WOODS CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD MEETING AGENDA
Thursday, October 16, 2025

1. The Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comment

3. Consent Agenda
    a. Principal's Report
    b. Minutes from September 2025 Meeting

3. Reports & Presentation of Committee Charters
    a. Student Update – Oakes Ulrich
    b. Faculty Update – Rachel Lawrence
    c. Finance Committee Report – Courtney Cabe
    d. Foundation Report – Jessica Oliver
    e. Communications Committee Report – Doreen Messick
    f. Personnel Committee Report – Rachel McInerney
    g. Board Development Report – Charmaine Terregino

4. Business
    Old Business - None
    New Business - None

5. Closed Session (not expected)

6. Adjournment Session
    Action Taken/Voted
    Adjournment

Principal's Report
October 16, 2025

Field Trip to Chesnee



Following the Board's approval at our September meeting of a plan to purchase two used buses for the school, Ann Kaiyala, Jim Malone, and I took a field trip to Chesnee, SC, the home of Carolina Bus Sales and Service, to retrieve one full-size bus and one small bus. The small bus, currently referred to as the Party Bus, a name bestowed by our 1st Graders in Team 146, has already been used by . . . 1) the High School Student Council for their Leadership Training Day at Triangle Training, 2) Middle School Cross Country for an away meet, 3) a Journalism class field trip to Elon University, 4) High School Cross Country for an away meet, and 5) the Varsity Volleyball Team for their Conference Championship game at River Mill (which they won!. I have no doubt that the miniature disco balls suspended from the ceiling were a spirit-boosting factor in their quick three-game victory over Chatham Charter.)

Vaccine Clinic

We had a steady stream of kids and adults at our vaccine clinic on October 14th-15th. Walgreens offered both flu and Covid vaccines. They administered 348 shots:

28	pediatric Covid
125	12+ Covid
40	pediatric flu
150	12+ flu
5	65+ flu

Senior Retreat at Chestnut Ridge

The seniors stole away to the woods of Efland for an overnight retreat at Chestnut Ridge. Thursday's weather was about as friendly as we could ever hope for, and Friday was fairly pleasant as well. The group was kind and inclusive with each other, with lots

of good discussions, planning, playtime, and laughter. The structure of the retreat allowed the seniors to talk and interact with people outside their regular friend groups.

The three officially stated (by me) purposes of the retreat:

- to help the seniors feel even more connected/bonded to each other,
- to help the seniors realize their roles as leaders of the high school,
- to set goals for the remainder of the year.

The goals the seniors identified Thursday morning at the retreat start:

- Connect!
- Take a break from routine.
- Make fun memories.
- Have fun!
- Reflect.
- Set goals.
- Heal.
- Own our senior-ness.
- Be outside.

I think the group had a strong collective sense that we met our goals.

Our rough schedule:

Thursday, October 9th

9:00	Arrive and orient. Review goals. Explain rules/boundaries.
10:00	Moving, Talking, Laughing
	Group initiatives
11:00	Writing from prompts
12:00	Lunch
1:30	S.W.O.T. analysis
3:00	Student-led workshops
6:00	Dinner
7:00	Purpose Work with Purpose Calling Cards
7:30	Campfire, S'mores, Singing, Talking, Star Gazing

Friday, October 10th

8:00	Breakfast
9:00	Morning constitutional
9:30	What's the Vibe?
	If this . . . then what?
11:00	Student-led workshops
12:00	Lunch
1:00	Solo sit

Letter to myself
2:00 Closing ceremony

Title IX Training
Stephanie Klupinski, an attorney with Stella Law, provided a training on Title IX for all faculty on October 7th. The Biden and Trump administrations have had widely varying interpretations of Title IX and have set different priorities for the regulations that stem from the law. It can be tricky to keep track of the changes. I'm grateful for the clear, professional insight provided by Ms. Klupinski and her law partner Lisa Gordon Stella (who has provided this training in the past).

Admissions, School Tours, Lottery Registration, Outreach
Registration for our admissions lottery opened October 15th and will remain open until January 15th. We'll run our lottery on February 2nd (as February 1st is a Sunday).

