

# Principal's Report

## August 24, 2017

### Student Enrollment as of Today

We're off to a strong start!

#### Current Model

Grade	# Students
12	46
11	46
10	46
9	46
HS 184	
8	40
7	40
6	40
5	40
MS 160	
4	36
3	36
2	32
1	32
K	32
ES 168	

**Total 512**

#### Current Actual

8/24/17

Grade	# Students
12	46
11	45
10	46
9	45
HS 182	
8	40
7	40
6	41
5	40
MS 161	
4	36
3	36
2	32
1	33
K	32
ES 169	

**512**

Total new students this year: 66

### New Faculty

We have ten new members of the faculty/staff:

FIRST	LAST	Role
Amber	Bates	EC Teacher
Robert	Drakeford	EC Teacher
Hope	Nolin	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher
Jessica	Oliver	Director of Advancement
Rachel	Thomas-Levy	MS/HS Theater Teacher

Taylor	Transue	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher
Ursula	Valgus	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher
Jessica	Walden-Gray	MS Science Elective Teacher
Carmen	Wood	Elementary P.E. Teacher
Elizabeth	Wood	MS Social Studies Teacher/Advisor

A short bio and photo of each new teacher has been on the website for the past week (and a copy accompanies this report).

New teachers who are new or new-ish to teaching have been assigned mentors. Experienced teachers who are just new to Woods (but not new to the profession) have been assigned faculty buddies.

### **Changes/Tweaks in Assignment:**

Gary Angus will continue to drive a morning bus route but will also serve as assistant facilities manager. He will take the lead on landscaping now that we have our own mowing equipment.

Eric Hale, who has taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade the past two years, moves to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Denise O’Gorman will now teach high school and middle school science and will no longer serve as high school counselor.

### **Refinancing Completed!**

On August 1<sup>st</sup> we paid off our bondholders and transferred remaining debt to Fidelity Bank. Previously, we had borrowed \$9.8 million at 6.95% interest. We now have a \$7,899,000 loan with a 10-year term at 3.90% interest.

### **Board Meeting Dates for the Year**

Thursday, August 24, 2017 (adjusted for first week of school)

Tuesday, August 29, 2017 Board Retreat

Thursday, September 21, 2017

Thursday, October 19, 2017

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Thursday, December 14, 2017 (adjusted for Winter Break)

Thursday, January 18, 2018

Thursday, February 15, 2018

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Thursday, April 19, 2018

Thursday, May 17, 2018

Tuesday, June 5, 2018 (adjusted for last week of school)

## Community Work Days

We held a Spruce-up-the-School Community Work Day on August 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The event was well attended (86 people signed in), and we completed a lot of much-needed work outside (laying brick, spreading mulch, weeding the pollinator garden, washing windows, etc.) and inside (cleaning tables, organizing classrooms, assembling equipment, moving furniture, etc.).

This year's bell schedule for middle school and high school will once again include a three-minute period at the end of the day to allow all students to lend a hand in cleaning up the classrooms. We will be cleaning desktops, stacking chairs, picking up floor trash, and running trash and recycling to hallway containers.

## Capital Expenditures

We have completed four of the seven capital purchases that the board approved last June:

- New Carpet for the Lounge/Workroom, the Conference Room, and the Glade.
- Faculty replacement laptops + licenses.
- Class set of iPads + cases + cart + management program.
- New chromebooks + cart + wall storage.

## Great American Eclipse at Woods

We abbreviated the high school orientation session on Monday. At the signal (Bonnie Tyler's "Total Eclipse of the Heart" playing over the intercom system) teachers, students, and parents all made our way out to the soccer field to experience the partial eclipse. A special thanks to Amy Dowden and Suzanne Sikes who helped secure glasses and to parents Steve Phillips and Ray Porter who were on hand with their telescopes and expertise.

## Calendar Notes

August 29	Board Retreat
August 30	Welcome Back Social, 6-8 p.m., at Opus Financial
September 4	Labor Day, no school
September 21	September Board Meeting
October 6	Faculty Retreat, no school
October 9	Fall Break, no school
October 12	Early Dismissal
	P/T Conferences
October 14	Community Camp Out

October 16-20	Annual Fund Drive
October 19	Board Meeting
October 20	Grandparents/Special Friends Day

## **Fall Sports Update (as reported by Bryan Matthews and Dena Floyd)**

### **Middle School**

MS boys soccer and girls volleyball started on August 14 with tryouts. Games begin on August 29th. Soccer will host Voyager in a rematch of the conference championship from a year ago. Volleyball will travel to Durham to face the home-school Carolina Mustangs.

