

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE
September 14, 2020



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Child, Barbara; Paquette, Philippa; Young, Scott; Harten, Michael; May, Val; Musko, Jason; Walley, David; Castle, Leah; Ignacio, Joey; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Woodland, Julie
ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Michalski, Alina (alternate);

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 June 8, 2020

MOTION: (May/Singleton) To approve the minutes of June 8, 2020.
Unanimous

4. Welcome New Members

New student member Leah Castle and returning student member Joey Ignacio were given a warm welcome and asked to offer their opinions at any time.

5. Academic Report

Dean of Academics Dr. Harten provided a comprehensive Academic report which included a near-100% graduation rate for the class of 2020, over 87% college placement, and highlighted an impressive list of colleges students chose to attend. Of the 231 students who took AP exams, 82% scored a 3 or higher, and 77 students were named as AP scholars—including 2 national AP scholars—which was excellent. Priorities for 2020-2021 include increasing instructional time by one hour each day, adding Wednesday office hours, and offering on-campus support which will include extra help and enrichment. Continued professional learning will focus on social emotional learning, best practices for eLearning, and equity & inclusion.

6. Opening Days PD Report

Dean of Academics Dr. Harten reviewed the professional development schedules and topics for the beginning of the school year, saying small group discussions were organized to address a variety of topics under the umbrella of “difficult conversations.” Resources were distributed to our sending town partners. Committee Chair Paquette was particularly impressed with the social emotional resources that were shared with the Board and community.

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton described the first days of having students back on campus. New students (freshmen and transfers) were divided into two groups over two days, and each group attended a variety of sessions which included a general orientation, assorted speakers, meeting teachers and counselors, taking school pictures, books/technology/art/music materials pick-up, and an activity fair. Upperclassmen made appointments to come to campus to retrieve their personalized bag of materials over the following 3+ days.

Leah Castle commented how well those early days seemed to go—even for freshmen. Joey Ignacio appreciated the opportunity to build relationships with teachers and other students ahead of beginning academics to learn which approaches work best. Val May appreciated the extra time built into the schedule for teacher prep, saying each hour of classroom instruction seems to require about two hours of prep time. Jason Musko enjoyed learning about his students ahead of covering curriculum and thought the professional development days which combined technology and diversity sessions were excellent. Dave Walley thought students meeting their counselors and each other ahead of beginning school was valuable for all students.

7. 20-21 School Goal

Dr. Harten and Mrs. Singleton reviewed a handout about the school-wide goal of equity and inclusion. ***School Goal (2020-2021):*** *By employing a growth mindset, the faculty and staff will work together to gather data and expand our knowledge in order to develop a plan to improve equity and inclusion and reduce bias.* Professional Learning Communities (PLC) will meet twice each month to guide and anchor the goals with input from The Woodstock Academy Leadership Team (WALT) along with faculty and staff.

Ways to express social emotional support toward teachers, staff and students were discussed, in addition to addressing mental health struggles. Committee Chair Paquette asked the student members to try and get feedback from other students for continued Academic Committee discussion. Scott Young commented that the need to express care and concern is even greater given the current climate of “e-events and eLearning.”

Academic Committee Goal

The group reviewed the Academic Committee goals from 2019-2020 and shared ideas in order to develop new goals for 2020-2021. The following action items were agreed upon.

1. Monitor social and emotional support for students and staff and collect data.
2. Encourage BOT members to attend virtual classes and events.
3. Monitor progress on improving equity and inclusion; trustee members are also encouraged to read *The Person You Mean to Be* by Dolly Chugh.
4. Monitor and support effective eLearning practices.

8. Other

Associate Head of School Singleton thanked Mr. Walley for his hard work over the summer building student schedules. His extra effort was appreciated.

Committee Chair Paquette mentioned her desire to add another Trustee to the Academic Committee and for the Board of Trustees to craft a letter expressing their appreciation to Academy teachers.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: (May/Singleton) To adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.
Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Woodland

Julie Woodland
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.