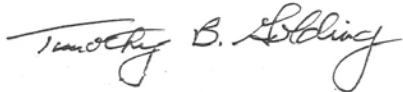


## FOREWORD

The Wooster School Parent Handbook contains important information, much of which will answer many of the questions you have about the policies and guidelines that govern the daily operation of the school. The contents of the handbook are carefully written and designed to help us sustain and promote the School's mission and philosophy. Handbooks are not static documents; therefore, additions and revisions are usually found in each edition. I look forward to sharing the 2008-2009 school year with you and your children.

Sincerely,



Tim Golding  
Headmaster

## THE MISSION OF WOOSTER SCHOOL

Wooster's mission is to maintain a school for the intellectual, spiritual, ethical, aesthetic, and physical development of boys and girls of diverse backgrounds. Since its founding it has been guided by four cardinal principles of Religion, Intellectual Excellence, Simplicity, and Hard Work. We believe that racial, social, economic, cultural, and religious diversity in the student body, staff, and Board of Trustees is central to the school's educational mission and values.

## WOOSTER SCHOOL PRAYER

O God, you have given us every good gift. We thank you for the bounty of your Creation, your teachings through the ages, the love of family and friends, and the goodly heritage of this school. Bless us we pray, in our work and in our play; make us gentle, generous, truthful, kind, and brave; keep us in purity of heart; and let the life of our school go on from strength to strength and have its place and meaning in your Kingdom. Amen.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Wooster School admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national, and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## All School Information

Allergies (See "Health") .....	11
Athletic Trainer .....	5
Attendance .....	5
Chapel.....	6
Class Placement.....	6
Communication from the School to Families .....	7
Communication of your concerns to the School.....	7
Custody Issues.....	8
Damages .....	8
Delays and Cancellations .....	8
Decision-Making at Wooster .....	8
English for Speakers of Others Languages ("ESOL").....	8
Fund Raising.....	9
Gender Equity.....	9
Grounds .....	9
Health (including Serious Allergies) .....	9
Homework.....	12
Honor Code.....	4
Learning Assistance Program.....	13
Library.....	16
Lunch.....	17
Mission Statement (see "Foreword") .....	1
Music Lessons .....	17
Parking, Driving & Idling.....	17
Parents' Association.....	17
Pets.....	18
Philosophy .....	4
Prayer.....	1
Report concerning Asbestos Inspection .....	18
Self-help.....	18
Sexual Harassment.....	18
Snow Days (see "Delays and Cancellations") .....	8
Standardized Testing .....	19
Tobacco.....	19
Transportation.....	19
Volunteer Driver Agreement for Parents.....	20

## Lower School Information

Arrival and Dismissal .....	21
Attire and Personal Appearance .....	21
Birthday Parties and Other Social Gatherings.....	22
Disciplinary Action .....	21
Extended Day.....	23
Homework.....	23
Field Trips.....	23
Peer Relations and the Social Curriculum.....	23

Playground.....	24
Progress Reports and Parent Conferences.....	24
Snacks .....	24
Weekly Chatter .....	24
Winston Hall.....	25

**Middle School Information**

Advisor System.....	26
Arrival and Dismissal .....	26
Athletics.....	26
Birthday Parties and Other Social Gatherings .....	26
Extended Day.....	26
Parent Responsibilities Re: Social Gatherings .....	27
Reports and Conferences.....	27
Saturday Programs and Commitments .....	27

**Upper School Information**

Advisor System.....	28
Arrival and Dismissal .....	28
Athletics.....	28
College Guidance.....	28
Parent Responsibilities Re: Social Gatherings .....	29
Reports and Conferences.....	29
Saturday Programs and Commitments .....	29

**Contact Information .....30**

Note that this Parent Handbook is intended as an addendum to the Student Handbook which contains the rules and expectations pertaining to all Wooster students. The Parent Handbook contains additional information of particular relevance to parents.

## **WOOSTER'S PHILOSOPHY**

Wooster students are rigorously taught in a liberal arts tradition. The learning of basic skills and techniques --- reading, writing, computing --- leads to acquired knowledge and understanding in both science and the arts and eventually should lead to the exercising of a balanced judgment.

Because education takes place at all times, at work and at play, with teachers and with students, Wooster tries not to be an exclusive school but an inclusive school and to use diversity as a means of achieving a sense of genuine community.

Individual growth seldom takes place outside a social context, and so the school puts what it believes to be proper emphasis on the life of the community as well as of the individual student. For this reason, a Self-help system, an honor code, and student responsibility for many aspects of discipline have been a part of Wooster's traditions ever since its founding.

Wooster believes that education in the truest sense is moral as well as intellectual. Therefore, the school's diversity also reflects a deeply religious conviction that there is value and dignity in the individual because all of us are children of God. Such a belief can be narrow and parochial or boundless and liberating. Wooster School believes that its faith is of the latter persuasion. We try to express this faith through our actions, seeing as the most important expression of our religious heritage our Self-help system, racial diversity, and our attempts when dealing with people to temper justice with mercy, to revere patience, and to put the individual ahead of the institution whenever possible.

Finally, but not incidentally, Wooster School seriously tries not to take itself too seriously, tries to remember that laughter is a uniquely human gift, and tries to teach young people to gain perspective by developing the ability to laugh at themselves.

Such has been and is now the essential philosophy of this school.

## **THE HONOR CODE**

All faculty, staff, students, and parents are expected to contribute to maintaining an atmosphere of respect, trust, and honor at Wooster. The Honor Code is predicated on the assumption that all members of the Wooster Community are honorable and have the right to be trusted. As such, each member of the community is expected to act honorably in all of his or her relationships with other people. The Honor Code states:

- I will tell the truth and not mislead others. I will not lie.
- I will ensure that the work I submit will be my own, citing sources of information I use, and I will neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance in my academic work. I will not cheat.
- I will demonstrate respect for all people through my words and actions. I will not harass or belittle others.
- I will respect the property of this community and of those in the community and ensure that it remains safe for their use. I will neither steal nor vandalize.
- I will actively support the community of trust embodied in this Honor Code. I will not condone dishonesty. I will not condone the disregarding of the Honor Code by other members of the Wooster community.

Teachers may request a signed honor pledge at the end of quizzes, tests, and examinations as follows: "I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this exam." (We are somewhat indebted to the University of Virginia honor system for both the concept and the language.) An oral pledge may be requested of students in the primary grades (K-2) during times of assessment.

## ALL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### **ATHLETIC TRAINER**

The Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) is responsible for the prevention, recognition, care, evaluation, treatment, education, and reconditioning of all athletic injuries that result from athletic participation at Wooster School. When your child visits the doctor for an athletically-related injury, a doctor's note must be supplied to the ATC stating the diagnosis and prognosis of the injury in order to return to play. If a student athlete is disqualified from competing/practicing by a doctor, that same doctor must also provide written authorization for that student athlete to resume competition or practice. This will allow a clear line of communication among the doctor, the family, and the ATC.

Because of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) the ATC is now required to get authorization from the parent/guardian prior to contacting the physician about a student-athlete's injury/illness. The ATC is available throughout the day for rehabilitation when not teaching. Prior to the start of practices and games, students whose needs are more basic will be treated first followed by students whose needs require more attention.

If a student athlete is injured away from Wooster School, please leave a message on the athletic trainer's phone (203-830-3994) regarding the nature and cause of the injury. For more information please visit the athletic trainer's website at [www.woosternet.org](http://www.woosternet.org)

### **ATTENDANCE (The "85% Rule")**

Regular attendance is essential for consistent academic and social development. The flow of classroom and social experiences builds from day to day and cannot be replaced. Absences also affect other students as the activity of the other members of a student's class, team, or project group often depends upon collaboration with the student.

In the Middle and Upper Schools, a student must attend at least 85% of the classes in an academic subject to earn credit for that course; in the Lower School a student must attend at least 85% of the school days to earn promotion to the next grade level. Wooster defines that number as no more than 24 absences from a year-long Middle or Upper School course or from a Lower School grade level. Middle and Upper School classes of duration less than a year require no more than 12 absences from a semester course, no more than 8 absences from a trimester course or activity, and no more than 1 absence from a once-per-week trimester art class to earn credit.

