

# Terri North leads students, teachers at DeSana Middle School

By Kelly Whitmire Staff Writer [kwhitmire@forsythnews.com](mailto:kwhitmire@forsythnews.com)

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**Terri North is the principal at DeSana Middle School.**

Opening a new middle school is a tough, but Forsyth County Schools chose the right person for the job.

Principal Terri North is heading DeSana Middle School, which held its first day of classes on Aug. 4.

While opening a new school will always be challenging, North has the benefit of experience. Over the last 15 years, she has opened four middle schools, three of which were from the ground up.

“They’ve all been in Forsyth County,” she said. “I opened the new Otwell, when it opened in 2001 and we switched campuses. I opened Riverwatch Middle School in 2004, and that was ground up establishing the whole school. I opened Piney Grove in 2007, and now DeSana.”

This will be North’s 37th year in education — she has been with the local school system since 1997 — all in middle schools.

“I love being with middle school-aged kids, my heart and soul has always been with them and always will,” she said. “They’re very energetic.

They’re at a time in their lives when the world is really opening up to them. It’s neat to be a part of that and help them see the world in new and different ways, in more complex ways.

To help get acquainted with new staff members, she started planning and meeting with staff in February, held meetings in the spring and went on a retreat this summer.

She said compared to opening other schools, which included construction at nights other disruptions, DeSana had some time to settle in.

“We were able to move in earlier, so we weren’t rushing around at the last minute so much,” North said. “We’ve probably been in a month just getting things moved in and getting settled, so that was nice not to rush around.”

North said two themes of the new schools will center around flexibility and collaborate learning settings and the school would have some cutting-edge technology.

“Our kids will be using Chromebooks instead of desktops, because those are kind of dinosaurs these days,” she said. “We have some new whiteboard type projectors that do some things for the teachers and the kids, we also have some new rear projectors for our media center and our gym”

Of course, North said all of upgrades were to help foster interests at a critical age.

“They are still eager to learn ... and they’re humorous at times,” North said. “They’re developing into their own selves and finding their passions, and it’s neat to watch that blossom.”