



## Teacher Feature

**Ryan Wood** is always on the go, so it's no surprise that he says he's ready for whatever the future brings. Mr. Wood has been one of Meadowbrook's two Physical Education teachers for five years now. He loves the job, but he isn't certain how long he'll be in it. "I see myself wearing a lot of different hats. I need to see which one fits," he said.

Mr. Wood grew up in Arlington Heights in a family of educators. After graduating from Hersey High School, he went on to Elmhurst College where he earned a bachelor's degree in K-12 physical and health education. While he spends his days in the gym, he says he's teaching his students more than how to play games and stay fit. "I feel like I'm teaching them life skills. They are learning so much about working with others," Mr. Wood said, adding that his favorite part of the job is helping kids determine their passions.

If he ever decides to leave the gym, Mr. Wood could be headed to a principal's office. He has a master's degree in education: principal endorsement from Concordia University Chicago. Last school year, he spent nearly six months in an internship with Mr. Thome as part of his master's degree program and saw firsthand the wide variety of challenges that principals face. While Mr. Wood is open to the possibility of going into administration, he knows he would miss the classroom. "Being a teacher is the best thing. I love the daily interactions with the kids," he stated.

When he leaves Meadowbrook at the end of the school day, Mr. Wood heads to NBJH to coach the 7th grade boys' basketball team. "It's a big reunion over there," he said, pointing out the fun of staying in touch with his elementary school students when they move on to the junior high.

A full-day of school and coaching ends with a lengthy commute home to Hoffman Estates where Mr. Wood lives with his wife of three years and his one-year-old son, Bryson. He calls parenting both "amazing" and a "daily mystery." During winter break, the Wood family enjoyed a staycation, spending a lot of time at home in pajamas playing with Legos and watching Mickey Mouse. Bryson also loves dancing, Paw Patrol, trains, cars and keeping his dad up at night while he's teething.

### Fun Facts about Ryan Wood

- Previously taught PE in Arlington Heights, Norridge, and the Archdiocese of Chicago.
- Played basketball & golf each for one year during high school.
- Got slimed on a Nickelodeon TV show during a visit to Universal Studios Florida when he was in fourth grade.
- Relieves his stress by going to the gym at all hours - late at night or as early as 4:30am!

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