Wooster recognizes and values the religious diversity of its student body. It supports the religious observance of all faiths. Any student may miss any number of class days for religious observance with no penalty. Please inform your child's Division Head if any days of absence are due to religious observance.

Absences due to college visits, non-school vacations, optional school-sponsored activities, and illness all count toward the total number of allowed absences.

If a student must be absent from school for more than a single day for a family trip, college visit, or other anticipated absence, that student must submit a [Planned Extended Absence Notification Form](#) to his or her advisor (or Lower School classroom teacher) with the appropriate signatures **before** the absence. These forms are available from the divisional offices or from <http://www.woosternet.org> under *General Documents*.

The intention of the attendance rule is to minimize scattered absences due to appointments, mild illness, and other essentially optional choices to miss school. It is not the intention of the rule to penalize a student who experiences a major illness or other reason to miss multiple days of school. Families may submit a written appeal to the relevant Division Head if they believe circumstances indicate an exception to the attendance rule should be made. The Headmaster will make the final decision regarding the attendance rule.

Students who exceed these parameters, and who have not applied for and been granted an exemption, will forfeit their opportunity to earn credit for the course or activity. In the event that such credit is necessary for promotion to the next grade or for graduation, the student will be required to retake the course or receive tutoring over the summer to fulfill the obligation. Such arrangement will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Division Head in consultation with the Director of Studies and the relevant Department Head.

Students who are absent for all or part of the class day for reasons other than prescheduled medical appointments may not participate in sports, drama, the Academic Bowl, or any other extracurricular Wooster activity occurring that day without explicit permission from the Dean of the relevant division (or the Head of Lower School in the Lower School) and, when athletics are involved, the Director of Athletics.

Students who leave school before the end of the school day **MUST** sign out or be signed out and the circumstances of their leaving must be communicated to the appropriate divisional office **BEFORE** leaving campus. Students are not permitted regularly to leave required after-school activities early for a non-Wooster obligation, with the exception of religious education classes.

All lower school students are expected to attend the lower school concerts in January and May. Attendance during work days is a requirement of middle and upper school students and is viewed as a commitment to the Wooster educational process. Finally, all students in grades six through twelve are expected to attend graduation.

**Please report absences by telephoning the appropriate divisional office before 9:00 am.** Once students have arrived at school, they may not leave unless excused from the school.

### **CHAPEL**

The Chapel experience is a key component of life at Wooster. All students participate weekly in a chapel service designed to encourage reflection on the Holy, on what it means to be human, and on how we live amidst various communities in life. The chapel service recognizes various holy days within certain traditions (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu). Services also seek to connect the spiritual with the academic and to involve students in deeper reflection on their connectedness to life. Wooster is an Episcopal school. Wooster recognizes that its student body represents many different religious faiths, so our aim is not to proselytize but to enhance each individual's experience of his or her respective tradition and to promote respect for and understanding of other faiths.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

The faculty and administration take care to build class sections that will work well together and will allow the entire school to function smoothly. Academic abilities, social dynamics, learning differences, and concurrent activities in the school schedule are all taken into consideration. Each student's placement is given serious consideration based upon accumulated academic record,

perceived strengths, needs, and learning styles. For these reasons, particular requests regarding teachers or classmates cannot be accommodated.

### **COMMUNICATION FROM THE SCHOOL TO FAMILIES**

Wooster values communication between the School and parents as a cornerstone of successfully working with students. Lower school families will receive a weekly e-mail called Weekly Chatter. It will also be posted on line. *In the Middle*, our Middle School newsletter, is posted on [www.woosternet.org](http://www.woosternet.org) every Friday, and *The Upper School Voice* is posted by the end of the last week of each month for the following month. The web site is a source of timely updates about school happenings and offers an easy way to access an up-to-date calendar of events. E-mail is being used more frequently for communication by the School. Please be sure the School has your up-to-date daytime and home e-mail address information.

Monthly morning “coffees” with Division Heads provide avenues for further communication about what is going on at the school and are important forums for discussion of issues and concerns about the overall program and well-being of the School. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend these informal discussion opportunities.

### **COMMUNICATION OF YOUR CONCERNS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents best support a school climate of trust and respect by communicating concerns openly and constructively to the teacher or administrator closest to the problem. Although it may be more convenient to talk with another parent when you have a concern about something at Wooster, **please ask a teacher or administrator.** We understand all the reasons that parents sometimes hesitate to talk to teachers and, instead, pick up the phone and call other parents or seek answers in the parking lot. We also know we do a better job of responding to children and their families when a mom or dad approaches the teacher or administrator closest to the problem when there is a worry or question about something that has happened. Conversation with the involved parties is the only way that a troubling situation can be addressed and resolved. Sometimes inaccurate, second-hand information causes parents and kids needless worry or confusion. Please talk to us.

If speaking with a teacher first does not satisfactorily address your concern, the next step in the Lower School is to speak with the Head. In the Middle and Upper Schools, curricular supervision – what is taught – is assumed by the relevant Department Chair and then the Director of Studies, Alvin Hamilton (extension 3936.) Concerns about individual faculty members should be directed to the appropriate Division Head. Coaches are supervised by the Director of Athletics, Dave MacNutt (extension 3991.)

In the Middle and Upper Schools, the student’s Advisor is also a good person to contact for perspective on your child’s overall experience; in the Lower School the classroom teacher best serves this role. The Division Heads are overall supervisors of their respective divisions and are other sources of information available to you.

We hope you’ll remember, always, how much your child’s teachers care about their students and want them to be happy here. It is our goal at Wooster to help each child reach his or her potential as a human being. This is most possible when the child feels valued, supported, and loved. If there is something going on at school that is making your child feel upset, we want to help. Please call the classroom teacher or division head and explain the situation, and we will assist or intervene as best we can. Your satisfaction and your child’s positive experience are very important to us.

### **CUSTODY ISSUES**

Unless the School is in possession of a legal document indicating otherwise, it is School policy that all grades and other information about a student are shared equally with both of the child's parents when possible. If there are two households and you would therefore like separate communication for each, please notify the School in writing. Duplicate materials will be sent to each address, and other communication will be made as necessary with both households. Likewise, the School treats both parents equally in terms of rights to pick up the child from school. Please ensure that the School receives the necessary documentation if an exception to these policies is appropriate and provide addresses as needed to facilitate this communication.

### **DAMAGES**

Parents of students who damage school property will be billed by the Business Office. Parents will receive a letter from an appropriate administrator explaining the situation.

### **DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS**

Parents should make every attempt to get their student to school every day. Wooster will follow the Danbury schools' decisions in cases of inclement weather; we will close when they close, and open late when they open late. In instances when weather conditions dictate a later opening of school, we will always begin classes, for all divisions, at 9:20 am. Several area radio stations will be notified of the school's decision on a delayed opening or closing. In cases when the school is forced to close early after the class day has begun, we will activate the Honeywell Instant Alert System, post the news on our website, and call area radio stations. Under most circumstances, such decisions are made by 10:30 am. Parents suspecting an early closing due to inclement weather should phone the main Wooster number after 10:30 am or consult the school's web site at [www.woosterschool.org](http://www.woosterschool.org).

The Wooster year-long calendar is designed in anticipation that some scheduled days will be lost to snow closings. Under extreme circumstances, the published calendar may be altered in response to multiple lost days. You can also go to [www.woosterschool.org](http://www.woosterschool.org) for the all-year calendar, which is updated regularly.

### **DECISION MAKING AT WOOSTER**

At Wooster, as at most independent schools, the Headmaster is ultimately responsible for all of the School's policies and practices. While the Board of Trustees hires and evaluates the Headmaster, the Board does not make decisions about the day-to-day operation of the School. In practice, the Headmaster delegates many of the decisions to the Division Heads, and other members of the Leadership Team, who in turn empower the faculty and staff with appropriate autonomy to perform their duties. The Headmaster makes or is informed of all significant decisions and retains the authority to overrule any action or to request further information or reconsideration.

Should an action or decision be called into question, the School administration will first seek to understand the position of those who made the decision. Thus, it is most effective when sharing a concern to start with the teacher or administrator most closely involved.