We have recently posted these tour dates:

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

We are purchasing a list (names and addresses) of families of color who are within a ten-mile radius of Woods and have school-aged children. We will be sending a postcard invitation to these families with an appeal that they attend one of our tours. Admissions Coordinator Roz Grant will also be working with current Woods families to get the word out about our tours.

Walk to School Day
What a turnout for this year's Walk to School Day on October 8th! What a joyful and fun time it was! I'm thankful that our community is one that shows up even with the threat of some rain in the forecast.

Technology, Anxiety, and the Brain
Dr. Mitch Prinstein and Dr. Eva Telzer are co-directors of UNC's Winston Center on Technology and Brain Development, and they will join us at Woods on Monday, October 27th at 7:00 p.m. for a presentation on technology, anxiety, and the brain. They

will present, take Q&A, then we'll have time for breakout groups (for those who want to) to discuss *The Anxious Generation.*

Dr. Prinstein is the Chief Science Officer of the American Psychological Association, the John Van Seters Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and co-director of the Winston Center on Technology and Brain Development.

Dr. Telzer is a Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and co-director of the Winston Center on Technology and Brain Development.

The mission of the Winston Center:

> To create and disseminate knowledge regarding the use of technology and social media on the developing mind and brain. We study positive and detrimental uses of technology on neural, social, behavioral, and psychological outcomes.

Woods Charter School
Board Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2025

Voting members present: Charmaine Terregino, Rachel McInerny, Doreen Messick, Courtney Cabe, Alex Protzman, Michelle Pearlstein
Non-voting members present: Rachel Lawrence (Faculty Representative), Oakes Ulrich (Student Representative), and Cotton Bryan (Principal)
Absent voting members: Amy Garrett
Non-voting members not present: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm and was held in person, with guests having the option to watch via Zoom.

- The Pledge of Allegiance
- Public Comment: None
- Norms reiterated
- Consent Agenda: No Changes

Principal's report *Cotton Bryan*	Principal report highlights: • Reviewed new faculty and staff for this upcoming year • Reviewed Admin Team Norms • Faculty Orientation included Youth Mental Health First Aid training • Details to be discussed regarding new buses as well as Policy update regarding absenteeism in New Business • Update regarding solar array operations and maintenance due to collapse of company ESL. Cotton will explore new options for O&M • Presented bios for all new faculty The full Principal's Report can be found on the school website in the board meeting packet.
Minutes from June Meeting	Additional Comments: None
Action Taken	A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Alex Protzman, was seconded by Rachel McInerney, and was unanimously approved by all present voting board members.

- Reports

Student Update *Oakes Ulrich*	Oakes Ulrich updates: • Seniors are starting up with applications with a variety of presentations from colleges and scholarship deadlines • Wide variety of clubs represented at the club fair • Freshman getting adjusted to demands of high school • Sophomores in full swing, involved with Two-Step Tuesday, and upcoming overnight trip to Jamestown • Juniors working hard with AP classes and looking forward to

	Tremont trip The full Student Report can be found on the school website in the board meeting packet.
Faculty Update *Rachel Lawrence*	Rachel Lawrence shared updates • Many events have occurred including New Student welcome, High School Club Fair • Elementary is using Mystery Science curriculum to unify the science curriculum • High School biology working on hands-on projects • AP statistics working on bungee project. • Reviewed a plethora of professional development experiences this past summer. The full Teacher Report can be found on the school website in the board meeting packet.
Finance Committee *Courtney Cabe*	Courtney Cabe shared budget, revenue, and expenses for August, 2025. Highlights include: • Overall financial standing is good • Have not received local county revenue yet • Reviewed current holdings • Reviewed Financial Committee annual goals for 2025-2026 The full Finance Committee Report can be found on the school website in the board meeting packet.
Foundation Report *Cotton Bryan for Jessica Oliver*	Cotton Bryan for Jessica Oliver discussed events and financial summary including: • Foundation has raised approximately $63K towards Annual Fund as of September, 2025. • Goal for this year is $545K • Family Ambassador changes with more batch pairings with 4 total ambassadors. • Parents' Welcome Reception held at Woods this year • All School Campout planned for Sept 27. • Reviewed current sponsorships The full Foundation Report can be found on the school website in the board meeting packet.

