

Principal's Report

May 21, 2020

Keeping Track of the Weeks

An account of the weeks since school closure began:

March 14 th	Governor Cooper orders the closure of all NC public schools.
March 16 – 20	No school. Teachers preparing. Materials and devices distributed to students.
March 23 rd	Governor Cooper extends school closure to May 15 th .
March 23 – 27	First week of distance learning.
March 30 – Apr. 3	Spring Break as scheduled.
April 6 – present	Distance learning continues . . .
April 24	Governor announces NC public schools will remain closed for the remainder of the school year.

We have completed 38 days of distance learning; we have 12 remaining.

Instruction will continue until Friday, June 5th. On June 8th-9th we will hold student reflection and bringing-closure-to-the-year activities with classes and advisories. (Our calendar has June 9th as our last day of school.)

Update on Maintenance and Capital Projects

We **stripped and waxed** the hallway floors, the tile portion of elementary classrooms, the stairwells, the Great Room, and the tile portion of the gym. Completed 5/21/20.

We completed Phase #3 and 4 of the **LED lighting conversion**. At this point all of the lights in our building have been converted to LEDs, except those in the gym (Phase #5). Phase #3 and #4 completed 5/13/20. We expect a rebate check from Duke Energy of \$7,547 before the end of the fiscal year.

We've completed the installation of the **rooftop solar array** and have passed inspections with Chatham County. We're waiting now for Duke Energy to change our meter from

unidirectional to bidirectional, which we anticipate in the next two weeks. At that point, two amazing things happen:

- 1) we can receive our rebate check of \$75,000 from Duke Energy, and
- 2) we can begin net metering (whereby energy we create offsets the energy we consume).

We completed construction of the **Goliath Table**, a project begun with students as part of our Enrichment program and completed two weeks ago by Jim Malone and me.

Scheduled for this spring - summer:

- painting stairway **handrails**,
- repainting the **gym floor** (two-week process, begins July 1st),
- **carpet cleaning** (summer),
- repair and repaint **wall board in gym** (TBD),
- completing the **XC course revision** (spring),
- **new carpet** installation (after July 1),
- installing some **terracing** and a new access for the **soccer field** (TBD),
- possibly installing second-hand **artificial turf** in one of our outside play areas (TBD).

Small Business Administration (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

On May 13th the SBA issued FAQ #46 related to the good-faith certification of the PPP loan request. This was good news for nonprofits who received loans less than \$2 million.

***Question:** How will SBA review borrowers' required good-faith certification concerning the necessity of their loan request?*

***Answer:** When submitting a PPP application, all borrowers must certify in good faith that "[c]urrent economic uncertainty makes this loan request necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Applicant." SBA, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, has determined that the following safe harbor will apply to SBA's review of PPP loans with respect to this issue: Any borrower that, together with its affiliates, received PPP loans with an original principal amount of less than \$2 million will be deemed to have made the required certification concerning the necessity of the loan request in good faith.*

SBA has determined that this safe harbor is appropriate because borrowers with loans below this threshold are generally less likely to have had access to adequate sources of liquidity in the current economic environment than borrowers that obtained larger loans. This safe harbor will also promote economic certainty as PPP borrowers with more limited resources endeavor to retain and rehire employees. In addition, given the large volume of PPP loans, this approach

will enable SBA to conserve its finite audit resources and focus its reviews on larger loans, where the compliance effort may yield higher returns.

Reminder/background about the SBA PPP:

The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses and non-profits to **keep their workers on the payroll**. The loan will be fully forgiven if the funds are used for **payroll costs, interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities** (due to likely high subscription, at least 75% of the forgiven amount must have been used for payroll). Loan payments will also be deferred for six months. No collateral or personal guarantees are required. Neither the government nor lenders will charge small businesses any fees.

Forgiveness is based on the employer maintaining or quickly rehiring employees and maintaining salary levels. Forgiveness will be reduced if full-time headcount declines, or if salaries and wages decrease. This loan has a maturity of 2 years and an interest rate of 1%.

Board Treasurer Karen Trott and I applied for the SBA PPP loan in the amount of \$255,000, reflecting revenue that we anticipated, but will likely forego, this spring during the closure.

Job Openings

I have issued contracts to all employees for school year 2020-21. At this point we know of only three open positions:

- 1) **School Nurse** (part-time). Lori Phillips has very graciously agreed to stay on as needed through the interim, especially given the health challenges of school next fall, but she has indicated she would like to transition out of her role.

- 2) **School Counselor** (part-time). We anticipate that there will be a lot of work to do in supporting the mental, social, and emotional health of our students next year given the stresses of the pandemic and the financial crisis. We've been very lucky to have Joy Krawczel with us this past year, but it was technically her intern year (though she completed her program early in December), and we've not formally convened a proper search process for the position (until now).

- 3) **Bus Driver** (part-time). We're always looking for trustworthy, focused, and flexible people to help share the load of our bus routes.

Please let me know if you have potential contacts for any of these positions. The job descriptions are listed on our website under Employment. I informed all faculty of these openings on May 19th.

Faculty Survey on Economic Diversity Lottery Proposal

After last month's board meeting, I sent a survey to faculty to gauge their level of support for adding a fifth priority placement in our lottery process for students from families who are considered economically disadvantaged. Twenty-eight faculty members responded.

