

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 19, 2021



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Carabeau, Garry; Higgins, Edwin; Kelly, Paul; Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); McGinn, Walter; Paquette, Philippa; Quinn, Eric; Rhynhart, Hans; Rich, Matthew; Swenson, Christine; Trivella, Joan; Young, Scott

ADMINISTRATION: Chalupka, Eric; Favreau, Amy; Harten, Michael; Hughes, Karin; Rigney, John; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Susi, Michael; Washington, Denzel; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Duvall, Nancy (C); Ellsworth, Robert (E); Larrow, Jeff; Morse, David; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Samborowski, Leonard; Tuttle, Brent (P)

GUESTS: Joanna Lin

1. Call to Order

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

2. Student Council Report

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

3. Community Participation – None.

4. Secretary's Report

MOTION: (Carabeau/Asikainen) To approve the minutes of September 21, 2021.

Unanimous

5. Board Reports

a. President's Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sandford described the correspondence included in the packet, including a letter from Woodstock Public Schools asking to begin meeting to discuss a new contract followed by a reply requesting a list of proposed changes under consideration. Other correspondence included a letter of appreciation to Pomfret Board of Education for allowing The Academy to provide a presentation during a recent board meeting; wedding congratulations to Board member Matthew Rich; assorted letters of congratulations to recent winners of Head of School and Academy Champion awards; several resignation letters; and letters of appreciation for efforts to make Homecoming, Alumni Weekend, and the annual Student Testing Day such a success. Head of School Sandford shared a memo detailing his summer vacation dates with the Board.

ii. CAIS Annual Governance Conference

Board Secretary Philippa Paquette provided a summary of what she learned at the CAIS Annual Governance Conference. Questions were asked and answered as brief discussion ensued.

iii. Annual Holiday Gathering—December 4, 2021, from 4:00 – 6:30

This upcoming annual event will be held at the former Head of School's house and will adjourn to the Loos Center, where the Ocean State Pops will perform at 7:00 p.m.

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

There were no questions.

6. 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 highlighted several ESSER grants in the summary Revenue Report in addition to discussing transportation and food service costs when he reviewed the summary Expense Report. There were no questions about the Profit and Loss Report.

ii. Academy Building Project Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Susi described the bids the Buildings and Grounds Committee recently reviewed and provided an update about the USDA loan process. Work is still on track to begin in the spring.

iii. 2020-2021 Audit Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Susi stated that many of the materials needed to conduct the audit have had to be shuttled back and forth between the school and the auditor's facilities which has slowed the process a bit.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. October Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton reviewed her October Updates handout with the Board, answering questions throughout. Her October Update is attached to the end of the meeting minutes.

ii. Academic Report

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten presented his annual fall Academic Report to the Board. A detailed document, he highlighted the Academy's graduation rate, college placement, new courses, and a wide array of testing results from across every grade. Questions were asked and answered.

iii. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for Advancement

i. InSpire 150 Campaign Update

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant shared a financial dashboard related to the InSpire 150 campaign, saying that things are moving in the right direction. Discussion included upcoming fundraisers, grant funding, and a very generous gift from SPIROL that will impact the project over the next five years. Recent alumni events, such as the concert, banquet, and shindig were all successful.

ii. Annual Giving Day on October 27, 2021

Board members were encouraged to consider making a gift and to spread the word within the community.

iii. Foundation Directors' Ballot Results

A handout with the list of officers for the Foundation (approved by electronic vote) was read into the record. Martha Beckwith (President), Benjamin Harrison (Vice President), Paul Kelly (Treasurer), and Adam Troy (Secretary) will serve in 2021-2022.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

d. Head of School Report

i. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Presentation / Discussion

Head of School Sanford introduced Director of Equity and Inclusion Denzel Washington, saying he is doing a great job in his new position. Along with a PowerPoint presentation, the school-wide Equity and Inclusion Goal Action Plan

for 2021-2022 was reviewed with the Board. Robust discussion ensued, including topics such as DEI training in other institutions, collaboration and partnership with area schools, changes to the hiring process, using advisory and events to foster discussion, challenges within the greater community, and using scholarship money to assist day students who want to attend The Academy. Head of School Sanford expressed pride in the increased diversity now found in the staff and student body, saying the ultimate goal would be to have our school staff be as diverse as our student population.

ii. Other

Head of School Sanford shared a draft of the 2022-2023 Academic Calendar with the Board.

iii. Board questions/discussion – None.

7. Other Items

Head of School Sanford thanked Walter McGinn for speaking at the recent open house and greeting families at the event. A draft of the 2022-2023 Academic calendar was provided. It is currently under development.