Communications
Doreen Messick
	• Doreen Messick reviewed preliminary Communication Goals for this upcoming year.
	  ○ Establish norms for Board communications
	  ○ Review all school communications and identify areas of potential improvement
	  ○ Administer and analyze year-end Community Survey
	
	No written report.

Personnel *Rachel McInerney*	• Rachel McInerney reviewed goals for Personnel Committee o Refine HOS survey o Evaluate use of Infinite Campus for deploying HOS survey o Explore personnel policy with HOS and Board committee No written report.
Board Development *Charmaine Terregino*	• Charmaine Terregino reviewed topics for New Business o Revise Technology usage section of Handbook o Recruit for new Board Members for 2026-27 o Reviewed goals for upcoming year No written report.

- Old Business:

	• None

- New Business:

Principal's Goals 2025-2026	• Cotton Bryan presented Principal's Goals for 2025-2026
Action Taken	A motion to approve the Principal's Goals for 2025-206 was made by Rachel McInerney, seconded by Alex Protzman and unanimously approved by all present voting members.
Cell Phone Policy Update	• Per Session Law 2025-38/House Bill 959, a new cell policy was presented to the Board • Two adjustments were made to the language for General Restrictions (to use the word 'backpacks' and Exceptions to include language allowing HS students to use personal wireless communication devices during lunch.
Action Taken	A motion to approve the Personal Wireless Coummunication Device Policy was made by Alex Protzman and seconded by Courtney Cabe and unamimously approved by all present voting members.
Attendance Policy Revision	• Our current policy states that a student who accrues twenty or more absences including whole period absences, tardy absences and early dismissal absences (excused and excused combined) per academic year in a high school course will lose credit for the course unless granted a waiver by admin team. • NC DPI has adopted the following new language "A student may no fail a course based solely on attendance"

Action Taken	A motion to strike all references in the current Handbook that yield a failing grade based solely on absences was made by Doreen Messick, seconded by Alex Protzman and unanimously approved by all present voting members
Bus Purchase Proposal	Cotton Bryan requested Board approval to pursue a Purchase Agreement with Carolina Bus for the purchase of 2 new buses for the school (one 78 passenger and one 14 passenger). Details of the purchase agreement were reviewed by all present Board members .
	A motion to approve the Purchasing Agreement with Carolina Bus Sales dated 9/11/2025 presented by Cotton Bryan was made by Alex Protzman and seconded by Rachel McInerney and unanimously approved by all present voting members.

Closed Session

None	None

- Adjournment Session

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:05 pm by Michelle Pearlstein, was seconded by Alex Protzman, and was unanimously approved by all present voting board members.

Student Report
October 16, 2025

Good evening board,

The weather's finally getting colder, which means most people have found a general routine. It's been somewhat like a limbo period, with the buzz from the start of the new year fading off, no major tests like midterms to worry about for quite a while, and not many school events being conducted yet. However, we do have a lot of events to look forward to.

Next Friday, BIPOC plans to have the Baila De La Gente, a latin themed dance, which is sure to raise student's spirits. Tickets are only $5 too, so hopefully we'll get a good turnout this year. Student Council has also announced a date for homecoming (Dec. 6th), which a lot of students are looking forward to this year. Last year was a great success, so there seems to be a lot of excitement for this year.

Finally, we also plan to hold several Halloween events. October 30th, We hope to hold a Halloween Movie Night where we will have a group viewing of Beetle Juice. At the event, Student Council has planned face paint, bingo, and other fun activities like guessing how many jelly beans are in a jar. The week leading up to the event, advisories will be in heated competition facing each other in a door decorating contest, where Mr. Nelson will attempt to keep the title of the best door while other advisors try to take the spot from him. Of course, we will also hold our annual Harvest Parade, where students of all ages will dress up, and after we watch the elementary kids parade around the school the high schoolers will have some advisory trick-or-treating time.