MS cross country starts this Thursday, August 24th. The girls team is looking to repeat their championship feat of a year ago.

Coach Carmen Wood returns for her 4th season coaching middle school volleyball. She has 12 girls on the roster, and 3 managers from 5th grade. They've looked pretty good so far and it will be great to see the girls continue to grow this year. With a smaller conference, they hope to be more heavily in the mix this fall.

Coach Andrew Dilworth returns for his 2nd season coaching middle school boys soccer. 25 boys tried out and made the team. Andrew is a master of getting most, if not all, of the boys into each game, playing quality minutes and still managing to play very competitive soccer.

MS Cross Country has two new coaches this year. Math teacher, Rahul Dudhat, and 1st grade teacher, Taylor Transue, take the reigns of a program which perennially competes for championships. Registrations are still coming in, but as of now, 22 boys and 9 girls have signed up, with another 8-10 students expected. The first meet is scheduled for September 6th at Chatham Charter School.

Each fall, HALF of all middle school students take part in our athletics program! It has been a tremendous tool for breaking down barriers between grade levels and building a stronger Woods community.

This fall is also our first season of competition in a new middle school conference, which allows Woods to compete with opponents closer to home (all less than an hour away), play fewer games (2 games instead of 3 in a week), and choose opponents who have more similar values as it pertains to sportsmanship and athletics for the sake of education.

### **High School**

Varsity athletics has been well on its way since July 31st!

After losing several seniors last year, the men's soccer team has inherited a large talented group of freshman, and is off to a great start. Their current pre-season/non-conference record is 1-2. The team takes on Bartlett Yancey at Wake Med soccer park on

Saturday and then our first home match is this upcoming Monday @ 5:15PM at Briar Chapel Park, Field #4. Coach Graeme is returning after a very successful 2016-2017 in his 6th year of coaching at Woods. Sam Taylor is assisting in his third season.

Coach Anna Marie Hughes and Asst. Coach Carmen Wood are leading the way in their third season of coaching. The team is 1-1 , with a loss and win on the road. Their first home match is tonight at 6PM vs South Wake Academy. The team is led by a core group of seniors.

Cross Country started today in the sweltering heat. The numbers at practice are great on the women's and men's side, and we return some top runners in the junior class, Nick Teta for the men, and Nicole Avila for the women. Our great coach Jim Malone is leading the pack once again, in his 7th season. Their first meet is next Tuesday, August 29th at 2PM at Northwood for the Chatham County Meet.

The NCHSAA realigned conferences, so we are in a new conference called Central Tar Heel Conference with 5 other schools: River Mill, Research Triangle High School, Raleigh Charter, Chatham Charter, and Chatham Central. We play everyone twice in our conference (home and away) along with any non-conference games that we add to our sports schedules. Woods is still in the 1A Class of the NCHSAA.

## Faculty Roster ~ 2017-18

FIRST	LAST	Role
Gary	Angus	Bus Driver/Assistant Facilities Manager
Eve	Barnes	MS Math Teacher/Testing Coordinator/Advisor
Todd	Baron	Director of Technology
Amber	Bates	EC Teacher
Adrienne	Berg	HS Director/AP Seminar Teacher
Pascale	Bost	ES French Teacher
Cotton	Bryan	Principal
Kim	Carpenter	ES Teaching Assistant/Bus Driver
Trina	Cole	Kindergarten Teacher
Erin	Collins	3rd Grade Teacher
Vanessa	Costa	HS Spanish Teacher/Advisor
Stephanie	Derfeuil	HS French Teacher/Advisor
Amy	Dowden	HS Science Teacher/Advisor
Robert	Drakeford	EC Teacher
Rahul	Dudhat	HS Math Teacher/Advisor
Shirley	Edwards	Receptionist
Elizabeth	Faulkner	Kindergarten Teacher
Rachel	Finkelstein	HS English Teacher/Advisor
Dena	Floyd	Athletics Director, PE/Health Teacher
Rosline	Grant	Admissions Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator
Eric	Hale	3rd Grade Teacher
Aimee	Haygood	HS Math Teacher/Advisor
Alex	Herzing	MS Language Arts Teacher/Advisor
Beth	Hoffman	EC Teaching Assistant
Rachel	Holley	EC Teacher
Marquist	Holman	Custodian
Jamie	Horil	Lunch Coordinator
Ann	Kaiyala	Dir. of Personnel, Summer Wonders, Special Programs, & School Safety
Michele	Kish	Receptionist
Teresa	Klein	MS/HS Art Teacher/Advisor
Stephanie	Knight	EC Teacher
Sarah	Koppelkam	HS English Teacher/Advisor
Deb	Kozlowski	ES Art Teacher
Rachel	Lawrence	HS Math Teacher/Advisor
Rebecca	Lee	HS Spanish Teacher
James	Malone	Facilities Manager
Alexander	Massengale	HS History Teacher/Advisor
Andrew	Massengale	Custodian
Bryan	Matthews	MS PE/Health Teacher and Advisor
Janet	Moody	5th Grade Math/Science Teacher and Advisor
Kimberley	Moody	MS Math Teacher/Advisor
Andrew	Nelson	HS History Teacher/Advisor
Hope	Nolin	4th Grade Teacher

