

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE
February 7, 2022



These minutes are for informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Castle, Leah; Favreau, Lennon; Gronski, Melany; Harten, Michael; May, Val; Musko, Jason; Paquette, Philippa; Samborowski, Len; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Walley, David; Woodland, Julie
ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Rich, Matthew; To, Thao (Stephanie)—alt.; Young, Scott
GUESTS: Mia Ruggeri

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Paquette at 5:30 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of January 10, 2022

MOTION: (Harten/Singleton) To approve the minutes of January 10, 2022.
Unanimous

4. Aquaponics Proposal

Mia Ruggeri, an Academy Senior who utilized her independent study to create a program to develop alternative ways to use an aquaponic greenhouse, described how it could be used to benefit student learning. The greenhouse could be used by students in STRIVE, residential life, summer programs hosted by The Academy, Earthsave, the food pantry managed by FRESH, and technology classes; products could even be sold to FLIK for campus dining. During her research, she toured the greenhouse program being operated at the Pomfret School. A detailed handout provided estimated costs and rationale. Beyond general questions about aquaponics, questions about operation during school breaks, faculty responsibility, and possible site locations were asked and answered. A presentation to the full Board is planned for later this month. A sample syllabus was shared with the group. With full Board endorsement, fundraising to launch the project can begin.

5. BIGS Program Update

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten described the types of projects and student requests which have been approved through this grant program. After 2 ½ years (and not much happening during COVID), approximately \$56K has been divided between individual and group requests. Specific programs and types of individual requests were listed. Discussion included ways students might hear about available funds, income qualifications, and how travel can provide rich learning opportunities for students. Our partnership with the Edward E. Ford Foundation has benefited students greatly and has allowed us to leverage other gifts to grow the endowment.

6. Course Revisions: AP/ECE English

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten provided an overview of some changes to The Academy's AP/ECE course offerings as suggested by English Department Chair Mr. Richard Telford. In short, after completing English 2, junior and senior students will be able to select from a wider array of classes. This increased student choice will allow additional English classes to be selected as electives or to prepare for English as a college major. With these changes and a few more, The Academy's new class offerings are better in alignment with UCONN's. Data will be collected as this program rolls out.

7. Graduation Rate

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten shared a letter which detailed The Academy's cohort data for the last 10 years. Cohort data is collected by the state to track the exact same student who begins at The Academy in their

freshman year and walks across the graduation stage four years later. Our numbers are impressive, ranging from over 95% to over 99%. For example, in 2019, 99.1% of our students graduated. Also in 2019, the four other high schools in our area had 87%, 84.8%, 95% and 84.8% of their students graduate. These numbers illustrate the high level of caring shown by our faculty and staff and strong relationships being built here. Meetings are regularly held to address the needs of at-risk students and customized plans are created to address those issues. Counseling Director David Walley was thanked for his hard work and the efforts of his department to help students to meet this goal.

8. Masks

Associate Head of School Mrs. Holly Singleton provided a brief overview of the language guidance/mandates previously issued by Governor Lamont and the CDC. The administrative team has been preparing for what attending school, riding buses, attending/hosting sporting/social events might look like once the mask mandates expire. School policy is expected to transition to recommended mask wearing with the hope that medically fragile and/or COVID-concerned students and adults are treated with kindness, courtesy, and compassion. No discipline, consequences, prejudice, or discrimination will be directed toward individuals who do not follow the recommendation.

9. Other

A letter requesting that an American Sign Language (ASL) class be added to The Academy's class offerings (rather than just at the club level) was shared. Written by a seventh-grade student from Woodstock Middle School, this future Centaur listed the many reasons a course such as this would benefit students. After supporting this exact proposal at its January meeting. The Academic Committee is looking forward to meeting this student in the future and thanked Mr. Sandford for responding to the student's letter.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: (Samborowski/Walley) To adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Woodland

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Board Clerk

The Woodstock Academy prepares all students by providing diverse opportunities through a rigorous curriculum and a variety of programs in order to cultivate the necessary skills to become lifelong learners and global citizens.