

WCS Educational Philosophy

Woods Charter School strives to build a community where long-term relationships between students, teachers and parents enhance the learning process. We create an environment where each student is known well by his or her teachers and peers and is encouraged and challenged as an individual. Within our small, safe and friendly learning community, we expect standards of conduct appropriate for a serious academic environment where honesty, civility and mutual respect are the rule, not the exception. Beyond academics, we strive to promote emotional and physical health, develop stellar character, and instill the highest interpersonal values.

The Woods educational philosophy intends to promote a strong sense of personal responsibility in each student that will help prepare him or her for high school graduation, for college and university education, and for life. As our students progress from Kindergarten through 12th grade, we strive to enable each student to maximize his or her own potential through an academic program which becomes gradually more rigorous and in which each student is supported and challenged as an individual.

Woods Charter School utilizes a unique blend of principles built on the three programs of academic study that make up the Woods curriculum: the new NC Standard Course of Study (Grades K-12), The Core Knowledge Program (Grades K-8) and the Advanced Placement Program (Grades 9-12). In the elementary grades (K-4), the focus is on instilling self-esteem, teaching appropriate social skills and building a core knowledge of fundamental facts and concepts across all subjects of the curriculum.

In the middle school (5-8), our students learn to utilize that knowledge by mastering the core communication and analytical skills of reading, writing and basic math. The emphasis across the board is on mastering the fundamental knowledge and skills shared by educated individuals in our society – thereby providing a common basis for understanding and communication, as well as a foundation for developing the unique abilities and ideas of the individual student.

The high school grades (9-12) build upon knowledge and skills learned in the elementary and middle schools. The student's focus shifts to practicing advanced analytical thinking and effective communication in all subjects of the curriculum. Students are inspired to explore the relevance and connectivity of the material they have learned, and encouraged to pursue independent inquiries and projects. Our high school curriculum is intended to prepare our students to be critical thinkers, to succeed in advanced academic study, to be responsible citizens, and to pursue life-long learning.

- ❖ We believe **students** learn best when they:
 - Are in small classes
 - Feel safe in a nurturing environment;
 - Are known well and respected by their teachers and peers;
 - Are challenged by high expectations;
 - Receive assignments and homework that are challenging, relevant, and in an appropriate amount for the age of the student; and,
 - Are encouraged to pursue a healthy range of activities outside the classroom.

- ❖ We believe **teachers** teach best when they:
 - Are empowered and trusted;
 - Are respected and supported throughout the school community;
 - Have the opportunity to influence the curriculum;
 - Know and respect their students;
 - Communicate and partner with parents; and,
 - Are free to explore different teaching methodologies.

- ❖ We believe **parents** support the education and development of students best when they:
 - Share the school's mission to promote emotional and physical health, develop stellar character and instill the highest interpersonal values;
 - Support the pursuit of academic excellence and ensure that their student arrives at school each day fit and ready to learn.
 - Communicate regularly and respectfully with their student and their student's teachers;
 - Seek to resolve any school problems by working respectfully with teachers and administrators with the goal of maintaining the school's appropriate authority with students; and
 - Have the opportunity to participate in school activities, influence school policies, and be active partners in the Woods community.

We believe that Woods Charter School is enhanced by the diversity of its students, teachers and parents and that our community is strengthened by embracing and encouraging each individual within our community.