### **ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHERS LANGUAGES (ESOL)**

Bilingual students in kindergarten through second grade are immersed in the English language within their classrooms and generally do not receive extra support. ESOL support is available to students in grades three through twelve by special arrangement. The ESOL faculty member meets students as necessary, individually or in small groups, to focus on writing mechanics, vocabulary development, and written fluency.

## **FUND RAISING**

### **Annual Fund**

No independent school can rely solely on its tuition to maintain the special quality of its programs; that is why annual voluntary support is critical to Wooster's excellence. Wooster relies on the generous gifts from current and past parents, alumni, grandparents, faculty/staff, foundations, corporations, and other friends to provide the funds necessary to support Wooster's intellectually curious students and its highly qualified faculty. Annual Giving bridges the gap, which currently is over \$2,500 per student, between tuition and the actual cost of a Wooster education. Voluntary annual contributions immediately and directly benefit our students because these funds support educational programs, faculty salaries, library acquisitions, technology, financial aid, and plant maintenance and improvements. All members of the Wooster community are asked for their tax-deductible donations to Wooster's Annual Giving Fund.

### **Projects to Raise Funds**

All projects or sales of items designed to raise funds at Wooster for any reason must first be cleared through the Director of Development who will consult with the Head of Community Service, Division Heads, and/or the Parents' Council as necessary. Additionally, Wooster-sponsored groups or individual faculty/staff members using Wooster's name to raise funds for school projects, charities, or small-group activities must discuss those events at least three months in advance with the Director of Development. Groups should plan their fundraisers well in advance such that their plans and the beneficiaries of their activities may be approved and added to the calendar in the spring preceding the academic year in which they will be executed.

Because of the wide variety of important charitable causes and the limited population at Wooster, fund-raising within the Wooster community by individuals for causes not directly affiliated with school projects is generally not permitted. Wooster clubs may offer one fundraiser per year – and each grade level may conduct one bake sale or other event per year – for a charity of their choice. Additionally, the Community Service program conducts divisional or school-wide charitable efforts throughout the year. All of these are approved by and coordinated by the Director of Development.

## **GENDER EQUITY**

Wooster believes in the fundamental right of females and males to have equal access to the opportunities and resources of the school, and that all areas of the school's life should strive to reflect this belief.

## **GROUNDS AND GUM**

Parents are reminded that it is Wooster tradition that no one - students and adults alike - walks on the grass around campus. Exceptions include the athletic fields, the lawn by the Kindergarten playground located in front of Grover Hall, and the hill behind Winston (student center). Additionally, all members of the Wooster community are asked to refrain from chewing gum on campus.

## **HEALTH**

All matters having to do with health should be handled through the School Nurse, Jill Hindes, R.N. The nurse is available to students Monday-Friday from 7:45 am to 4:00 pm. Her office is located on the lower floor of McAlister Cottage. In case of serious illness or accident, parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, the student will be transported to the appropriate care giver, (i.e. physician, dentist, hospital, etc). Students cannot be accommodated in the Health Center for illness. Parents must be able to pick up their child or provide an alternate person to do so.

Students who have a fever of 101 or show signs and symptoms of a contagious condition, such as chicken pox or strep throat, or who have a purulent discharge, will be sent home and may return to school if they have been fever free for 24 hours and are on medication. If the condition warrants, the student may not return to school without clearance from the medical doctor along with consultation with the School Nurse.

Every student must have a completed Health Assessment record on file before the opening day of school. Wooster requires a current State of Connecticut Health Assessment for all NEW students, and students entering third, sixth, and tenth grade. Students in grades seven through twelve are required to have an annual Athletic Health and Physical Exam Assessment. Part I of the Physical Assessment Form must be signed by a parent/guardian. Part II must be signed and dated by the physician upon examination.

The Student Information Emergency Form should be completed and returned no later than August 20th. Students will not be permitted to register or participate in Wooster's afternoon athletic program, including pre-season athletic practices, until these forms are on file with the School Nurse. Connecticut State law mandates that a student be fully immunized against major childhood diseases. Please ask your physician to complete the immunization section of the form, with the dates of immunizations received.

The "Medication Order" form is required for any prescription or over-the-counter drug your child may need during the school year. For the protection and safety of the school and students, no form of medication may be carried by any student during the school day, with the exception of an Inhaler or Epi-Pen. (If a student is prescribed either of these, the doctor and parent must complete and submit a permission form for self-administration.) Tylenol will be provided by the nursing staff, but if a student desires Advil, or any other over-the-counter medication, the Nurse must have written authorization from the physician as well as the parent. State Law prohibits the school from administering medicine without such written permission. Prescription medications must be in pharmacy-prepared containers and labeled with the name of the child, drug, strength, frequency of dosage, physician's or dentist's name, and date of original prescription. All medication will be administered by the School Nurse.

For the well-being of students under our care, it is important that the School Nurse be informed of any changes in a student's health or any changes in medication taken on a regular or short-term basis, even if the medication is administered outside of school hours.

While Wooster takes all precautions and care to ensure safe athletics and play for all students, we cannot assume any responsibility for accidents including those resulting from play, intramural, or interscholastic athletics. Wooster offers a Student Accident Plan which provides coverage of up to \$1,000 per injury with no deductible. This plan covers a child for a full year, twenty-four hours a day. If an accident occurs off campus, parents of students covered by the Plan should notify the Health Center about the accident and submit the bills to Wooster within 30 days of the accident. Parents may receive information about the Student Accident Plan from the Business Office. If an accident occurs at school, the student should report to the Health Center immediately and inform an adult of the location where the accident occurred. All accidents or injuries occurring at school or on school-related trips must have an injury report form filled out by the coach or adult present and submitted to the School Nurse.

If a student has been injured or has been excused from gym or a sport for medical reasons, a written physician's release is required in order for him or her to return to gym or sports. A student who is medically excused from athletics may not recommence participation unless a written doctor's note is on file.

Students may not be excused from school during the day for medical reasons unless authorized by the School Nurse. Students are not permitted to call a parent/guardian to be picked up. A student who is not feeling well must be examined by the School Nurse, who will contact the parent/guardian if necessary.

Wooster School is required by law to report suspected or known cases of child abuse to the School Nurse, and, in turn, an oral and written report is made to the State Commission on Children and Youth Services.

### **Children with Serious Allergies**

Although Wooster cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment, we can utilize strategies to greatly minimize risks associated with peanut and nut allergies, as well as other allergens about which we are made aware.

It is critical that parents of children with allergies meet with the School Nurse prior to the start of the school year to provide a medical history of the child with the allergy. This should include a list of foods and other items to which the child is allergic and how s/he reacts after exposure. Before the child can start school, the child's doctor must provide the school with written information regarding the child's allergies and what restrictions are required. Medication administration forms must be completed by the physician and signed by the parent. The medication must be properly labeled and delivered to the school by the parent prior to the child's starting school. An Individualized Health Care Plan will be established with input from the family, classroom teacher, School Nurse, and specialty teachers for all children with a known allergy to meet the specific needs of the student.

Copies of the School's allergy policy are available upon request from the Nurse's office.

### **Guidelines for the Management of Pediculosis in the School Setting**

The school nurse is the most knowledgeable professional in the school community regarding the "best practices" of pediculosis management. The school nurse's goals are to contain infestation, provide appropriate health information for treatment and prevention, prevent overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals, and minimize school absence.

Head lice are small parasitic insects that live on the scalp and head of human hosts. They are not known to be vectors of illness, and complications of the infestation are rare. Studies show that lice are not highly transferable in the school setting, and no outbreaks of lice resulted when allowing children with nits to remain in class. Presence of nits does not indicate active infestation, and no evidence is found that presence of nits correlates with any disease process.

The management of head lice should not disrupt the educational process. Interventions are provided with this in mind. Students found with active head lice will be referred to their parents to facilitate treatment at the end of the school day. In a supportive, confidential, and non-judgmental manner parents will be provided education regarding treatment, infestation, and prevention of overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals.

