

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
June 21, 2022



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Carabeau, Garry; Duvall, Nancy (C); Ellsworth, Robert (E); Higgins, Edwin; Kelly, Paul; Larrow, Jeff; Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); McGinn, Walter; Morse, David; Quinn, Eric; Rhynhart, Hans; Rich, Matthew; Samborowski, Leonard; Swenson, Christine; Young, Scott

ADMINISTRATION: Favreau, Amy; Godzik, Matthew; Harten, Michael; Hughes, Karin; Rich, Craig; Rigney, John; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Susi, Michael; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Paquette, Philippa; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Trivella, Joan; Tuttle, Brent (P)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Swenson at 7:01 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of October 19, 2021 and February 15, 2022

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

4. Board Reports

a. President's Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sandford reviewed the correspondence included in the packet, highlighting letters of resignation/retirement (some due to the retirement incentive), thank you letters to department heads, letters to various winners of Head of School Awards and Academy Champion honors, letters congratulating the valedictorian and salutatorian of the class of 2022, thank you letters to staff, letters of condolence, and end-of-year letters sent to sending towns. State Representative Pat Boyd and our school lobbyist were thanked for their efforts to secure a \$200k grant to support the creation of a drug and alcohol counseling office at The Academy.

ii. September Retreat Planning (September 10th or 17th)

It was agreed to utilize a facilitator to develop a strategic plan at the September 10th Board Retreat, filling 6-7 “buckets” through group discussion.

iii. David Teed Ambassador Award

A memo to the Executive Committee suggested renaming “The Academy Ambassador Award” to “The David Teed Award” to honor David Teed’s dedicated commitment to supporting impactful student learning opportunities and advocating for social justice. Mr. Teed served 29 years as Trustee. The Executive Committee approved this change at its last meeting.

MOTION: (Kelly/Morse) To rename The Academy Ambassador Award as **The David Teed Award.**

Unanimous

b. Committee Reports—questions/discussion on reports provided in packet

There were no questions about the minutes included in the packet.

5. Woodstock Academy Administration Reports

a. Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Report

i. 2021-2022 Budget Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi reviewed the Profit and Loss Report. He noted \$350k of security grant funds are still pending and said he expects to close out the year in the black. Faculty and staff helped control spending despite high food and transportation costs.

ii. Academy Building Project Update

Mr. Susi shared that the project is at the demolition stage, and so far, nothing uncovered has been too surprising. Buildings and Grounds Chair Bob Blackmer has been attending meetings that occur every two weeks.

iii. 2022-2023 Budget Update

Head of School Sandford and Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi provided an overview of the 2022-2023 budget. Discussion included management of the possible gap between revenue and expenses and rising food service and fuel costs. In response, budget submissions have been reduced.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. Year-End Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton presented a detailed handout that provided school updates, listed student achievements, and highlighted faculty and staff accomplishments. Her complete handout is attached below.

ii. New Scheduling Adjustments Discussion

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton detailed a whitepaper regarding scheduling adjustments planned for the 2022-2023 school year. In an effort to mitigate a worrisome level of educational and social disconnection in students, a two-part plan was devised. The first part replaces every other advisory block with an activity block where students will access games, clubs, and activities to contrast with the structured lessons used during advisory blocks. The second part creates a one-hour daily lunch block for the campus community. Beyond eating lunch with friends, students will use this flexible time for extra help, clubs, and library or gym use. Teachers and staff would be expected to have an open-door policy when not utilizing a 30-minute period to eat their lunch. Students with transportation challenges or athletic commitments after school are expected to particularly benefit from this opportunity to participate in clubs, get extra help, and catch up on missed work. Logistics, a proposed bell schedule, and a resource list were included in the discussion. Teachers would still be expected to be available for extra help for 45 minutes after school.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for Advancement

i. Fundraising Update

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant shared that between July 1, 2021 and this meeting, over \$2M has been received in gifts from over 450 donors. In addition, over \$265K has been pledged. Of that, the InSpire 150 campaign totals over \$968K in gifts and pledges; the Displaced Students Fund balance is over \$76K in gifts from 199 donors. Pratt and Whitney was thanked for a \$30K grant for new computers in the engineering lab; NBC-CT was thanked for donating a new TV studio valued at roughly \$1-1.5M; and the Public, Educational and Governmental Programming and Educational Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) Grant Program was thanked for awarding the school with \$42,910 for equipment to be used in production clubs and classes. It is hoped that the Board of Trustees will achieve 100% participation in annual giving for the 2021-2022 school year.