Athletics have also been a huge success, with students getting progressively more involved at games. Volleyball just had their first state championship game, where they won, progressing on to the next round. Hopefully we'll have tournament winners next year. The soccer team also will be finishing their season soon, so their state tournament is something to look forward to. I'm sure new initiatives, like the new "Hype Committee" club, are going to create lots of student support for the athletic teams in the coming month.

Taking a break from our future plans, Student Council also had a great retreat at the Triangle Training center. We set out some basic rules for our meetings, and finished a basic plan for the year where we hope to try and experiment with some new events. Now for our messages from our different grade's representatives.

As October has come by, the freshman class has settled into their new classes well. Kids are finally getting used to the routine and have improved greatly at time management, which was a problem at the start of the year. As big tests have come, some students have struggled, giving them a new sense of what the expectations are in high school. Students are excited about upcoming trips such as playmakers (which was today), and are eagerly awaiting more information on the upcoming overnight class trip. Advisories have created good relationships with each other with monthly Thursday breakfasts, and Derfeuil's advisory has gotten to know

the younger students in the elementary wing through visits. Also, students are excited about school and their extracurriculars, with state playoffs coming quickly, and competitions for clubs arising every weekend. Overall the freshmen are great and are ready for the rest of the upcoming school year.

It has been a successful month for the Sophomore class. We have a lot to look forward to , such as our overnight trip to Williamsburg and Grandparents Day. However, many students are frustrated that a test has been scheduled on Grandparent's Day, which limits the time they can spend with their families. Civics is still a highlight of many student's days, with Sophomore Sachi Oza saying, "Trivia in Civics class has been really fun to work in a team and compete against each other!" Other Sophomores say that clubs have been very successful so far this year. Founder and President of Art Club, Claire Prehodka is very involved with clubs at Woods such as, MUN, Ethics Bowl, Debate, Science Olympiad, and Dungeons and Dragons! Other sophomores are similar, with high participation in clubs. In conclusion, the sophomore class are doing well, and are being very active in the Woods community.

The junior class is enjoying a hard-working October. With varying degrees of preparation, almost all 11th grade students took the PSAT on Tuesday. The junior class has been engaged in academic rigor inside and outside of our usual classes. With the announcements of Student Council Halloween festivities, many are also excitedly preparing their costumes, plans, and advisory doors accordingly. Many of the student council events are sparking discussion and fun among the student body. Inside our many different classes, October provides a period for consistent workflow and learning to take place. As we are settled into the flow of the year, we can effectively work on our many assignments and studying. We can be certain that the junior year will continue to work hard on their classes and studies.

As for seniors, they're surviving, but it's been rough for a lot of them. Just yesterday, UNC Chapel Hill's early application closed, which I would estimate around 30 kids applied for. This deadline got a lot of mixed reactions, with many happy that they got it over with, but a lot of others nervous about their result. One thing's certain, though: it's definitely not the last deadline they'll have. Most universities' early application deadline is either November 1st or 2nd, so there's no doubt that the seniors will be busy with other applications. For UNC early applicants, they'll get their results back December 15th, and other early applications are somewhat similar. Then, there's regular decision applications that are due in December or January, which are also on the back of the senior's minds. Overall, the seniors have a lot on our plates, but the teachers have been incredibly supportive through it all. Not only are they helping up without applications and essays, but many teachers have started assigning less homework in an attempt to reduce student's stress.

In conclusion, the student body's getting into their rhythm. The weather's getting colder, but the students are finally coming out of their summer hibernation. Events are starting to pick up, with some great things planned for the coming weeks, and not many complaints can be made at the moment. As always, any board member is invited to email any questions to stuco@woodscharter.org.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: OCTOBER 2025

NEW PARENTS WELCOME RECEPTION

We held our Welcome Reception at school on September 17th, and despite my worries, having it at school did not detract from the warmth of the event! Everyone seemed to mingle nicely and I loved how proactive our faculty, Senior Sibs and Foundation board members were in engaging with our guests. Our speakers all received a really positive response and I felt like we captured what makes Woods Woods in an authentic way.

CAMPOUT

Due to the forecast, we canceled the Campout. Unfortunately, the forecast did not hold and we could have at least had a cookout.

