is ranked #81 in Missouri for the current season, according to MaxPreps, an online sports website for high school players' stats to be posted. They are also ranked #4 in the Missouri Class 4 rankings, as of an October 13, 2025, Sports Illustrated article. The team also holds a 4-0 record in its district and 7-0 in this season. This game was placed on Principia's family weekend. While being an international school, parents were looking forward to this game.

After the hard loss, Tristin Coon, the QB for the Principia Panthers, is a new player in his Junior year of high school. Tristin sits at 5'10, 170 pounds. During this game, Tristin was being chased down by #0, Tyson Bronson, a senior for the Eagles who sits at 6'1, 205 pounds. (The photograph is of the Orchard Farm team of players.) This loss was hard for Tristin, being a dorm student himself, and his mother, Tricia

Coon was at the game. Tristin says, "The game was hard, especially knowing that my mom was there watching." Tristin Coon, after the game, says, "Trusting my abilities and trusting my teammates". This allows Tristin to keep a cool head in game knowing that his team is able to back him.

Jeremias "Jere" Ciampitti Burgert, #77, plays right tackle. Protecting Coon's blind spot. He stands at 6'4" and weighs 275 pounds. During this game, Ciampitti struggled with Orchard Farms' defense. What he struggled with was having to try block-

ing two players at a time. This game deeply affected Jere, feeling as if he couldn't play to his best ability do to the two players on him.

When asked what ways you can prepare yourself for this upcoming game, he said, "Being able to learn and prioritize a player that can affect the QB to be able to protect Tristin better".

Jordan Hubbard, a sophomore wide receiver, is already thinking about the next game to come. "The team is ready to ring that bell and get us another win in the pocket." Hubbard, being a man of focus and spirit, didn't believe looking in the past was worth it and only looked to the future and what he could do better for the team and himself. "Being able to track the QB and running back better to help on defense and on offense, being able to get to the ball and get more touchdowns". He pushes the team morale after this hard loss, making sure everyone is in a good head space to be able to "knock people's heads off" for this upcoming game against Priory, the rival of Principia for the past 120 years.

"The team is ready to ring that bell and get us another win in the pocket."

Panthers' Grit Tested

By Ron Henry

The Principia boys football team was off to a strong start heading into Family Weekend, with a 3-2 record, already surpassing last year's 1-9 mark. The boys had a game on Friday, October 10th, against Orchard Farm. Leading up to the game, one of the star players for Principia, 2026 Wide Receiver Neo Swanson, said, "This game shouldn't be too hard because we prepared in practice and are ready for this." If they can win this game, this will be a huge win considering the losses that they took in the previous years. Last year, they lost 13 - 60, so the tension going into this game should be high.

Another star player, 2027 Wide Receiver Kingston Money, said, "They don't know what's coming for them." This is Money's first year playing football, and he is developing well, with nice hands and great footwork that allow him to get open. He also plays both sides of the ball. He is not afraid to make a tackle or go up and contest a pass or even intercept it. This should cause problems for Orchard Farm.

JJ Marshall is not eligible to play, but he gave his opinion on how he thinks the game will go: "The team knows how important this game is and how much this win would mean for us. I know we will pull out the victory," Marshall said.

The final score of the game was 72-0. This was a devastating loss for Principia. "This was an unexpected score for everyone, even them," said Marshall.

As of October 31st, the team's record is 4 - 4.

Houses Prep for Inter-House Choir Competition

by Aereon Robinson



Bole House preps for Inter-House Choir (Photo Credit: Aereon Robinson)

The Inter-House Choir Competition, introduced three years ago, is now a highly anticipated event where each house comes together to sing a song in a competition against the other 3 houses. Each house is judged based on four categories: the house's memorization of the lyrics, articulation of the lyrics, how in tune they are, and their rhythmic precision.

Principia's Choir Director and Performance Arts Department Chair, Justin Moore, has selected the judges for this year's competition: Christopher Boemler, Bonnie Burke, and Anna Brummel. All judges are music professionals who are unassociated with Principia to ensure decisions are made professionally and without bias. This event is open to the entire Principia Community, including parents, family, and others.