Students are allowed to return to school the next day only after being assessed by the school nurse and noted to not have an active infestation. Students with nits, after appropriate treatment, are allowed to stay in school. Classroom screening is not indicated unless, at the discretion of the school nurse, it is warranted due to a high number of cases. Letters will be sent home to parents of children in the classroom when more than three children are infested or at the discretion of the school nurse.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important component of Wooster's educational program. We believe that regular practice and review reinforce and extend what is taught in the classroom.

Homework builds responsibility, is a means to bring parents into the learning loop on a daily basis, and provides opportunities to invent and create beyond the school day.

In addition to daily assignments, the faculty strongly believes in the value of independent, long-term assignments (either individual or group projects) which require students to plan ahead, organize, work in depth on developing sound research, academic, creative, or other skills, and share in responsibility for carrying a project to its conclusion. The importance of group projects, beyond academic content, is in providing students with real-life problem-solving opportunities for which responsibility is shared communally.

Parents play an important role in supporting their child's homework efforts by:

- helping to create a conducive environment for study;
- establishing an effective schedule/routine for nightly homework;
- facilitating their child's efforts to find resources;
- communicating with their child regularly about progress and difficulty;
- actively helping their child use study strategies such as flash cards, reading notes, or class notes to review material;
- providing their child with materials to complete projects (e.g. markers, poster board, colored pencils);
- discussing academic topics and concepts, as well as talking through reasoning problems with their child;
- brainstorming ideas and approaches with their child;
- questioning the child but not supplying oral or written answers for them;
- providing technological support for their child --- in some cases, teachers expect children to do their own word-processing; in others, they may not mind parental help with typing; each teacher will make his or her expectations clear in each instance;
- facilitating meeting arrangements for students working on group projects;
- helping their child understand what constitutes plagiarism;
- Suggesting organizational schemes and helping their child budget time.

Parents should not involve themselves in their child's homework to the extent that they:

- complete homework for their child;
- correct or edit their child's homework (although discussion and questioning are encouraged);
- do substantial research for their child.

## **LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

### **Philosophy and Purpose**

The Learning Assistance Program was created to help support the individual learning needs of students to meet established curriculum requirements. The program recognizes that students learn in different ways and integrates current brain research strategies and technology to support students and teachers. The support program is based on a Teacher-Consultant model and provides help to students through consultations with subject area teachers, advisors, administrators, parents, students, and tutors, and can provide direct one-on-one and small group instruction to students on an interim basis. The primary purpose of the learning assistance program is to help students successfully meet the educational challenges of Wooster.

### **Students Served**

Working one-on-one or in small groups for a period of time benefits many students and is available to students at Wooster. In the Lower School, the Learning Assistance Coordinator often provides support in the regular classroom, either team teaching with the child's teacher or working within small groups. Lessons are tailored to students' individual needs and are designed to support course content. To enhance student success, the lessons may identify individual strengths and weaknesses as they focus on teaching compensatory study, organizational, time management, reading, and writing strategies, as well as developing self-advocacy skills.

Wooster is a mainstream school with high academic standards. The Learning Assistance Program is not designed as a Resource Room program that follows mandates set by Pupil Placement Teams in the public schools. Bright students with mild learning, emotional, and attention differences are among our student body, and they can find support through the Learning Assistance Program. However, students who have learning differences must meet the same requirements for admission, promotion, and graduation as other students at Wooster.

### **Services Provided**

Any student, parent, or faculty member can consult with the Learning Specialist to problem-solve learning issues or teaching paradigms. The Learning Specialist will make recommendations to help students better succeed in classes. The recommendations made are not considered modifications to the school program or curricula; rather they are meant to facilitate a student's learning without fundamentally altering the school program. (See **Reasonable Accommodations at Wooster**). The Learning Specialist, in consultation with the Director of Studies and the Division Head, makes determinations as to what accommodations are made.

### **Criteria for Diagnosis and Eligibility for Accommodations and Support**

To receive regular on-going (long-term) learning assistance support and to be eligible for accommodations, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. The student must have a documented learning disability, emotional disability, Attention Deficit Disorder, or Other Health Impairment in the form of a current Psychological and Educational Evaluation (not more than 3 years old), or current IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan (current for the school year) including the psycho-educational evaluations on which the plans are based.
2. The student must have been evaluated by a professional with appropriate credentials to diagnose the condition.

3. A full report must be submitted to the Learning Specialist for use in developing an Educational Plan. This report will be kept in the student's learning assistance file in the Learning Specialist's office.
4. The report must include:
  - (a) a clear diagnosis of the condition listed in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV)
  - (b) data to support the diagnosis, i.e. test scores from measures of cognitive ability (WISC IV), and academic achievement (Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement, or WIAT)
  - (c) specific recommendations for appropriate accommodations
  - (d) An evaluation that has been conducted within the last 3 years.\*

*\*In cases of emotional disability, documentation must be submitted and updated every year.*

### **The Role of the Learning Specialist**

When there is concern that a student may have a learning difference, the Learning Specialist, after consultation with the student's parents, advisor, and Division Head, collects information to see if a psychological and educational evaluation is warranted. If the student needs an evaluation, the Learning Specialist may provide referrals to outside psychologists or assist the parents in pursuing Special Educational services in testing from the Danbury Public Schools. Once the evaluation is complete, the Learning Specialist reviews the findings and, if appropriate, prepares a summary of the cognitive and academic profile of the student with the necessary recommendations and accommodations. This report is sent to the parents and all the teachers of the student and becomes the student's Educational Plan. The Educational Plan then gets revised and updated every year to meet the student's on-going and continuing needs for 3 years. After this time, if needed, a new Educational Plan is created based on updated testing.

### **The Role of Parents**

When parents have concerns about their child's learning, they are encouraged to contact their child's classroom teacher. In consultation with the faculty, parents may decide to involve the Learning Specialist. Parents are invaluable sources of information about their child and their information can help their child succeed in school. Parents are responsible for sharing with the school outside information such as testing, counseling or tutoring. When this information is shared, appropriate educational action can be taken. To receive testing accommodations for school-based tests such as midterms and finals, testing information regarding learning disabilities, emotional disabilities and/or AD/HD must be presented to the Division Head or Learning Specialist at least two weeks before the scheduled exam. Accommodations cannot be made after this time except in clear emergency situations for emotional or medical disabilities.

If it is determined that a student requires additional tutoring outside of class, such support should be obtained by the parent in consultation with the Learning Specialist who will provide referrals. Clear, regular communications should occur among the family, tutor, and the school during the time a student is receiving tutoring support or counseling.

### **Grades and Transcripts**

The Learning Assistance Program does not modify the Middle or Upper School tests or assessment system. Grades for all students are based upon the quality of their work, not the amount of time and effort a student puts forth. Strong efforts, however, are an important part of the Wooster grading system and indicate if a student is working toward potential.

There is no indication on a student's transcript that he/she has a psycho-educational evaluation, an Educational Plan, IEP, or 504 Accommodation Plan, or that he/she has in any way been involved with the Learning Assistance Program. However, students with disabilities may be encouraged to share further information about their special needs when transferring schools or applying to college.

### **Confidentiality**

All Learning Assistance records (IEP's, 504 Accommodation Plans, psych-ed test reports) are kept separately from the students' regular academic files in a locked area in the Learning Specialist's office. Only the Learning Specialist has access to these files. The Learning Specialist prepares a summary of the student's strengths and weaknesses (a cognitive and academic profile) along with specific classroom recommendations and testing accommodations appropriate to meet the student's learning needs, and distributes this summary, with the parents' consent, to the student's teachers. If the parent wishes that this information be shared with outside support specialists (doctors, therapists, tutors), the parent may request this in writing, enabling the Learning Specialist to send information or have conversations about the student.

### **Accommodations on Standardized Tests**

The **ERB's, PSAT's, SAT's, and AP's** are standardized tests that can grant accommodations such as a computer for essay writing, no scantron use, or extended or double time, among others. For students who qualify for testing accommodations, current documentation (see **Criteria for Diagnosis and Eligibility**) must be on file in the Learning Specialist's office for at least 4 months prior to the registration deadline in order to assure that appropriate arrangements for administering the test can be made. The four-month stipulation is a requirement for the College Board tests (SAT, PSAT, AP, NMSQT) because the accommodations that are being requested for these tests must be in place and in use in school for at least this amount of time before the College Board will grant the request. Exceptions to this can be made in terms of newly-diagnosed health issues, but not for newly diagnosed learning disabilities or AD/HD.