Denise	O'Gorman	MS/HS Science Teacher, Advisor
Jessica	Oliver	Director of Advancement
Kris	Pass	ES Teaching Assistant/Bus Driver
Misty	Peeler	5th Grade English/Social Studies Teacher and Advisor
John	Perschy	Bus Driver
Lori	Phillips	School Nurse
Renee	Powell	ES Teaching Assistant
Julie	Rosen	4th Grade Teacher
Kimberley	Rossi	Business Manager
Veronica	Scotton	ES Teaching Assistant/Bus Driver
John	Sheridan	HS Math Teacher/Advisor
Suzanne	Sikes	HS Science Teacher/Advisor
Diane	Smith	MS French Teacher/Advisor
Cindy	Sperry	Assistant Principal, K-8 Director
Kathleen	St. Lawrence	EC Director
Richie	Temple	HS History Teacher
Rachel	Thomas-Levy	MS/HS Theater Teacher
Anna	Thrower	Registrar/Data Coordinator
Taylor	Transue	1st Grade Teacher
Ursula	Valgus	1st Grade Teacher
Christene	Vaughan	Music Teacher
Robin	Wagoner	6th Grade Humanities Teacher/Advisor
Jessica	Walden-Gray	MS Science Elective Teacher
Beverly	West	2nd Grade Teacher
Katherine	White	MS Spanish Teacher/Advisor
Brittany	Wilson	2nd Grade Teacher
Carmen	Wood	Elementary P.E. Teacher
Elizabeth	Wood	MS Social Studies Teacher/Advisor
Sonja	Younger	MS Science Teacher/Advisor

# Woods New Faculty for School Year 2017-18

What an impressive crew of teachers we have joining us for the upcoming school year! Here's a brief introduction . . .



## **Amber Bates ~ E.C. Teacher**

My name is Amber Bates, and I am excited to return to Woods as a teacher! I graduated from Woods in 2012, and from there I went to Elon University where I majored in Special and Elementary Education. After graduating from Elon in 2016, I spent my first year teaching Kindergarten at Ephesus Elementary School.

This year, I am looking forward to beginning my career as a special education teacher at Woods. My goals for this year are to help my students reach their highest potential and to create a classroom environment where every student feels welcome.

When I am not teaching, I enjoy reading, writing, and traveling. Out of the few places I have been, Krakow, Poland has been my favorite, and I am hoping to return and explore the rest of Europe, and the world, in the future.

I am excited to see what the 2017-2018 school year will bring!



## **Robert Drakeford ~ E.C. Teacher**

Greetings, I am looking forward to being a part of the Wood Charter School community for this upcoming school year. I have seven years of teaching experience, most recently in Charlotte, NC. I am a native of Chapel Hill and am excited about being back in this area to teach. I have a bachelor's degree from Auburn University, and a Master's Degree in Education from The University of Texas at San Antonio. I also enjoy reading, working out and spending time with my family.

My outlook on education is that it is an empowering force that can enable and inspire individuals to do great things. It is my goal to teach with passion and enthusiasm daily, along with helping to facilitate knowledge and growth within our student population.





### **Hope Nolin ~ 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

As a graduate from Elon University, I am absolutely thrilled to be at Woods Charter School this coming year! While North Carolina has been home to me for the past four years, I am originally from Clarendon Hills, Illinois – a small suburb outside of Chicago. I am a huge Cubs fan, an avid coffee drinker, and an animal lover. Also, I'm a triplet! I have a brother and a sister.