A Current Fundraising Priorities list, previously reviewed by the Foundation and the Executive Committee, was considered. Questions were asked and answered.

MOTION: (McGinn/Beckwith) To endorse the Current Fundraising Priorities as discussed at this meeting.

Unanimous

- ii. Other – None.
- iii. Board questions/discussion – None.

d. Head of School Report

i. College Acceptance Report

Head of School Sandford presented his annual college acceptance report, the data of which is provided by students who self-report in Naviance. After having earned many thousands of dollars in scholarships, many members of the class of 2022 are heading off to very impressive colleges and exciting career paths.

ii. Security, Health, and Safety Presentation

Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes, Director of Campus Safety Craig Rich, and Director of Information Technology Matthew Godzik provided a detailed PowerPoint presentation about student support, health, and safety at The Academy.

Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes's topics included the types of health service professionals who are available, kinds of services provided by the health office, comprehensive athletic training and physical therapy services for students, 2021-2022 health office data, various training and certifications held by our staff, school-based counseling, drug and alcohol counseling, community partnerships, additional supports, the school-wide social emotional learning curriculum, and 2021-2022 student support data.

Director of Campus Safety Craig Rich provided an overview of campus safety, listed security accomplishments, described recent and current projects, highlighted our website reporting feature, and outlined the projects he recommends for the future.

Director of Information Technology Matthew Godzik used photographs to illustrate the work completed at Bentley Field including the installation of fiber/internet cable, new network boxes, access control equipment, security cameras, gates/barrier arms, improved Wifi, enhanced broadcasting capabilities, and radio tags for WA vehicles.

Questions were asked and answered on a wide range of topics. The administration was thanked for their fine work in all these areas.

iii. Vacation Notification Memo

As per his contract, Head of School Sandford shared with the Board the dates of his scheduled summer vacation.

- iv. Other – None.
- v. Board questions/discussion – None.

6. Other Items

Due to ever-increasing fuel/transportation costs, a memo modifying the current pay-for-play model for student-athletes in 2022-2023 was proposed. *For all sports (except for ice hockey, which already has a higher fee), each athlete will be charged a \$100 per sport fee with every third sport free. There will be a \$500 cap per family.* Discussion included that students receiving free and reduced lunch would receive a discount or exemption.

MOTION: (Livermois/Morse) To approve the inclusion of pay-for-play in student athletics beginning in the 2022-2023 school year as proposed. Unanimous

Craig Rich and Matthew Godzik exited the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

7. Executive Session—Personnel and Legal (Including the Head of School’s Contract)

MOTION: (Bentley/McGinn) To enter into Executive Session to consider Personnel and Legal matters (including the Head of School’s contract), inviting the administrative team listed above to attend at 9:04 p.m.

Unanimous

The meeting returned to regular session at 10:17 p.m.

8. Possible Action Based on Executive Session

MOTION: (Samborowski/Kelly) To accept the recommendation to freeze the Head of School’s salary for the 2022-2023 school year (to mirror the 2021-2022 school year) and to extend his contract through 2024-2025 as part of a rolling three-year contract.

Unanimous

MOTION: (Bentley/Morse) With regret, to eliminate the prep basketball program for the 2022-2023 school year as part of the budget. Votes in support = 15 (Beckwith, Bentley, Blackmer, Carabeau, Duvall, Ellsworth, Higgins, Kelly, Larrow, Morse, Quinn, Rhynhart, Rich, Swenson, Young). Votes in opposition = 4 (Asikainen, Livernois, McGinn, Samborowski).