The Inter-House Choir Competition, was introduced by Upper School Principal, Mrs. Dry, as a way to create competition "off the field," Principal Dry said. "We didn't have any-

thing competitive that was artistic in nature," she said, expressing the need for friendly competition that wasn't athletic. Principal Dry also stated that "The Inter-House Choir Competition puts most children out of their comfort zone, it gives them the experience of participating in something that's not comfortable," voicing the importance of uncomfortable situations and how they build character in students. The overall message behind the Inter-House Choir Competition is to expose students to new experiences, build confidence, and unite our community.

How do students feel about Inter-House Choir?

Upper School students' perspectives on the Inter-House Choir differ depending on their grade and house. A lot of students feel Inter-House is a great initiative to bring houses together and create friendly competition. Bole Senior Q Coleman stated, "I feel it's a good way to connect with your house."

Perrin junior Demi Brown stated,

"My biggest takeaway is just going like pushing through stuff that you don't want to do."

Numerous students also voiced their opinions regarding the House Captain's performance and leadership during rehearsals and preparations. Aniyah Poniewas a Hubbell III freshman said, "If I were the house captain, I would have us locked in. Our house captains are too soft."

However, Rohan Suthar, a Flint sophomore, said, "Our house captains are good leaders; they definitely have good organization." The contrast in answers to the same question highlights different leadership styles depending on the house. Some students felt that their house organization was spot on, and others felt the opposite. After observing each house's rehearsal techniques, there is a big difference in how each house is preparing for the Inter-House Choir Competition.

Inter-House Choir Competition Impacts House Standings

by Shepherd Thomas

As houses squared off in the latest house event, Inter-House Choir, emotions, school spirit, and drama all reached new heights. Leading up to the event, Hubbell House was in dire need of house points, as they sat in last place in the standings before the event. Hubbell House Captain Reid Schauman said, “We sounded very good in our rehearsals.” Despite feeling well prepared, Schauman and Hubbell House took third place in the event. Jakub Vacin, a senior in Hubbell House, said, “I’m pretty upset. I think we should’ve won.”

Every year, out of all of the house competitions, Inter-House Choir seems to draw in the most debate and drama, simply because the results are subjective. The results are determined by a group of judges, selected by Choral Director Justin Moore, who is also a member of Bole House. Bole House captains chose the song *Dancing Queen* from the Broadway show *Mamamia!* “We walked in knowing people would be aware of the song *Dancing Queen*... Everybody knew their parts, knew the lyrics, knew the tune. It became clear that this was going to be a good choice for us,” said Bole House Captain Elise Toombs. Toombs seemed to have made the right song choice as Bole came out on top in the Choir competition.

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Houses take the stage to perform during Inter-House Choir Competition at The Principia Upper School Family Weekend Concert, Oct. 11, 2025.

Inter-House Choir Rehearsal Observations:

by Aereon Robinson

Each house at Principia approached rehearsals for the Inter-House Choir competition in its own unique way. Bole stood out for its strong organization and clear focus on vocal technique and harmony, showing a traditional and disciplined approach to rehearsing. Coleman, a Bole senior, stated, “We’ve gotten much better at singing and added more dance moves.”

Perrin, on the other hand, prioritized choreography over vocals. They rehearsed mostly a cappella with great energy; however, they did not have good memorization of the lyrics. Demi Brown, a Perrin junior, said, “We love to win. We feed off of competition, and if we win this, we’ll win house cup.”

Flint shared a similar emphasis on movement and synchronization, though their lyrics were harder to un-

derstand; they had great leadership and organization that might lead them to victory.

Rohan Suthar, a Flint sophomore, stated, “We have good organization, our house captains are great leaders.”