Regarding SAT's: The College Board permits students who have proper documentation of a disability to take **PSAT, SAT, and AP Tests** "with accommodations," meaning in an extended time situation with aids such as cassette or computer, if appropriate. Families of students with learning or other disabilities often have questions concerning that option.

### **Reasonable Accommodations in Testing and/or Modifications that can be made at Wooster (with appropriate documentation as previously noted)**

*To qualify for special accommodations, see "Criteria for Diagnosis and Eligibility for Accommodations," above. To receive accommodations for midterms or finals, documentation must be presented to the Learning Specialist at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled exam. Requests for accommodations received after this time will be granted for emergency medical or emotional crisis situations only.*

### Lower School

1. Modified Homework assignments
2. Access to a computer technology
3. Movement breaks
4. Occupational Therapy materials
5. Checklists and visual cues to help with organization
6. Special education materials or techniques
7. Foreign language waiver

8. Small group instruction to remediate and/or supplement the curriculum
9. Cooperation with a students' parents and/or tutor to front load information before it is presented for the first time in class
10. Preferential seating
11. A less distracting environment for test taking
12. Extended time for assignments and assessments
13. Simple behavior management plans to improve target behaviors

#### Middle and Upper School

1. Extended time for tests and quizzes, generally considered time and one half; also double time, if appropriate
2. A computer for essay writing, or for making charts and diagrams
3. Use of a student's own laptop
4. Use of a student's own PDA to help manage organizational needs such as recording homework assignments or recording appointments.
5. Use of graphic organizers, charts, and computer technology such as *Inspiration* software for essays and projects
6. No scantron on tests
7. A separate location for midterms and finals
8. Access to teacher notes or overhead notes
9. Access to a student note-taker
10. Opportunity to purchase an extra set of texts for home use.
11. Books on tape
12. Computer assisted technology, such as *Kurzweil* software available in the Learning Center to help with reading, note taking and writing
13. Midterms or Finals arranged on separate days
14. Reduced course load in the Upper School to 4 majors per year\*
15. Foreign Language waiver\*

\*These accommodations require discussions with the Director of Studies and the Director of College Guidance regarding the impact they may have on the college process.

Unique situations and requests for accommodations not mentioned above must be discussed with the Learning Specialist, classroom teacher, and Division Head.

*Additional Information about the Learning Assistance Program at Wooster, including responses to frequently asked questions about the program, is available on our website or in hard copy from the Division Offices or from either of Wooster's Learning Specialists.*

#### **LIBRARY**

The John D. Verdery Library facilities include a periodical area, a reference center, a fiction and non-fiction collection of about 20,000 volumes, a separate lower school library, computers, and 500 curriculum-related videos.

#### **Library Material**

Library materials are selected to enhance the curriculum and to enable Wooster students to become lifetime users of library resources. The library collection promotes books, reading, and access to information for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. It is the responsibility of the Librarian to provide for the overall quality and balance of the collection.

The John D. Verdery Library provides materials on opposing sides of controversial issues. If any material in the collection is challenged, the library has a procedure for handling the challenge, which includes a selection policy statement, and "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form. These are available from the Head Librarian.

### **Gifts**

The library welcomes the gift of books and other materials from individuals or organizations but reserves the right to refuse materials which are not needed or considered inappropriate for the collection. A gift plate will be placed in materials to recognize the donor. No monetary value will be placed on the gift. The library's Adopt-a-Book Program provides an opportunity for book donations in honor of or in memory of a teacher, child, or loved one. Holidays and birthdays are common times to recognize someone with a book gift. Please see the librarian for suggestions.

### **Borrowing Privileges**

All Wooster parents may borrow books from the library at any time. Please see a librarian to set up an account.

### **LUNCH**

Faculty, staff, and students eat lunch together in the Dining Room. A simple grace is said before the meal. All students participate in the hot lunch program.

### **MUSIC LESSONS**

Students who are taking voice and instrumental music lessons must allow time in their day to practice. Wooster counts on parental support in encouraging their child to practice in preparation for the next lesson. Consistent practice habits will assure progress in the student's expertise.

### **PARKING, DRIVING, and IDLING:**

Please follow the speed limit and parking/no parking signs; please do not park and wait on the right hand side anywhere above the entrance to the road to Tiedemann Field. Please be aware of the yellow school buses. Pick up and drop off times are crowded; please avoid blocking those behind you.

Wooster School has pledged to improve the quality of the air for our community and is taking steps to protect our students from vehicle exhaust by implementing a no-idling policy on campus. Drivers of all vehicles are asked to turn off their engines when their vehicles are not in motion. We appreciate your support in following our new no idling policy when on our campus.

### **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

All parents of Wooster School students are members of the Parents' Association. The Parents' Council, the governing body of the Parents' Association, consists of Grade Representatives (up to three representatives from each grade) and the Executive Committee. Officers on the Executive Committee include the President; the First Vice President; Lower, Middle, and Upper School Vice-Presidents; Secretary; Treasurer; and the Auction Co-Chairs. The Parents' Council meets once each month from September through May, and meetings are open to all members of the Association. The Annual Meeting of the Parents' Association for election of Officers for the following school year is held each year in May.

Grade representatives attend Parents' Council meetings on behalf of their class, and sometimes organize a parent and/or student social for their grade level early in the year to promote class unity. All parents are encouraged to attend their grade's social to facilitate future communication among families, especially in regards to social events involving their children.

### **PETS**

Due to allergies within the Wooster community, pets are prohibited in all interior areas of the School including the dining room, library, gym, cloisters, and chapel. Exceptions to this rule are possible with permission from the Division Head if the pet's presence serves an educational purpose for the class. In such cases, the pet must be kept in a secure enclosure (cage, kennel, or pen) when indoors.

Pets are permitted in exterior areas of the school provided they are under strict supervision and control (e.g. dogs must be on a leash, and may not be tied up or left outside unattended.) Pet owners must clean up after their pets, and all pets must be quiet and well behaved.

These guidelines do not apply to guide dogs brought to campus by visually impaired members of the community.

### **REPORT CONCERNING ASBESTOS INSPECTION**

In compliance with AEHERA regulations, Wooster School has an Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan on file in the school Business Office and is available for review by any parent, teacher, et al. during normal business hours of the school, which are 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. Please make your request for reviewing this file to the Business Manager.

### **SELF-HELP**

Self-reliance, personal and community responsibility, and justifiable pride are not easily taught. A carefully designed attempt to do so is made through the philosophy known at Wooster as "Self-help." One aspect of the School's Self-Help philosophy is the student-administered jobs program. Believing that full individuality is achieved only when community service plays a role in shaping it, Wooster makes daily demands on students to be involved in maintaining the school. This jobs program is central, and not in any sense tangential, to Wooster's philosophy of education.

Through this program, as the underpinning Self-Help philosophy, it is hoped that each student will learn something about the balance between power and personal responsibility. We believe that the combination of peer responsibility and peer judgment provides positive guidance toward maturity, helps build a sense of community, and is the essence of a good school.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Wooster's policy is to maintain a learning, working, and social environment that is free from harassment of any sort, including sexual harassment. All members of the Wooster community are expected and required to adhere to a standard of conduct which is respectful, courteous, and mindful of the feelings of others. Accordingly, members of the community shall refrain from any conduct, communication, or action that is defined as sexual harassment in the Wooster School policy on file in the offices of the Deans, Division Heads, and Headmaster.

Sexual harassment is a major offense and can result in disciplinary action. The defining factors in sexual harassment are that the behavior is persistent, uninvited, demeaning, or offensive. Sexual

harassment is a violation of the spirit of mutual respect and individual freedom which is at the heart of the Wooster community. As such, it will not be tolerated at Wooster School.