Motion passes.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: (Samborowski/McGinn) To adjourn the meeting at 10:20 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.



June Updates from the Associate Head of School

School Updates

- Model UN won the Award of Distinction at nationals again for the 4th consecutive year!
- The World Language department successfully inducted 65 new members in the 5 honor societies!
- Public Educational and Governmental Programing and Educational Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) awarded The Academy \$42,910 to support the educational technology classes of filming and broadcasting.
- Pratt & Whitney has awarded The Academy a grant of \$30,000 to upgrade the Engineering lab.
- 2022 edition of *Centaur Magazine* is available for viewing at this link:
<https://vimeo.com/oconchobhairproductions/review/720607389/240a236240>
- Next year, students may take the course, Intro to eSports, at WA and receive college credit from The University

of Bridgeport.

- The Academy hosted Artists in Residence this spring from the Starling Shakespeare Company. They will be giving providing a free performance of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* on this Friday in The Loos at 7 PM.
- The Woodstock Academy Broadcasting program was officially launched this spring with the completion of the studio installation (the studio was a donation from NBC Connecticut).



- The Academy will be making two changes to the daily schedule for next year. (Please refer to the White Paper)

Student Achievements

- 5 Model UN students won individual awards at the Georgetown Model UN Conference: Isabella Miller (W), Honorable Mention; Leila MacKinnon (W), Honorable Mention; Owen Bland (I), Commendation; Sydney Haskins (W), Commendation; and Claire Anderson (P), Commendation.
- 6 students won individual awards at the National Model UN Conference: Fiona Rigney (W), Award of Distinction; Isabella Miller (W), Award of Distinction; Linsey Arends (B), Award of Distinction; Sydney Haskins (W), Award of Excellence; Olivia Grant (W), Award of Excellence; Vincent Tocci (W), Award of Excellence.
- Olivia Mawson (P), Cormac Nielsen (W), Savannah Olson (B), and Nick Webster (W) were accepted into the CT All State Music Festival.
- WA Chemistry Olympiad Team member, Elias Newall-Vuillemot (W) was one of 12 students from the region who qualified to participate in the national exam.
- Gwen Hendrickson (W) was recognized as a 2022 National Certificate of Distinction recipient of the NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing!
- Zoe Botta (W) and Savanah Olson (B) were accepted into the 2022 American School Band Director Association's National Honor Band.
- Ryan Hanlon (W) won a Silver Award in the Connecticut Student Writer's Magazine for his fictional work titled "Twenty Minutes."
- Students won big at the Regional Technology Student Association competition: Henry Driscoll (E) won first place in Dragster Design, and Ashton Lanning (W) and Dylan Chamberlin (W) won second Place in Cyber Security.
- Kamden Meyer (W) and Aleena Jafar-DeCeasare (W) have received UConn Aetna First Year Writing Awards! (They not only beat out fellow ECE students, but also UConn first years!)
- Han Zheng (I) won the Silver Medal of Distinction Award in the National Scholastic Art Awards competition for his "Metal Fish" portfolio.



Faculty & Staff Accomplishments

- The following teachers were selected to participate in AP Reading Teams this June: Val May (Biology), Meghan Mizak (English), Tom Young (Statistics), Lauren Gagnon (Social Studies)
- Sam Romero received the 2022 Sacred Heart University MED Award for Outstanding Master's Project (which was on strategic digital marketing in private schools).
- Val May will be presenting three workshops (*Exploring Gene Therapy and the Central Dogma with BioInteractive Resources*, *The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study for Molecular Biology with HHMI BioInteractive*, and *Disease Detectives: Tracking Epidemics with HHMI BioInteractive*) at the National Science Teachers Association Conference and conducting a Data Analysis Workshop for AP biology teachers from New York.
- Peter Sumner for being named the CTEEA teacher of the month of May! This recognition also puts him in the running for the 2022-2023 Connecticut CTEEA Teacher of the Year.
- Ian Howley and the Arts Outreach Club completed their work on the Gold Star Project.



- Prescott Powers's painting class created a new art installation for the new Annhurst Lobby.