Our first campout was in 2017, and in the past nine years, we have canceled it once for Covid, two times for weather and switched it to a cookout once due to a wet field. However, we've only held the full campout once in the past four years, so it feels like it has been canceled a lot and I understand some parents' frustrations with us not having a rain date.

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

Our Fifth Annual Walk to School Day was last Wednesday! We had a huge crowd, despite the threat rain. It was a joyous occasion, as always, and one that I think both young and old find special.

ANNUAL FUND WEEK & GRANDPARENTS DAY

Annual Fund Week is upon us! We've mailed letters to all of our school families, sent out a video, and are promoting it each day online and in person, but it feels a bit slow this year. As of Wednesday night, we have received $30K in donations this week from our school families and faculty. Last year, this same group donated $60K for the week (not including designated donations or Grandparents' Day support). I am hearing lots of chatter about Cotton's green hair, so I am hoping to see many more of our families donate Thursday and Friday. Right now, only 30% of our school families have donated or pledged – we have a long way to go to get to 85% and green hair!

On the other hand, our grandparents and special friends are showing up on Friday in robust numbers! We have 275 rsvp's as opposed to 231 last year. It will be a packed house! Our guests will start arriving at 8:30 on Friday, with the program beginning at 9. We will Facebook livestream the first half hour of the morning, which will include three music performances, and Cotton and myself both speaking. I am looking forward to this super sweet day.

RESTAURANT NIGHTS

Our first restaurant night of the year was September 29th at Guanajuato Mexican Restaurant. I have not heard what we earned for the night (though I am not expecting much as it was 5% of sales), but it was fun to see lots of Woods families there!

Our next one is in Durham, at Tomato Jake's on October 23rd, from 4-9pm. They'll donate 20% of sales, both in store and takeout.

INTO THE WOODS 5K

Mark your calendars for this year's Into the Woods 5K, it will be the morning of Saturday, December 6th. We'll start pushing messaging out about it in the next two weeks!

2025-26 EVENTS

SEPTEMEBER 17	NEW PARENTS WELCOME RECEPTION
SEPTEMBER 27	ALL SCHOOL CAMPOUT
OCTOBER 8	WALK TO SCHOOL DAY
OCTOBER 13-17	ANNUAL FUND WEEK
OCTOBER 17	GRANDPARENTS & SPECIAL FRIENDS DAY
DECEMBER 6	INTO THE WOODS 5K
DECEMBER 11	McINTYRE'S BOOKS SHOP-IN DAY
MARCH TBD	BOOK FAIR
APRIL 17	BENEFIT AUCTION

2025-26 GRANTS TO WCS

Individual Teacher, Director & Dept Support	Up to $20,000.00
Faculty Appreciation Events	Up to $9,000.00
Curricular Materials	$3,969.33
Student Consumables	$21,826.17
Professional Development	$5,231.30

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

I'm pleased to report that the audit for 2024 has been completed successfully, with no issues or concerns noted. I've approved the draft and expect the final copy soon.

As of 09/30/25:

Fidelity Bank Checking: $271,785 ($107,846 is designated)

Treasury Bond: $101,507

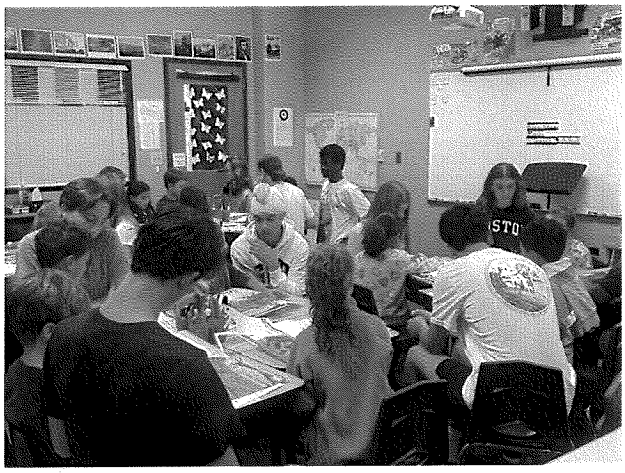
Woods Endowment: $83,181

LPL Financial: $55

October 2025 Faculty Board Report

Prepared by Rachel Lawrence, October 16, 2025

The high school French 2 and French 3 classes are writing letters to their pen pals in French. They will receive their own letters in November and then we will have a Zoom meeting with our French mates in December.