I graduated from Elon University in 2017 with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. During my time there, I cultivated my passion for human development and cognition through a minor in psychology. In January 2016, I spent a term abroad in Malawi, Africa. I have been forever changed by my service in Malawi's Namasimba Primary School. Teaching critical literacy skills to 12-year-old boys opened my eyes to a culture of education entirely different from our own. The paradoxes in Malawi are moving: joy versus heartache, abundance versus scarcity. Yet surprisingly, the heart of their educational system, both in its successes and trials, is not entirely unlike that which we experience in the United States. My time in Malawi prepared me to be a teacher that loves selflessly, perseveres boldly, and engages deeply.

Likewise, as an educator I value curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration, and inquiry. My experience in the classroom begins as early as preschool and extends until sixth grade. Last year, I student taught 100+ fifth graders in the Alamance Burlington School System. The privilege of teaching fourth grade at Woods Charter School is truly a dream come true! The K-12 setting is a special place to foster long-term relationships with both students and families. I can't wait to see all the growth and joy that this year brings. Go Wolves!



### **Rachel Thomas-Levy ~ MS/HS Theater**

I am so excited to share my knowledge of and passion for theatre with the students of Woods Charter School. I am a Pittsboro native and '06 Woods alumna: it feels like coming home to join the faculty here.

A year ago, I earned an M.F.A. in Theatre Arts from Towson University, MD. I have five plus years of experience working with non-profit theatre companies in the Asheville area and have worked as an actor, director, deviser, and facilitator. I believe that open, honest collaboration in the classroom (and the rehearsal room) leads to the most empowering and imaginative theatrical experiences.

I am an avid collector of knick-knacks and secondhand objects, and I often use these finds in the classroom as inspiration for sketches, improvisations, and

performances. I look forward to embarking on many creative adventures with the students at Woods Charter School. Cheers!



**Taylor Transue ~ 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

My name is Taylor Transue. I am the mother of two great girls- Ellie and Lucy Poitras. I love being a mom and I love doing lots of activities with my girls. We like to run, ride bikes, swim, play sports, and spend lots of time outside! We have a funny dog named Honey Jane, 6 pet hens, and two pet rabbits. I look forward to sharing funny stories with my class about the antics of our crazy pets!

I have been teaching for a long time! I started out teaching lacrosse and soccer as a coach when I was a freshman at UNC-Chapel Hill. Throughout college, I was a coach and continued to coach a variety of sports and youth activities over the past 23 years. I have taught adults as a personal trainer and I have taught students in elementary, middle, and high school. I have taught at Chapel Hill High, Durham Academy, and Perry Harrison Elementary. I have been both a classroom teacher and a PE teacher. My licensure is in Special Education and general elementary education.

I am excited to join the Woods faculty! The more I learn, the more I know that there is much more to learn! I love the ideas represented in the 21st Century Classroom. I hope to bring a strong sense of collaboration and project based learning into the classroom. I am very excited about learning how other teachers in Woods like to include PBL with curriculum to help students not only stay engaged in their learning, but also to recognize the value of their learning and the real world application that it has for them both in the present and as they consider their future. I whole-heartedly support teaching self-regulation and helping students to see their potential, power, and strengths. I have loved the support and kindness that Woods has already offered to me and I can't wait to extend that same feeling in my classroom.



**Ursula Valgus ~ 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

My educational journey began in the foothills of North Carolina where I was born in Morganton and raised in Hickory. Several of my extended family members were educators and I enjoyed mimicking their profession. During the endless summers, I would transform small patches in the woods or shady spots near the creek into my classroom and recruit my younger siblings and cousins to come and join. Using leftover workbooks from our

elementary school, favorite picture books from my bedroom, and manipulatives collected around the house, we would play school for as long as the "students" were willing or until a game of basketball beckoned.

During my undergraduate experience at UNC-Asheville, I had the opportunity as a scholarship athlete to speak to and meet with students at local elementary schools. During this time with the Bulldog Buddy Program, I mentored a little girl that made a lasting impression as she solidified my desire to pursue a degree in Education. With a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Elementary Education, I began to hone my craft as an elementary classroom teacher in Catawba County Schools while coaching at the high school varsity and club level. Eventually, I moved to Chapel Hill to further my education. While teaching 4th grade in the Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools, I graduated with a Master's in Education in K-12 Literacy from UNC-Chapel Hill, received Licensure as a Reading Specialist, and earned a National Board Certification.

In considering my next endeavor in my professional journey, I envisioned engaging in a vibrant school community where students are active participants in the learning process, parents are partners in their child's educational journey, teachers are professionals afforded the opportunity to engage students in a variety of instructional approaches, and administrators are visionaries who facilitate practices leading to continued growth. I have observed and experienced these characteristics at Woods Charter School and am excited about being an integral part of this dynamic team.