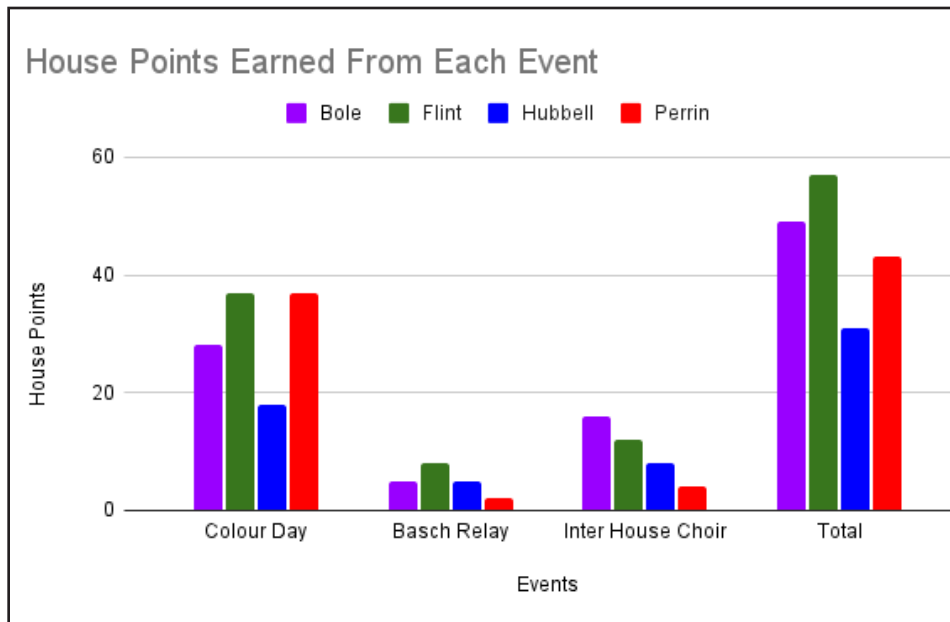
Hubbell differed the most, taking a collaborative approach where every member contributed ideas. While they first struggled with the choreography and pitch, their performance improved greatly once the music started, blending them together. Aniyah Poniewas, a Hubbell freshman, stated, “We have a good chance of winning. I feel we are locked in.”

As the Inter-House Choir Competition draws near, anticipation continues to grow over which house will take the victory, but one thing is clear: every group is giving their all to make their performance unforgettable.

Inter-House Choir Competition Impacts House Standings Continued

While Bole had a very successful event, it was quite the opposite for Perrin, who was on top of the leaderboard going into the event. Konrad Römhild, a Perrin House Captain, said, “The house (Perrin) didn’t pay close attention to us (The Perrin House Captains) during meetings, and they weren’t very engaged.” He adds, “The house captains together (himself and Dean King) didn’t choose a great song that was easy for the house to learn.” As a result of chaotic rehearsals, Perrin finished last in the event and now sits in third in the overall house standings.

Lastly, Flint finished second, only beating Hubbelll by one point. As a result of the event, Flint House Captain Rehema Oyugi learned a lot about her house through this process. “I learned that the people who are typically silly and goofy could actually take this event seriously because they value the performance and house,” said Oyugi.



Flint now sits in first place in the house standings.

House captains are already looking forward to the next steps. “We (Bole House) just need to keep on being engaged,” said Toombs. Bole House is currently in second place heading into the next event, Surf N’ Turf, where their two talented sophomore swimmers, Sarah Lamb and Davis Johnson, will look to carry Bole House to first place.

After another competitive house event, tensions are only rising going into future house events.

Reaction to Principia Inter-House Choir Competition Results

By Eli Morse

Principia’s houses, Perrin, Hubbelll, Bole, and Flint, all worked to sing and choreograph songs chosen by their individual house captains in hopes of winning the Inter-House Choir Competition. Final standings of the houses were announced on Saturday, October 11th. Amy Evans, who was a large contributor to the Perrin Inter-House Choir performance, said, “I agreed with the judges. I thought that would be about how they end up. Although I thought that Hubbelll would be a little bit higher, it was interesting when Mrs. Dry showed the results, and there was that 1 point difference there. I thought that was interesting,” she said.