Any questions concerning issues of sexual harassment should be directed to the Sexual Harassment Liaisons, who are members of the Sexual Harassment Grievance Committee. In **2008-2009, the Sexual Harassment Liaisons are Alex Zequeira and Janet Jochem**. Faculty members and students comprise the Grievance Committee, which hears all issues that may not be resolved by the Sexual Harassment Liaisons. All issues will be handled with appropriate confidentiality and discretion. Retaliation for making a complaint of sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Students in grades two and three take the Gates-MacGinities Reading Test in the fall. Students in grades five through nine take the Educational Records Bureau CPT-IV tests. Sophomores and Juniors take the College Board PSATs. Juniors and Seniors take SAT-I's (reasoning tests). Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors take SAT-II's (subject tests). Advanced Placement tests are taken at the end of appropriate coursework in the Upper School.

### **TOBACCO**

Wooster is a tobacco-free campus; please do not smoke or chew tobacco at any time on the campus.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Arrangement for transportation of students to and from school each day is the obligation of the parent. Some parents arrange mutually beneficial car pools or make use of bus service provided by local municipalities. Bus transportation is available and provided by the City of Danbury according to state law for those families residing in Danbury.

New York State residents are entitled to state busing provided they live within 15 miles of Wooster. New York residents should contact their County Transportation Department for further information.

Wooster also provides bus service from southern Fairfield country. For details and a registration form, please go to [www.woosterschool.org](http://www.woosterschool.org) and click on "Admissions" and then "Transportation."

Students riding the bus regularly are not permitted to have friends accompany them home on the bus without special permission from the bus company. Inappropriate behavior on the bus is reported to the school and will be handled like any other misbehavior at Wooster. In addition, the bus company may choose to impose other sanctions.

**WOOSTER SCHOOL  
PARENT VOLUNTEER DRIVER AGREEMENT  
2008-2009 School Year**

Thank you for your willingness to support our school’s activity program as a volunteer driver. In order to comply with our insurance standards and maintain the “Best Practices” approach to the use of parent drivers recommended by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, we must ask you to read and sign this form.

My signature assures the school that:

- I hold a valid, current driver’s license in the state where I reside, with no moving violations recorded in the past twelve months.
- I have never had a driver’s license revoked.
- The vehicle that will be used to carry students has a current inspection sticker and is in good mechanical condition.

My insurance coverage provides for a level of protection no less than **Combined Bodily Injury & Property Damage Liability Limits of \$500,000**. In the event of a claim, my insurance will be the “first responder” – the school’s insurance will provide back-up coverage, if necessary. I hereby agree to indemnify and hold the school harmless from any liability incurred as a result of my negligence. A copy of my insurance card is attached to this form (Note: for your convenience our school staff will make a copy of your original if requested,)

I will refrain from driving if I am taking medication or any other substance that might impair my driving ability or if I have consumed alcohol on the day of the trip.

I will not place or receive cell phone calls, eat or drink, during the time I am driving.

This form will be valid for the 2008/09 School year. If I am unable to meet all of the conditions stated above now or at any time during the school year, the school will require me to refrain from driving.

I am able to meet all of the conditions required for volunteer driving.

-----  
Name of volunteer

-----  
Date

## **LOWER SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Classes begin for Lower School students at 8:00 am. Students who arrive on campus prior to 8:00 am should wait in the Chapel where a teacher is on duty beginning at 7:40 am to supervise them. Students waiting in the Chapel will be dismissed to their classrooms at 8:00 am. Students arriving after 8:00 am should sign in at the Lower School office. Wooster expects parental assistance in promoting prompt arrival in the morning; this helps students begin the day comfortably.

Lower School students are dismissed at 3:15 pm; buses depart at 3:45 pm. Students going home by car should be picked up in their classrooms. Lower School students enrolled in the Extended Day program will be dismissed from their classroom directly to the Extended Day teachers. Students will be dismissed only into the care of their parents or other adults for whom the school has written authorization. The Lower School office must have written authorization to allow a child to go home with another family or classmate.

If a child is to be dismissed before the end of the school day, parents should notify the classroom teacher or the Lower School office in the morning. Lower School students dismissed early will wait near the Lower School office at the designated time. Students who are not feeling well will be examined by the school nurse. Students may not be excused from school during the day unless authorized by the school nurse.

### **ATTIRE AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Wooster believes that student dress should be neat, clean, and appropriate to the activities of children involved in an interactive learning environment. Lower School students play outside daily, weather permitting, and their clothing should not inhibit their involvement in age-appropriate play. As Lower School students grow and develop into pre-adolescents, it is important that their choice of clothing for school provide appropriate coverage and is not offensive, distracting, or threatening to other members of the Wooster Community. Lower School students walk to and from their co-curricular classes daily; for this reason, parents are asked to make sure that their children are prepared for cold or inclement weather. It is advisable to keep a raincoat with a hood in the classroom at all times. For safety reasons, Lower School students are not allowed to carry umbrellas.

#### **General rules**

Clothing must appropriately cover students' torsos.

No gap is permitted between the bottom of the shirt and the top of the pants or skirt.

Undergarments may not be visible.

All attire must be neat and clean...

No clothes with holes, frays, or rips are permitted.

Pants must not drag on the ground or be excessively baggy.

Army fatigues are not permitted.

No denim attire is permitted.

No athletic wear is permitted except on P.E. days.

#### **Rules for specific articles of clothing**

##### **Shirts:**

All shirt styles except T-shirts are permitted.

All boys' shirts (button downs, polo shirts) must be tucked in.

Shirts, sweatshirts, and fleeces may not have pictures or words on them except for a small product logo or a Wooster logo.

Straps for girl's dresses and shirts must be at least two inches in width.

Pants:

Pants, shorts, and capris may be worn.

Shorts, skirts, and skorts must be an appropriate length which is determined by having the wearer hold his or her arm straight down by his/her side: shorts/skirts/skorts must extend beyond the fingertips.

No swimming trunks are permitted.

No flannel pants with elastic or drawstring waist are permitted.

Shoes:

No plastic shower shoes, flip-flops, or sports sandals are permitted.

No backless shoes, clogs, or crocs are permitted.

No high heels are permitted.

Heelys may only be worn *without* the wheels; no wheeled heelys at any time.

Jackets:

If a jacket, fleece, or sweatshirt is meant for outside, it may not be worn inside.

**Special Events**

Physical Education Classes:

Sweatpants, athletic pants, and wind pants are permitted on the days that students have PE class.

Wooster T-shirts are permitted on days that students have PE class.

Students must have lace-up or Velcro sneakers in order to fully participate in class.

Messy Day Art Classes:

Jeans and t-shirts are allowed, provided the clothes are without rips, holes, or tears.

Girl Scouts and Boys Scouts:

Scouts may wear their uniforms to school on the day of a troop meeting.

Field Trips

As ambassadors of the school, it is important that students be in dress code when traveling off campus.

**BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND OTHER SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

In school, Wooster activities are naturally designed to include all the students. Thus, treats and special snacks brought to school to celebrate birthdays should include enough to share with all those in all sections of the child's grade. Please notify your child's teacher a day in advance to insure that there are no conflicts with food allergies or other "special snacks."

Parties held outside of school which do not include all the children of one section, or all the children of one gender in a grade level, must be handled with great sensitivity so as not to hurt anyone's feelings. It is very supportive if all the children in a class can be helped to understand the rationale behind who was invited and who was not, to diminish these hurt feelings. The faculty greatly appreciates your support and efforts to be as inclusive as possible when planning birthday celebrations.

Each lower school class enjoys a year-end party. These parties take place during the school day and are school-sponsored events. As such, year-end parties are considered field trips and all field trip guidelines apply for both students and chaperones. Year-end parties may be held on the Wooster campus or at public parks. Note that siblings of students are not invited to year-end parties

held on campus. If the party involves water, there must be a **certified lifeguard** present at all times. As at all Wooster functions, alcohol may not be served in the presence of students.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Disciplinary issues in grades K-5 are handled by the classroom teachers and the Lower School Head. In all cases, discipline is meant to be a learning opportunity for students.

### **EXTENDED DAY**

Wooster School offers an extended day option for children in the Lower School. The Extended Day Program is intended to provide children who cannot be collected at the end of the academic day with a safe, supervised environment. A variety of activities appropriate to the age of the students is available. Time is set aside each afternoon for homework as well. Families interested in participating in the Extended Day Program should contact the lower school office for registration materials.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Lower School students take numerous field trips over the course of the school year. Except for the end-of-year party, all off-campus excursions are planned to extend and enrich the classroom curriculum. Students may be transported by Wooster School vans or school buses with professional drivers. In all cases, students are required to wear seat belts and are prohibited from sitting in a seat with an air bag. All off-campus trips involving Lower School students will be postponed on days when school has been delayed due to inclement weather.