The survey outline:

Have you read . . .

The FAQ?

The red-lined version of the Admissions Policy?

Overall, I am . . .

In favor of the proposal.

Opposed to the proposal.

My reasoning for the above response is . . .

A thought or concern about this proposal that I'd like to share with the Board is . . .

A question I still have is . . .

26/28 respondents were in favor of the proposal. They cited the importance of diversity in preparing our students for a diverse world. They generally echoed the five reasons delineated in the FAQ.

The two opposed explained their reasoning this way . . .

I don't believe we have the right to prioritize any students because then we are deciding what qualities are more worthy of admission than others. Our lottery should be random without any priorities bestowed on one student over any other.

Since we are a tuition free school, it seems that income would not play a role in whether or not a student would be able to have a chance to come to Woods.

The most common concerns cited were the need for adequate funds and training to properly support students from economically disadvantaged households.

The following are ready to go out to the community if the Board decides to take the next step:

- A letter from the Board Development Subcommittee

- A red-lined version of our Admissions Policy
- An FAQ about the proposal
- A community survey for parents, alums, and high school students

New GA/DPI Requirements in Response to COVID-19

- A 2020-21 calendar revision that accounts for the **five additional remote instruction days** and the **five full additional instructional days** mandated in SB 704.
- A **Remote Instruction Plan** due July 20th to DPI. Required by all PSUs in SB 704.
- A plan, once we receive DPI guidance, for **Summer Jumpstart** possibilities for at-risk students in grades K-4.

At Home Together: Woods Style

A big thank you to everyone who tuned in this past Saturday night for our first all-school virtual community event and auction. We had a lot of fun experimenting with a new form. Details to follow from Jessica Oliver in her Foundation report, but as you'll see, our fun event was also a lucrative one!

Special thanks to . . .

- **Jessica Oliver** for her creative mind and her keen ability to organize and cajole participants, while keeping the work fun for all.
- Parent volunteer **Steven King** who produced the whole show, gave generously of his time at a crunch time for his regular work, and without whom nothing would have worked technologically.
- **Creighton Irons** for composing an original song for our school with student co-composers and student co-musicians/performers.
- **Ella Clarke** for her energetic and colorful raffle basket drawing.
- Playful faculty members **Rahul Dudhat, Vanessa Costa, Katie White, John Sheridan, Aimee Haygood, Taylor Transue, and Eric Hale** for their spirited feuding in our first ever Woods Family Feud.

Woods Graduation 2020

Draft of Plan

Guiding Principles:

1. We really like the traditions surrounding Graduation at Woods, and we'd like to maintain the core elements as much as possible.
 2. We will align with current governmental orders related to group size and social distancing.
 3. We want to find ways to include the three groups that are essential to Graduation: the seniors, the faculty, and the seniors' families and friends.
 4. Events will be video recorded for folks who cannot attend.
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Graduation will take place over **two days**.

Ceremony I: Senior Gathering (assuming group size of 25 allowed)

When: Friday, June 12th, 9:00 a.m.

Who attends: just the seniors (in three waves by advisory groups, with faculty and admin team)

Where: back field of Woods

What: the seniors deliver their speeches to their classmates

Video recorded or livestreamed: video recorded and sent out that afternoon

What do seniors wear: caps, gowns, masks, comfortable shoes

Ceremony II: Graduation

When: Saturday, June 12th, in assigned waves, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Who attends: seniors, faculty, admin team, families, friends

Where: front parking lot and crosswalk of Woods

What: seniors receive their diplomas individually on a stage in front of the school. Families will drive through parking lot to the "pole position" spot with a clear view of the stage. Senior gets out of car, walks across crosswalk, receives diploma on stage, poses for photo, then exits back to car. Family and friends may remain in car – or come out to take a quick photo.

Video recorded or livestreamed: both

What do seniors wear: caps, gowns, masks

Detail of Ceremony II: Launch



"Pole Position" Spot where senior's family parks when it's that senior's time. Senior exits vehicle, crosses crosswalk, receives diploma, gets photo taken, returns to vehicle, exits with family. Next senior vehicle moves into pole position . . .



Stage where seniors will receive diplomas and pose for photo.



Path of vehicle travel.



Faculty lining front sidewalk at social distance. (Sidewalk cracks are 6' apart.)

Assigned Times

Alexandre – Bode	9:00 – 9:15
Carr – Diaz	9:15 – 9:30
Durham – Holder	9:30 – 9:45
Homovich – Karali	9:45 – 10:00
Lanford – Pearson	10:00 – 10:15
Rardin – Stone	10:15 – 10:30
Thompson – Weakley	10:30 – 10:45

Families need not line their vehicles up in perfect alphabetical order. They just need to be on location within their **assigned time window**.

We have a **video** that shows a walk-through of this plan.

8th Grade Ceremony will take place in two parts as well:

Monday, June 8th: Watch party with speeches and slideshow, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 9th: Drive-By Parade, 11:00 a.m.

Calendar Notes:

May

25 Memorial Day, no school

June

4 Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

5 Last day online instruction

8-9 Student Reflection and Bringing-Closure-to-the-Year Activities

8 8th Grade Watch Party

9 8th Grade Drive-By Parade

Final Day of School

10-11 Retrieve Personal Items & Drop Off School Items

12 Senior Gathering, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

13 Graduation, beginning at 9:00 a.m.