The standings she is referencing were Bole in first place, Flint in second place, Hubbelll in third place, and Perrin in fourth.

Dasia Scott, a junior in Flint House,

said, “I think my house standing was well deserved. I think we had really good choreography, and we were in sync for the most part, and I think we separated our lines really well from the guys and the girls, and I think we did really good!”

Tristin Coon, a junior in Bole House, said, “I don’t think the judges properly looked at the rubric, and I think if they would have looked at the rubric properly, it could have helped Hubbelll’s placement, and I think they could have gone at least second.”

Song selection can play an important role in the performance. Milo Broadhurst, a sophomore in Bole House, said, “I thought our song was super easy and fun. It was like super easy to learn, which I liked, so like everybody knew the lyrics. It still had room for energy even if it was an easy song.”

Bole House sang *Dancing Queen* from Mamamia! On Broadway.

On the other hand, Evans said, “I think Perrin picked a song that’s a little too challenging, a little too big for them to chew off. I think the other houses chose songs that were a little bit more in their range.” Perrin House sang *Revolting Children* from *Matilda* and got fourth place.

Hubbelll House sang *Seasons of Love* from *Rent*, the Musical. Flint House sang *I Just can’t Wait to be King* from *The Lion King*.

The Inter-House choir competition has become a well-talked-about event and tradition at Principia. With Bole in first place, Flint in second, Hubbelll in third, and Perrin in fourth. The Principia community is already building up anticipation for next year’s Inter-House choir competition.

Family, Dedication, and Heart: Fernando Martinez Steps Up for Senior Game

By Colton Walters

When junior Fernando Martinez took the field on Senior Night, held over Family Weekend, he wasn't just playing for his team, but he was playing for his family. With his grandparents in the stands all the way from El Salvador, everything that happened in the game had a deeper meaning. For Martinez, the highlight of the night was simple. "My grandparents. It meant a lot since they came all the way from El Salvador."

Their visit gave him an extra spark of motivation. During a key play, Martinez found himself in a scoring position. "Frank Vasquez set me up perfectly, and I just kicked it and hoped it went in," he remembered. It was a moment of emotion. "I really wanted to score in front of my grandparents because they came from so far away just to watch me."

Senior Night was a big deal for everyone, but especially for Martinez. "I was the only junior that played, so there was a lot of pressure to do good for the seniors," he said. Despite the nerves, the team rose to the occasion. The locker room before the game was extremely energetic. "Everybody was happy and the locker room was decorated," he said. "The coach gave a great speech that kept us confident."

Balancing the demands of school, soccer, and life isn't easy, but Martinez

has a system that works. "I always try to do homework so I can have free time for soccer and my girl," he said. His honest, down-to-earth attitude reflects his commitment to both academics and athletics, a model for younger players looking up to him.

And when it comes to advice to younger players, Martinez keeps it simple. "Always train more and give 100% at all times," he said. "Be healthy and eat good." It's the kind of advice that shows maturity as both an athlete and a person.

His teammate Alik Mboya, a sophomore who scored his first goal of the season that night, had the same team-first mentality. "Seeing my teammates shedding tears of joy made me emotional too," Mboya said. "Now I'm look-

ing forward to my own Senior Night." Senior Frank Vasquez, also from El Salvador, is one of the key players on the team. He said senior night was "Very special because it felt like the game was all about me and everybody on the team supported me." For Martinez, those moments of emotion and teamwork define what soccer is all about.

As the crowd cheered and families snapped photos, Martinez's grandparents smiled proudly from the stands. For them, the long trip was worth every mile. For Martinez, the night was more than a game, it was a memory he'll carry for the rest of his life.



Fast Facts: Fernando Martinez

Grade: Junior

Highlight Moment:
Playing in front of grandparents visiting from El Salvador

Pre-game Mood:
"Everybody was happy and the locker room was decorated."

Balancing Act:
Homework first, then soccer and social time

Advice to Young Players:
"Train more, give 100%, be healthy, and eat good."