8. Executive Session—Legal Update

MOTION: (Asikainen/Rhynhart) To enter into Executive Session to consider Legal matters, inviting all present to attend at 8:27 p.m. Unanimous

The meeting returned to regular session at 8:43 p.m.

9. Possible Action Based on Executive Session – None.

10. Adjournment

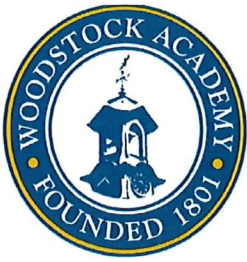
MOTION: (Paquette/Asikainen) To adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. Unanimous

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.



October Updates from the Associate Head of School

School Updates

- School Testing Day – Participation rates were 73% Grade 12, 90% Grade 11, 89% Grade 10, 92% Grade 9.
- The Academy, under the leadership of Brenden Ostaszewski, hosted a National High School Strength Coaches Association Meeting and Clinic on October 16, 2021.
- WA held the first school social for employees last week; around 60 in attendance. Administration will continue these gatherings throughout the year to support employees' wellness.

Student Achievements

- On October 18th, Math Honor Society inducted 21 new members; Science Honor Society inducted 46.
- Head of School Awards for September and October were given to the following students:
 - Thomas Musumeci, senior from Woodstock – Thomas is a natural leader who exhibits kindness throughout the school community. His enthusiasm for the learning experiences enriches the classroom environment. He is involved in every aspect of the music program, including Hill Singers and the musicals. Ms. Dziedzic described Thomas as, “a positive and powerful influence in the classroom. He is a great role model, and he is always willing to go above and beyond, whether it is working on a resolution or mentoring freshmen who are new to the Model UN program.”
 - Hailey McDonald, senior from Woodstock – As 3-season athlete, senior class president, and president of Student Council, Hailey is very involved in the life of The Academy. She is known as a positive contributor in the classroom and willingly challenges herself in all she does. As noted by her counselor, Mrs. Sumner, “With all of her obligations (of which she has many) and responsibilities she still manages strong academic record and always has a bright positive smile.”
 - Nathan Gaug, senior from Union – Nathan is an energetic and fun person. His teachers note that he is very helpful to the class and is a great partner for everyone to work with. Mr. Collelo had these words to say about Nathan. “I have seen him serious in class helping to get others on task and be the life of the party during appropriate times. Nathan sees what the classroom needs and fills the void. I appreciate his resourcefulness and versatility in our classroom.”
 - Conor Stewart, senior from Brooklyn and recently moved to Woodstock – Conor is a quiet leader who leads by example. Involved in many different clubs and honor societies at WA, Conor is always contributing positively to The Academy community. Mrs. Thibodeau describes characterizes Conor as kind, responsible, and has a strong work ethic. She went on to say, “In class, he is so considerate of his peers, and goes above and beyond to help if he is working in cooperative groups to make certain that everyone is involved and understands.”

Faculty & Staff Accomplishments

- Dave Walley was selected to be a member of the ECE Advisory Board at UConn.
- Tom Young secured free equipment for the eSports Team from Nintendo.
- Mel Gronski and Sara Dziedzic have initiated a faculty coaching program to support faculty growth and development.
- An article on The Loos Center, highlighting the work of Eric Chalupka, was published in the Chroma-Q online magazine. (<https://chroma-q.com/news/the-woodstock-academy-includes-chroma-q-in-loos-center-for-the-arts>)

- Mel Gronski has become certified as a certified Apple Learning Coach.
- Laura Kennedy, a member of the English department, was selected as the Academy Champion of October! Student nominations highlighted her positivity, compassion, advocacy for student-wellbeing, and her efforts to improve equity and inclusion at The Academy.

Upcoming Events

10/25 – Meet the Woodstock Selectmen Candidates, 7 PM, The Loos Center

10/26 – Virtual Student Leadership Conference

10/27 – English and Social Studies Honor Society Inductions, 6 PM, The Bates Auditorium

10/28 – WA Gives Back, 2:30 PM, The Palmer Arboretum

10/29 – Trick-or-Treat Street, 4-7 PM, The North Campus (outdoors)

11/06 – Concert at the Loos: Local Bands Night, featuring Big Blue Thang, Cold Train, and Granite, 7 PM, \$22 tickets

11/11 – Tri-M Inductions, 6:30 PM, AH147

11/16 – Powder Puff game, 4 PM, The Bentley Complex

Ongoing – B Club limited raffle for 2 Shawn Mendes concert tickets (\$20 per raffle ticket)