Field Trips are an extension of the school day; therefore, all school rules apply. Applicable rules include the Honor Code, the expectation that students will always respect the rights and property of others, rules against vandalism, prohibitions against the use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol, and rules against any other inappropriate behavior. The dress code is enforced at the discretion of the faculty chaperones. Students are expected to respect the rules of any institution or establishment with which the group has contact. These rules will be discussed with the students before departure and are as important as Wooster's rules. Prior to going on any field trip, each student must have a signed field trip authorization form on file in the Lower School office.

### **HOMEWORK**

Students should expect to receive regular homework assignments beginning in the first grade. In grades four and five, students may have up to one and a half hours of homework daily. All students in the lower school are expected to read every night, either independently or with their parents. Lower School students in grades three, four, and five may expect occasional homework from their music and foreign language teachers in addition to that work assigned by the classroom teacher.

### **PEER RELATIONS AND THE SOCIAL CURRICULUM**

The lower school faculty considers the social curriculum an integral part of school life. They take a proactive role in supporting students as they learn how to be a good friend and a supportive member of a diverse community. Our community does not tolerate teasing, bullying, or any behavior which is exclusive rather than inclusive. Inspired by the work of Vivian Paley of the University of Chicago Lab Schools, we have a basic social tenet: "You can't say you can't play."

Learning and relaxing together in our close knit family-like classrooms are not always easy. The adults in our school community are thoughtful and purposeful as they provide guidance to students. This work is most successful when it is a joint effort between parents and teachers. A child's

emotional state directly impacts his/her ability to learn. Students who feel secure in the social milieu and accepted by their peers can make the most of Wooster's curriculum.

Faculty communicates with parents about the social climate of the classroom and their child's social development. Faculty also welcomes conversation about the social dynamics in the classrooms as the parents hear about it from their children.

### **PLAYGROUND**

There are two climbing structures used by Lower School students during recess. The students are familiar with the safety expectations, and it is expected that they will play according to these same guidelines when using the playgrounds after school hours. The play area in front of Grover Hall is reserved for use by the kindergarten and first graders. After school hours, the older students are welcome to play on Grover lawn, but may not use the climbing structure or swings. For safety reasons, students may not use balls, Frisbees, or other toys that might draw them out into the traffic while in the context of a game. All children should be closely supervised by an adult when they are on the playgrounds, especially after school when there is a mixed age group and no teacher monitoring the activity. The Grover sandbox is for the exclusive use of the kindergarten students during school hours. For sanitary reasons, students and parents are asked NOT to uncover the sandbox once the kindergarten teachers have closed and cleaned it for the day.

#### **General Guidelines for Playground Usage**

- The swings should be set in the lowest position.
- Only one child should be on a swing at a time.
- Children should not stand on the swings.
- Students should go UP the ladders and DOWN the slides.
- Everyone should be kind to trees and flowers.
- Students should not climb or walk on the fences.
- No throwing of wood chips or sand.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS AND PARENT CONFERENCES**

There are two academic semesters. Written reports are sent home at the end of each semester: January and June. Parent conferences for Lower School parents are held mid-semester: November and April. Individual conferences for parents of students in any grade may be scheduled throughout the year at the specific request of either the parents or the teacher.

### **SNACKS**

Wooster's food service runs a breakfast snack bar in the kitchen before 10:00 am, selling breakfast items. Lower School students should have an adult with them when they patronize the snack bar. On Friday mornings, following chapel, fifth grade students enjoy the privilege of purchasing snacks from the kitchen snack bar.

Lower School students eat lunch at 11:15 am. Most students find a nutritious snack is appreciated, and classroom teachers incorporate a time for snack into the daily routine. Students are not allowed to bring soda or candy for their snack or lunch.

### **WEEKLY CHATTER**

In attempt to be more "green," The Head of Lower School will be communicating with Lower School parents on a weekly basis via e-mail. This will include a calendar of events for the coming week, announcements, happenings in the Lower School and my quote of the month. Any flyers or forms will be attached. You will find the heading *Lower School Chatter* in the subject box. If you do

not have access to a computer, there will be paper copies outside my office for you to take. Any materials that are confidential will be mailed to the child's residence or will be enclosed in a sealed envelope and given to your child.

**WINSTON HALL**

Use of Winston Hall is a privilege reserved for students in grades nine through twelve. Lower School students are not permitted in Winston Hall except for special events or after-school activities under the supervision of a member of the faculty.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **ADVISOR SYSTEM**

Each middle school student is assigned a faculty member who is his or her advisor for the year. The advisor is responsible for overseeing the academic, social, and individual progress of each advisee. Weekly advisor-advisee meetings are held to discuss citizenship, grades, effort, and issues of interest in the life of the school. Each student is encouraged to seek out his or her advisor whenever a particular need arises. Parents should contact the advisor first when they have questions or concerns regarding their child's progress.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Middle school students should arrive at school between 7:30 and 7:50 am. Classes start promptly at 7:50 am. A child who arrives after the start of classes will have a difficult time getting organized for the start of the day and can be disruptive to a class already in session. Please help your child get to school on time. We understand that weather and driving conditions sometimes make this difficult, but we ask that to the greatest extent possible, parents respect our schedule and help the children learn the important responsibility of punctuality.

Students in grades 6-8 should be picked up at the Middle School Building at 3:45pm unless they are participating in an after-school activity. At 3:50 pm, all Middle School students still on campus but not participating in an after-school activity must report to the Middle School building and attend the Middle School Study Hall which runs until 5:30pm. Parents should collect their children from Study hall in the Library by 5:30pm.

If a student is to be dismissed before the end of the school day, he or she must bring a note from home or a phone call from the parent or guardian must reach the Middle School office by noon.

### **ATHLETICS**

The athletic program is an integral part of the total curriculum and strives for the development of the whole individual through healthy interscholastic competition. In addition to teaching the skills and rules of particular sports, the coaching staff promotes the development of personal values by encouraging all players to appreciate sportsmanship, cooperation, respect, commitment, determination, confidence, and community.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND OTHER SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

Please help your child to be sensitive to his or her peers' feelings about attending birthday parties and other social gatherings. All efforts should be made to be as inclusive as possible when invitations are sent to classmates. Invitations should not be brought to school unless the whole class is invited nor is it appropriate to bring birthday gifts to school.

Parents are advised to monitor social events at their homes very carefully. Wooster School is not responsible for incidents that occur outside its jurisdiction. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with families hosting parties or other social gatherings for information about the event.

### **AFTERNOON STUDY HALL**

Wooster School offers an afternoon study hall for children in the Middle School. The Study Hall provides a quiet atmosphere for students who wish to do homework on campus at the end of the academic day in a safe, supervised environment. In the John D. Verdery Library proctors maintain a quiet working atmosphere during the 3:50 - 5:30pm period. Students are expected to bring some

school work or other reading material to the library at 3:45 pm and to be cooperative and considerate in working without disturbing others. Students whose behavior is repeatedly disruptive may be denied further participation in the program. On occasion, the student may engage in alternate activities as deemed acceptable by the proctor.

Students record their presence by signing in and signing out daily. A brief break of 10 or 15 minutes may be scheduled between 4:30 and 5:00 pm at the proctor's discretion. At 5:30pm the program ends. Students are dismissed to the Reception Center area for pickup. Parents who arrive before 5:30 pm may collect their children at the Library.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES RE: SCHOOL SOCIAL EVENTS**

Parents are advised that they are expected to pick up their children at the conclusion of school events in a timely manner. Delays of fifteen minutes or more are inconsiderate to the faculty chaperones. Children who are not picked up in a timely manner on two separate occasions may not be invited to future events.

### **REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Written reports are sent home six times per year, approximately every 6-8 weeks. Parents will receive grades, written progress reports from teachers, attendance information, and citizenship ratings, and may receive coaches' comments or a phone call from the advisor. Teacher conferences are held after the second marking period, just after Thanksgiving and again in the spring. Parents seeking information about student performance between reporting periods should contact the student's advisor.