Ms. Derfeuil's 9th grade advisory visited Ms. West's 2nd graders for the second time this year. They read newspapers with their buddies and quizzed them on the content.

The Ronald McDonald House Club will make dinner for 50 people at the Ronald McDonald House of Chapel Hill on October 18. Six members of the club will prepare a taco dinner on site for the residents of the house.



We had our annual Flu and Covid shot clinic! Special thanks to Kimberly Houston for organizing this important event, and Woods Parent/Grandparent super star team Kristina Miles and Kathy Krupp for implementing this clinic!

7th grade science has been crafting props and developing skits to represent different parts of cells. Right now, there is a mini-kitchen made out of scrap cardboard complete with a sink and a microwave hood representing the complex inner workings of cellular machinery. A spiderweb cytoskeleton is in the corner near a shield representing a cell wall. 7th graders will be acting the functions cell parts this week. Eighth graders have been modeling atoms made of pompom subatomic particles and have been investigating the properties of minerals made from different elements and compounds.

The Science department has been busy with professional development.

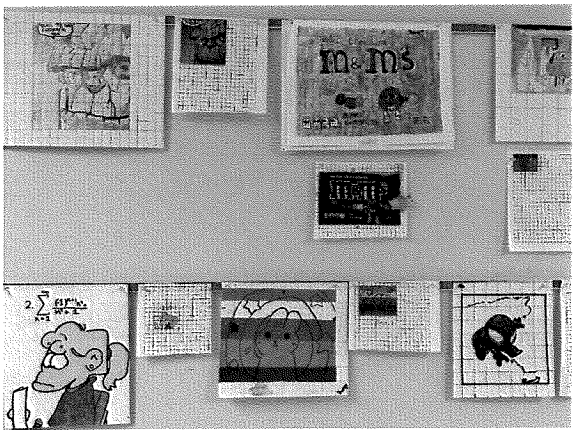
Ms. Moody, Ms. O'Gorman, and Ms. Walden-Gray attended the 2025 NC Outdoor Classroom Symposium on Monday 10/13 at the NC Botanical Garden. Ms. Walden-Gray here reporting - I was especially inspired by my sessions with folks from the NC Department of Environmental Quality, the NC Geological Survey, and the Durham County Soil and Water Conservation District. At a charter school, it's on individual teachers to learn about and connect with our

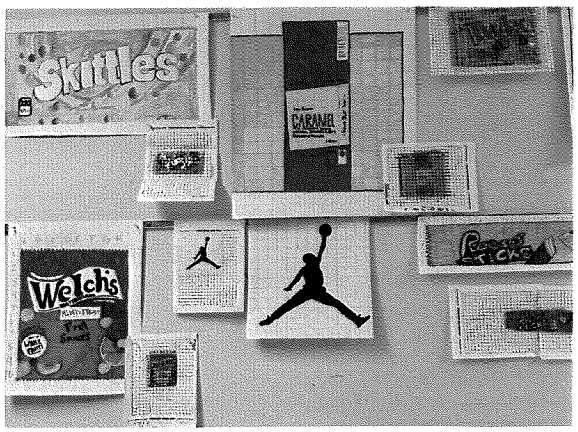
county and state level resources. The education professionals at the state and county level are incredible resources and I'd like to use them more often.

Ms. O'Gorman, Mr. Chetwynd, Ms. Schulman, and Ms. Walden-Gray are participating in the Sustained Science and Engineering Practices training at NC State offered by The Science House. In 2023, NC DPI introduced new science standards for all grades that integrate the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices into the NC Standards. This training has us collaborating with teachers from across the state over the course of three in-person days and monthly online sessions to learn how to best incorporate the new standards into our classes. This aligns with our goal of intentionally vertically aligning science instruction in grades 5-12 at Woods as we adjust to the new standards.