**Carmen Wood ~ ES P.E.**

I have been on quite a journey being led by my heart and my spirit. I graduated from UNC Chapel Hill and shortly after began coaching and substitute teaching at Woods. I have been coaching basketball, volleyball, and recently soccer. Basketball has shown me many places around the United States as well as internationally! It has also allowed me to meet so many wonderful people and create bonds that will last a lifetime.

I am at Woods because it provides an open experience for growth in all areas and for all who come into its atmosphere. Each day I am surrounded by staff who bounce ideas around, students who support one another, and athletes who see sport beyond competition. I want to continue to grow as well as utilize my position as PE teacher to

help my students grow physically, mentally, and socially. My goal is to guide them into being well-rounded individuals for the future.



**Elizabeth Wood ~ 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

It may surprise you to know that I once flew an F-18 Super Hornet jet. No, not really, I just always dreamed of becoming a fighter pilot in the Navy since the first time my father took me to an airshow. I have an adventurous side that propels me to always want to try new things. This drive has allowed me to develop many different passions in life. I believe it is possible to dream big and become passionate about many things along the way.

I grew up in Miami, Florida with my very large Cuban family. Growing up, I developed a passion for cooking, for being the University of Miami's biggest football fan, and for playing soccer. My skills as a soccer player are what took me to Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. There I developed a passion for the outdoors. I fell in love with the mountains where I could go on long hikes, camp, and play beneath waterfalls. I learned how to snowboard and discovered that I had a hidden talent. My hidden talent is what drove me to major in Hospitality Management. I have a knack for planning and organizing things and an overwhelming desire to be hospitable. My career as an event planner allowed me to travel and take on new adventures.

Throughout my travels, I developed a love for history. Considering the fact that I come from a long line of teachers, it seemed inevitable that I would soon change careers. Combined with passion for travel and a love for history, the organizer/planner in me led me into teaching Social Studies. I have been a Middle School teacher for 11 years. In those 11 years, I have developed a passion for photography and art and you may find me doodling from time to time. Perhaps my biggest love and passion has been raising my beautiful 10 year old daughter, Isabel who will be joining me here in this new adventure as well. Here at Woods Charter, I hope to continue to develop more passions in my life and to inspire my students to discover and develop theirs.

## Director of Advancement Position at Woods

Our beloved colleague **Heather Gallagher** has decided to experiment with retirement and other ventures, so she will transition away from Woods in the coming weeks. It is with great gratitude and a lot of love that we send her off. She has served the school with dedication, heart, and humor for fourteen years, most recently as our very successful, record-breaking, putting-the-fun-in-fundraising director of advancement! We wish her the very best!

We feel very fortunate to have **Jessica Oliver** joining us as our next director of advancement. She has been working closely with Heather to ensure a smooth transition. Please see her brief bio below.

### Jessica Oliver



I am a Tar Heel native, born and raised in Wilmington, and a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill. After graduation, I lived in Atlanta, then Denver, until North Carolina called me home in 2008 – this time with my husband and infant daughter in tow. My husband Casey, daughter Wesley, son Mack and dog Turbo live in Briar Chapel. Wesley and Mack are entering their 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade years at Woods. When I am not playing chauffeur to them, I like to fill my free time with travel, hiking, running, cooking (which is why I need to run) and reading.

Professionally, my background is rooted in advertising. I led strategic development and execution for brands such as the Atlanta Hawks, Crocs Footwear, Chipotle Mexican Grill and New Belgium Brewery. Those years were filled with many an NBA game, a closet full of colorful (some say ugly) rubber shoes and more meals of burritos and beer than recommended by the FDA. When we returned to NC, I paused my full-time career, but was fortunate to find fantastically timed part-time roles;

building a successful Stella & Dot jewelry business, expanding The Produce Box in Chapel Hill and Carrboro while launching the company into Pittsboro and most recently, I've been managing marketing for a women's clothing brand, Amaya Textiles.

My interest in education bloomed when my children entered preschool and I was witness to the value of instilling a passion for learning. I served as Board Chair at Aldersgate Church Preschool and as Vice President on the PTA at Perry Harrison School – spearheading fundraising and event planning at both. I am eager to leverage my strengths more fully at something as close to my heart as Woods Charter School. We already felt incredibly fortunate to be a Woods family, and now it is a great honor and wonderful challenge to lead the Foundation fundraising and outreach efforts. I couldn't be more excited to join the team and look forward to helping inspire support for our school!