One Goal, One Community

By Demi Brown



The Principia Boys Varsity Soccer engages in a warmup activity. In this photo, left to right, Shepherd Thomas, Gabe Gavaletz, Cole Brodbeck, Alik Mboya. (Photo Credit: Demi Brown)

For Principia's Varsity boys soccer team, winning means lifting each other up, both on the field and off. The Principia Varsity Soccer team has had a truly impactful season this year. After interviewing a few upperclassmen and the head coach of the soccer team, they highlighted managing a season as smoothly as this one, especially given the record they have achieved in previous years.

The Principia Soccer team has faced some tough challenges throughout this season, with fierce battles against Lutheran South 1-0, John Burroughs 2-1, Desemet High School 6-0, and Lindberg High 4-2. This has influenced the utmost need for motivation and keeping a steady head whilst playing these matches.

Principia Varsity Coach, Nigel Marples, works to keep his team up and motivated. "Before every game we start with a slow clap, gradually getting faster to get the guys pumped and try to help get rid of any pre-game jitters,

just by being loud and having energy," he said. Nigel also stated that every so often, he gives a speech. "What we as a team turn to is the idea of working," Marples said. He likes to remind players "that nothing in life comes easy. If you wanna have a good life, a good family, if you want to be successful, you have to work for it," he said.

Nothing in life comes easy. If you wanna have a good life, a good family, if you want to be successful, you have to work for it.

Rocco Stanley, a left back specialist on the Principia Panthers soccer team, sees community as something that happens on and off the field "We do team lunches on game days, which we found allows us to have more of

a connection with the team, and not just thinking that we have only to be friends or comrades on the field." Of course that sense of community can be found on the field as well "if one of our teammates scores, we come together to celebrate that person, and give them praise," Stanley said, "but we also celebrate the team knowing that its not just up to one person."

Jann Wainaina, a senior center back, expressed how he feels he helps empower his team as not only a leader but also a motivator, he said, that "It's better to lead by example, by me being happy and energetic during tough games, most of my teammates pick up on that energy, which motivates us to push through any game."

Trust also plays a huge role in building the community this team has. Rocco Stanley also states, "I think we've gotten so far in this season because of the amount of trust we have in one another. The fact that we know that everyone has each other's backs, and that we must go through every hardship as a team, even if it means doing after-practice sprints, or not letting one other person take the blame for something. I think just having a sense of trust and just showing that everyone cares for one another on the team has gotten us this far, character-wise and on the field."

This sense of community is heavily evident during Family Weekend, showing Principia families how incorporating trust, loyalty, and support on their team, the boys of Principia Soccer have created something no record or scoreboard can ever measure. The Principia Panthers may not win every game or get to play a perfect 90 minutes, but the foundation they have built is far beyond results. In the end, it's not just about soccer. It's about showing up for one another, every day, not only as a teammate, but also as a friend.

More Than Just a Game: Principia's Varsity Volleyball Team Honors the Power of Unity

By Syd Mau

It's another win for The Principia Varsity Volleyball team on Friday night. The volleyball team won all three sets with each set winning by more than 10 points. It was extra special because it was the girls' senior night, where the seniors get recognized for their hard work and accomplishments. The bond on the volleyball team looks stronger this year compared to years past, and there was lots of support and cheering on the court from everyone on the team.

Senior volleyball player Yanahni Hatwaizika said, "I try to talk and make sure that people pick up their heads when they mess up. I'll be like 'next one' or 'you got this' just to build better morale on the team." Hatwaizika has been on the team since freshman year and has seen the team grow and is always supporting others on and off the court.

The team's collective effort on Friday night was impressive against their opponent. If someone made a mistake, others would cheer for her to let her know that there's always the next one. If someone does well, everyone on the team celebrates it and tells her to do it again. The team is very united on the court showing that they work really well together and they encourage each other.

Sophia Imrie, a junior on the team, said, "I think we're all just a family and very cohesive, and the chemistry between



Varsity Girls Volleyball Team celebrates a point against Kipp High School on Friday, October 10, 2025. (Photo Credit: Syd Mau)

our team is very strong." Imrie has been on the volleyball team for 3 years and has contributed greatly by encouraging others on and off the court and connecting with the people on the team. The team has been working hard and they hope to finish off the rest of the season with more wins.