The 3rd & 4th graders are joining with the 5/6 and 7/8 choruses and the high school band to perform for Grandparents Day tomorrow. Along with the a parade of kindergarteners, 1st graders, and 2nd graders, nearly 250 Woods students will be taking the stage to perform "Good Things Grow." The song will feature set pieces created by Ms Ashley's art classes and maneuvered by Ms Knight-Pass' Theater 1 students. The audience is reserved for grandparents, but we will reprise the performance as a part of our winter concert on December 16.

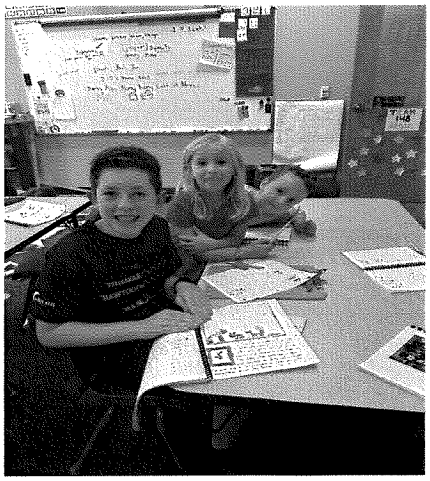
Ms Wilson and Ms Moody's math classes just finished a fun scale project to end their first unit on Scale Drawings! Students enlarged a comic, logo or candy wrapper using various scale factors:







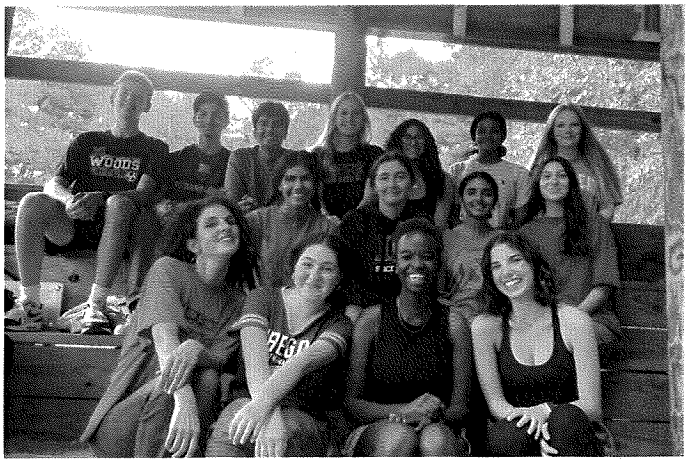




Creative Writing II students, who are all 7th graders this semester, recently visited their Little Buddies in Ms. Transue's class. After Big Buddies shared a bit about the characters they're writing about in their children's books, their Little Buddies then drew these characters. They did a great job & many of the Big Buddies drew right along with them, too! Some of these 7th graders spent their first grade year with Ms. Transue, so when she pulled out their class book full of what they'd written when they were in first grade, that was a special treat for all of us. It was fun to take a trip down memory lane and what a full circle moment it was for some of these current 7th graders to now be sitting in that same room – Room (& Team!) 148 – writing again…but now with her current first graders. Eventually, Creative Writing students will share the children's books they're creating with their Little Buddies. We're excited!

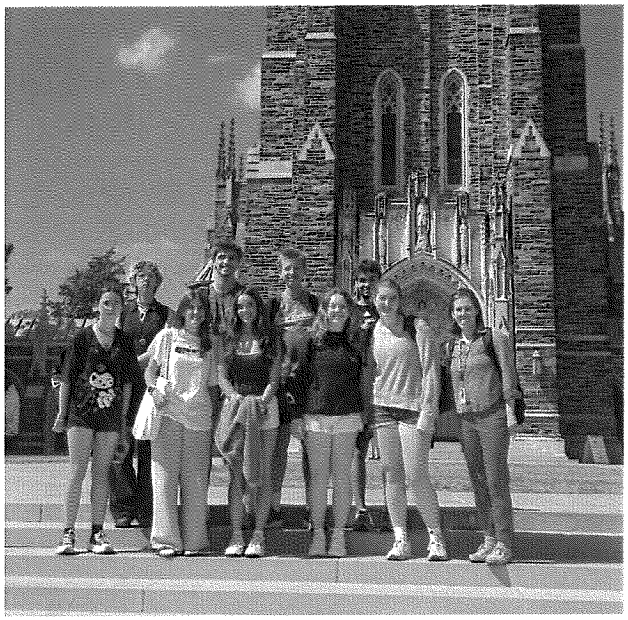


Sra. Costa's Honors Spanish 4 class just finished a unit on Legends & Folklore of Latin American countries. After reading and analysing the work of Nicaraguan poet, Rubén Darío, the students imitated his style with their own versions of creation stories, from swans to vultures, slugs to snails,hippopotamus to seal and many others. Cuentos de nacimientos = Creation stories in Spanish.