Conferences for parents of students in any grade may be scheduled throughout the year at the specific request of the parents, a teacher, the advisor, or the administration.

### **SATURDAY PROGRAMS AND COMMITMENTS**

Wooster is a six-day-a-week school for Middle School students. We believe that education occurs both inside and outside the classroom, and programs which meet on Saturdays are central and not tangential to a student's education. Parents and students are expected to cooperate with the demands of the school's program. Extra-help and extracurricular activities such as sports and drama meet almost every Saturday. In addition, other periodic events and special programs, such as Saturday Study Hall and Saturday Work Squad, require student attendance.

Note that on weekends the clear structure of the class day is absent. While adults are on campus and available, the faculty does not monitor student whereabouts except for scheduled extra-help appointments, athletic and extracurricular practices, and other planned events. Thus, during weekends, students are expected to have understandings with their parents concerning where they may or may not go between their Wooster obligations.

## **UPPER SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **ADVISOR SYSTEM**

Each Upper School student is assigned a faculty member as his or her Advisor. The Advisor is responsible for overseeing the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional progress of each advisee. Weekly advisor and student meetings are held to discuss citizenship, grades, effort, and issues of interest in the life of the school. Each student is encouraged to seek out his or her Advisor whenever a particular need arises. Parents with questions about an academic class should first contact the teacher directly either by e-mail or phone; however, please include the advisor in any e-mail. Other questions or concerns regarding their child's progress should be directed to the Advisor.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

School begins at 7:50 am. Upper school students arriving late must sign in at the Dean's Office on the second floor of Coburn. Students will not be admitted late to first period classes without first signing in. Students will be marked as excused late if a note or phone call from a parent excuses the lateness. A student is unexcused late if he or she arrives at school without a note or a phone call from home. Slips will be given for unexcused lateness. For students who drive to school, frequent tardiness may result in loss of privileges, including the permission to park on campus. Wooster expects parental assistance in promoting prompt arrival in the morning, thus helping students begin the day comfortably. Self-help jobs end at 3:45. The school day ends after afternoon activities. Upper school afternoon activities are dismissed at 5:25pm unless previous arrangements for a later dismissal time have been made.

If a child is to be dismissed before the end of the school day, he or she must bring a note from home, or a phone call from the parent or guardian must reach the Dean's Office before noon. Students who become ill during the day **MUST** see the nurse before any decision is made to leave school. Upper school students leaving before the conclusion of their last commitment must sign out at the Dean's Office. If they have not been excused before noon, they must, prior to their departure, ensure that their coaches and teachers are aware that they will be leaving.

If there is an early dismissal from school, Upper School students must check out with their Advisors before leaving campus.

### **ATHLETICS**

The athletic program is an integral part of the total curriculum and strives for the development of the whole individual through healthy interscholastic competition. In addition to teaching the skills and rules of particular sports, the coaching staff promotes the development of personal values by encouraging all players to appreciate sportsmanship, cooperation, respect, commitment, determination, confidence, and community.

### **COLLEGE GUIDANCE**

College counseling is an integral part of the Wooster experience. Freshmen and sophomores are encouraged to look ahead to college as they go through orientation, sit for PSAT's, and select courses appropriate to their future plans. Juniors meet individually throughout the spring with the Director of College Guidance. Together they review the student's academic records, test scores, extracurricular activities, and possible careers goals, and based on this information devise a list of colleges ranging in selectivity. Individual parent conferences with the Director of College Guidance take place in the spring of the junior year and again in the fall of the senior year. As students enter their senior year, they continue to meet with the Director to finalize their college lists and prepare

the actual applications. Students receive support, advice, and encouragement during the application process from their senior advisors as well. Guidance, rather than placement, is the focus of Wooster college counseling.

In addition to experienced personnel, the Wooster College Guidance Department offers extensive materials and resources, including software, video tapes, and brochures. Each year, representatives from over 30 colleges visit campus to meet directly with interested students. The Department also hosts evening information events for juniors and their parents which are also open to all Wooster families.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES RE: SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

Parents are advised that they are expected to pick up their children at the conclusion of school events in a timely manner. Delays of fifteen minutes or more are inconsiderate to the faculty chaperones. Children who are not picked up in a timely manner on two separate occasions may not be invited to future events.

Parents are advised to monitor social events at their homes very carefully. Parents make a habit of communicating directly with families hosting parties or other social gatherings for information about the event. While Wooster School is not responsible for incidents that occur outside its jurisdiction, we value the reputation of the School and expect students to uphold its integrity along with their own.

### **REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Written reports are sent home six times per year, approximately every 6-8 weeks. Parents will receive grades, written progress reports from teachers, attendance information, and citizenship ratings, and may receive coaches' comments or a phone call from the advisor. Teacher-Parent meetings will be held in December and April. Parents seeking information about student performance between reporting periods should contact the student's advisor.

Conferences for parents of students in any grade may be scheduled throughout the year at the specific request of the parents, a teacher, the advisor, or the administration.

### **SATURDAY PROGRAMS AND COMMITMENTS**

Wooster's Upper School is a six-day-a-week school. We believe that education occurs both inside and outside the classroom, and programs that meet on Saturdays are central and not tangential to a student's education. Parents and students are expected to cooperate with the demands of the school's program. Extra-help and extracurricular activities such as sports and drama meet almost every Saturday. In addition, other periodic events and special programs, such as Saturday Study Hall and Saturday Work Squad, require student attendance.

Note that on weekends the clear structure of the class day is absent. While adults are on campus and available, the faculty does not monitor student whereabouts except for scheduled extra-help appointments, athletic and extracurricular practices, and other planned events. Thus, during weekends, students are expected to have understandings with their parents concerning where they may or may not go between their Wooster obligations.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please refer to the following people with questions about:

### **Academics**

Alvin Hamilton  
Director of Studies  
Ext. 3936

### **Admissions**

Tad Jacks  
Director of Admissions  
Ext. 3916

### **Athletics**

David MacNutt  
Director of Athletics  
Ext. 3991

### **Attendance**

Grades K-5  
Mary Beth Hackenberg  
Lower School Office  
Ext. 3942

### Grades 6-8

Gaynor O'Neill  
Middle School Office  
Ext. 3955

### Grades 9-12

Alex Zequeira  
Dean of Upper School  
Ext. 3937

### **Business Office**

Lori Fitzgibbon  
Business Manager  
Ext. 3909

### **Bus Issues**

Mary Beth Hackenberg  
Ext. 3942

### **Citizenship Program**

Grades 6-8  
Kresta Hayes  
Ext. 3965  
Scott Brady  
MS Deans  
Ext. 3919

### Grades 9-12

Alex Zequeira  
Dean of Upper School  
Ext. 3937

### **College Guidance or Counseling**

Nancy Maxwell  
Director of Counseling and  
College Guidance  
Ext. 3935

### **Community Service**

Reverend Rob Ross  
Ext. 3979

### **Development**

Lisa Young  
Director of Development  
Ext. 3920

### **General Concerns:**

Lower School  
Rae-ann Allen  
Head of Lower School  
Ext. 3940

### Middle School

Jocko McKean  
Head of Middle School  
Ext. 3968

### Upper School

Anne B. Cass  
Head of Upper School  
Ext. 3976

### **Headmaster**

Tim Golding  
Ext. 3906

### **Health and Health Education**

Jill Hinds, R.N.  
School Nurse  
Ext. 3925

### **Parent Liaison**

Jeannine Wible  
Ext. 3918

### **Registrar**

Charlotte Wood  
Ext. 3910

### **School Store**

Parents' Council  
School Store Managers  
Ext. 3997

### **Student Activities**

Middle School  
Gaynor O'Neill  
Ext. 3955

### Upper School

Suzanne Westerberg  
Fifth Form Council Advisor  
Ext. 3908

### **Student Behavior**

Middle School  
Kresta Hayes  
MS Dean of Students  
Ext. 3965  
Scott Brady  
MS Dean of Students  
Ext. 3919

### Upper School

Alex Zequeira  
Dean of Upper School  
Ext. 3937