Cameron Crosby, a senior on the volleyball team says, "Saying words of encouragement and to 'BE the Change you want to see'." Crosby is a valuable player on the team who contributes a lot of words of encouragement to the team.

With their teamwork, energy, and encouragement, the Panthers show that volleyball at Principia is more than just a game—it's a family.

One Last Kick: Seniors Shine Under the Lights on Senior Night By Tristin Coon

The Principia Panthers took on St. Louis UnitedA in a soccer match up on Family Weekend. This was a home game for the Panthers, but not any regular-season game. It was Principia's senior night. The players were feeling a little more emotions pregame. "It definitely hit us hard knowing it was one of our last times playing on this field together. We wanted to leave it all out there and make it count, so we played with extra heart," senior Shepherd Thomas said.

Senior night in any sport is a lot to comprehend and is definitely something to remember. Senior Frank Vasquez said, "I hope people remember how close we were as a team and how much heart we played with. Even if we win or lose, we always had each other's backs and gave everything we had. This season wasn't just about soc-

cer, it was about family and making memories that'll stick with us."

Going into the game, all the players on Principia were ready and excited. Senior Sydney Mau stated that "We all drink plenty of water and eat good nutrition to make sure our minds and bodies are ready for the game."

Athletic trainer, Emily Karlskint, had this to say about the soccer team. "They have stayed very healthy this season, making my job a lot easier. Players only come in for slight tweaks and bruises, but nothing serious."

"Staying healthy and injury-free has really helped this season," said Vasquez.

With all the hot weather and constant running, the teams must also be in the right mindset for anything to happen. "I try to stay calm and focus on what I can control. It's easy to get

in your head when things get intense, but I just remind myself to trust my teammates and all the work we've put in. Honestly, hearing the crowd and my teammates' voices helps me lock in and keep pushing," senior Alberto Hernández Cristales said.

The stands were packed for the game Saturday with families and friends ready to watch the match up. After the game, Thomas said, "It was honestly amazing seeing everyone up there. Yelling our names and holding signs meant everything. It made me realize how much love and support we have. Hearing the crowd cheer after a good play just made me want to push even harder and make them proud." After a high-emotion and hard-played game, the Panthers succeeded with a final score of 5-0, marking them as the senior night victors!

Highlighting Student-Led Conferences

By Elsie Nabukenya



Senior Ian Sousa and his crew leader Dr. Mark Connor talk at his conference October 13, 2025. (Photo Credit: Katie MacDonald)

At Principia School, students are taking the lead when it comes to sharing their academic progress. During this year's Family Weekend, Principia hosted its annual Student-Led Conferences, a special event that gives students the opportunity to reflect on their learning and discuss their goals directly with their families.

"The process a child goes through mentally, when you defend or explain your learning, doesn't happen in any other setting except in that setting. In terms of when you have to explain your growth to your parents is hugely beneficial to you as a student," said Samantha Dry, the Upper School Principal.

Instead of traditional parent-teacher conferences, where teachers do most of the talking, these sessions put students at the center. Each student prepares a presentation or portfolio showcasing what they've accomplished so far this year, including projects, essays, lab work, and personal reflections.

"It was impactful to hear how each student is thinking about their progress so far, and especially with seniors, to hear how much their retreat impacted them," said Katie MacDonald, the Perrin senior crew leader.

Family Weekend is a long-standing Principia tradition that brings the school community together. So with this comes a lot of preparations. "We answered questions in this document that have asked us like, what is an achievement you've had in academics? Or like not just sports, but outside of the academic world," said Anzu Carpenter, a senior.

By turning the focus toward reflection and student voice, Principia's Student-Led Conferences continue to strengthen the connection between home, school, and student success.

Publication by students in Journalism and Media Literacy Fall 2025

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Sydney Mau
Eli Morse
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