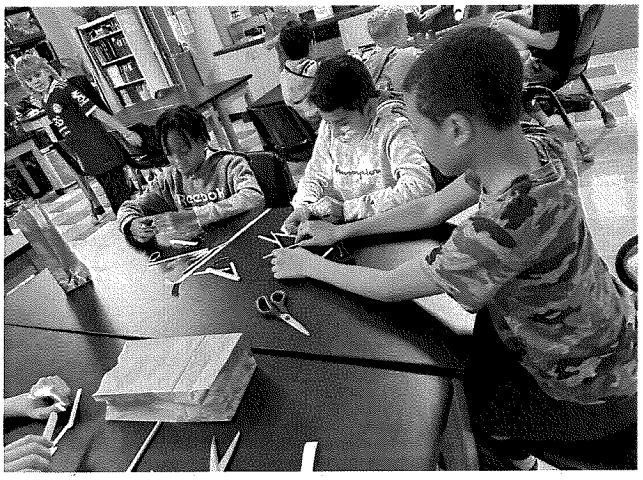
The BIPOC Student Union had an in-house field trip where the students and Ms. Costa did some teambuilding and event planning for the year. They plan to hold one cultural event per trimester - the Latin dance next Friday as a culmination of Hispanic Heritage Month. They have already begun reaching out to prospective guest speakers for Woods' annual MLK Day Celebration, and in the Spring, plan to host another school-wide Ubuntu community dinner with a twist. Stay tuned!

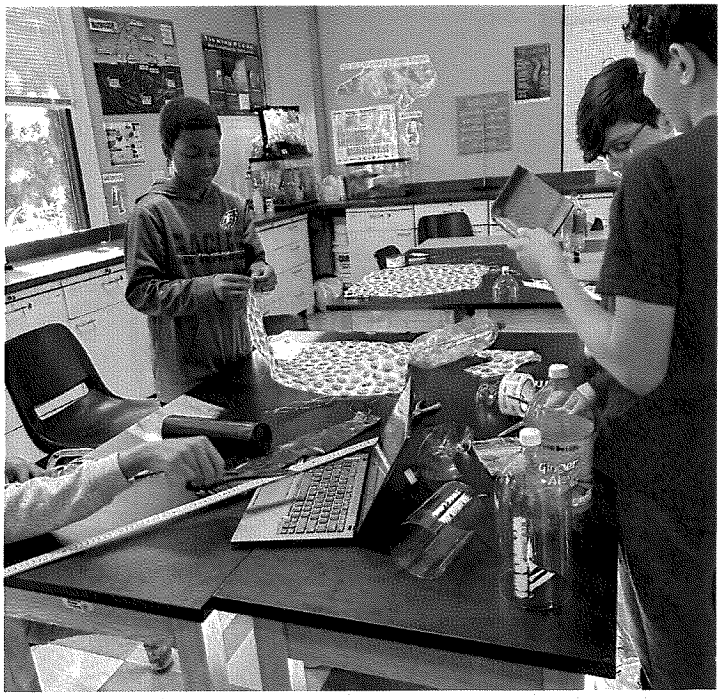
Back in September, AP Research took a field trip to Duke University's Perkins Library. Students enjoyed touring the library and finding numerous sources in the stacks and via online databases for their individual research projects.





Ms. Dowden's middle school science and engineering students have been working hard on projects this week. 5th and 6th grade made mini marshmallow catapults while 7th and 8th grade is designing and building bottle rockets.





WCS Board Meeting Sign-In

Date: October 16, 2025

Name (please print)

Jessica Oliver