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Hyde selling sister school in Conn.

Expansion project to occur on Bath campus
BY BEN GOODRIDGE, May 2, 2017
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STUDENTS WALK between classes last fall at Hyde School in Bath. The school announced Monday that it is closing its sister school in Woodstock, Connecticut, and spending funds on expansion at the Bath campus.PHOTO COURTESY OF HYDE SCHOOL

BATH
Hyde School in Bath announced Monday that it is selling its sister school in Woodstock, Connecticut, to Woodstock Academy for $14 million and using the funds to expand their Bath campus.

Expansions will include a new theater, a new student gallery and improvements to the student mail room and dormitories. The money will help fund new courses as well, including AP Modern European History, Marine Biology, AP Computer Science Principles and Introduction to Architecture.

Hyde School President Malcolm Gauld said that beyond facility improvements, the money will help supplement the people who call the school home.

“This money will allow us to take on two big challenges: providing financial aid to make Hyde more affordable to more people, and compensating our faculty so they want to stay with us,” said Gauld. “More than most schools I know, Hyde is about the culture. Our campus is very nice, but that’s not the essence of Hyde. The biggest driver of culture is faculty.”

Ten staff members from the former Hyde Woodstock campus will be joining the Bath campus, while the remaining Hyde Woodstock staff will remain at Woodstock Academy, which will be moving into the former Hyde School building next fall. In addition to those moving to Bath, Hyde School will be hiring five new faculty members locally. Gauld said that he expects the number of students enrolled in the Hyde School to rise from 140 to 180. “I think that this decision really needs to be understood with all the factors at once, those being streamlining for excellence, providing for future financial health and sustainability and maintaining opportunities for all of our employees,” said Gauld. “We’re excited about the folks coming up from Woodstock to Bath. It’s almost magical that they’re going to be able to continue working with us.”

Gauld said that Hyde staff have been discussing the consolidation of their two schools for “a few years,” and were able to reach a deal with Woodstock Academy this spring. Gauld said the sale will close on June 15, and if all things go accordingly, ground will be broken at Hyde School in Bath by next spring at the latest.

Laura Gauld, head of schools at Hyde, said that when Woodstock Academy came to them with the idea of purchasing the Connecticut Hyde School, she refused the offer at first before reconsidering.

“When this offer first came to us last spring we hadn’t considered a sale,” said Laura Gauld. “But it’s sort of like sometimes in life something comes along, and we often say in obstacles there are opportunities. As we started to think it through, we decided that consolidation would be a win-win for us and our staff. We’ve been quiet up to this point, but we want people to know about our expansion every step of the way going forward. This will help Hyde for the next 50 years.”