

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
January 21, 2020



These minutes are for informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Atchinson, Keith (B); Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bellerose, James; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Carabeau, Garry; Higgins, Edwin; Johnston, Kevin; Kelly, Paul; Larrow, Jeff; Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); McGinn, Walter; Musumeci, Joseph; Rhynhart, Hans; Samborowski, Len; Teed, David; Trivella, Joan; Tuttle, Brent (P); Young, Scott

ADMINISTRATION: Chalupka, Eric; Guillot, William; Harten, Michael; Rigney, John; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Child, Barbara; Duvall, Nancy (C); Frankhouser, Hans (W); Morse, David; Paquette, Philippa; Swenson, Christine

GUESTS: Zoe Marshall; Brooke Nagel; Gavin, Jessica & Mike Miller; Adam Broussard; Chris Pittman; Heidi Bradway; Kevin O'Brien; Isabella Precourt; Rachel Holden; Ciara MacKinnon; Mallory & Ann Tyimok; Megan, Cindy, & Jeff Preston; Suzanne Silbermann; Madeline Silbermann; Clayton & Tyler Singleton; Harriet Majek; Olivia & Michele Ott; Grace & Melany Gronski

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Higgins at 7:00 p.m.

2. Nominating Committee Report / Possible Action

Nominating Committee Chair Paul Kelly said the Nominating Committee met with and unanimously endorsed the candidacy of Keith Atchinson (of Brooklyn) as a Sending Town Representative on the Board.

MOTION: (Kelly/Teed) To appoint Keith Atchinson (B) as a Sending Town Representative on the Board of Trustees.

Unanimous

3. Head of School Recognition—December and January Nominees

Associate Head of School Singleton read the following passages about the honorees:

Head of School Award Winners for December

Zoe Marshall, Grade 12 (Eastford) *All of Zoe's teachers whole-heartedly agree that Zoe is one of the hardest working and most dedicated students in their respective classes. They also agree that Zoe is extremely dependable, helpful, and a strong leader in the classroom. She brings curiosity and thoughtfulness to every learning experience and willingly shares her findings with her classmates. Peers often seek out her insightful explanations that demonstrate both a mastery of content knowledge and stellar skills.*

As noted by her culinary teacher, Emily Nester, "Zoe is the most talented, creative, and hardest working student I've had in Pastry & Baking thus far in my career. This year, Zoe's group, which she led, won the Cupcake competition against Killingly and she also won the Cake Off competition. Not only is Zoe talented, but she works great in groups and it is a pleasure to have her in class!"

Zoe's art teacher, Mr. Dupuis, had this to say about her: "I can't say enough about Zoe. She is always the first student to be gathering her supplies while the others are coming into the class and getting settled. Her eagerness to learn and practice her craft is a step beyond what most students are doing. In addition to working the full 84 minutes during the block, she has also come every day during her free period to continue perfecting her skills and techniques. As far as her artwork goes, Zoe's creations are truly something to behold. She has a wonderfully creative vision and her execution continues to improve with each project. She pushes the boundaries of every assignment and makes each one uniquely her own. I have loved having her as a student this semester, and I cannot wait to see the growth of her work in class next semester."

Gavin Miller, Grade 11 (Woodstock) *Gavin is a motivated and highly talented student at The Academy. He is especially a standout in his Chemistry, Latin, and Modern U.S. History classes. While Gavin is quiet in class, he has his own way of showing his personality, intelligence, kindness, and humility. Mrs. Beck, his Latin teacher, had this to say about him: "Gavin is one of the most astute and talented translators I've had*

the pleasure of teaching in Latin. He has a genuine enthusiasm and love of learning. He also has a very quiet and kind demeanor that makes other students feel comfortable in class. He is well respected by students and staff alike for his maturity and the variety of his interests and talents.”

This year, Gavin has been a pivotal individual in getting the multicultural club off the ground. This new club is a student-led initiative to promote better cultural understandings on campus and help students from all backgrounds connect better and form new friendships. Gavin’s efforts have helped the school and its community to be more inclusive in its thinking and have helped all students to understand and bridge differences in order to establish a welcoming and global community.

Head of School Award Winners for January

The Sparrow Club, whose members include the following:

Grade 12—Isabela Precourt (B), Rachel Holden (P)

Grade 11—Ciara MacKinnon (U), Alexa Pechie (W), Alexia Adams (U), Mallory Tyimok (P), Lucy McDermott (W), Megan Preston (W), Suzanne Silbermann (U), Madeline Silbermann (U), Ashley Guillot (C), Clayton Singleton (E), Maria Santucci (U), Harriet Majek (B), Olivia Ott (U), Grace Gronski (W), Estella Douglas (C), and Eliza Dutson (W).

Grade 9—Leila MacKinnon (U), Fiona Rigney (W)

The Sparrow Club is a group of individuals committed to the well-being and support of individuals in the WA community who face medical hardships. The purpose of the club is to raise money to defray the healthcare expenses of these students.

This year, this group of students has resurrected the club from its defunct state, and raised almost \$4,000 through a bake sale, dress-down day, jewelry sale, and raffle for concert tickets. They have also taken a personal approach to kindness by Christmas shopping for the two WA sparrows so that these recipients know how much they are cared for during their challenging medical times.

Each student was presented with a plaque or certificate and a picture was taken with the Head of School.

4. Student Council Report

President of Student Council, Brooke Nagel described various recent and upcoming Student Council events including a Winter Dance, where over 300 tickets have been sold; the sale of hot chocolate every Wednesday; and various spring events, including the play, *The Wizard of Oz*.

5. Community Participation – None.

6. Secretary’s Report—Minutes of November 19, 2019

MOTION: (Musumeci/Tuttle) To approve the minutes of November 19, 2019. All voted Yes except Blackmer and Johnston, who abstained. Motion Carries.

7. Board Reports

a. President’s Report

i. Correspondence

Vice President Higgins reviewed the correspondence packet, highlighting the letter notifying The Academy of State approval for operation for the next ten years along with various letters to award recipients and thank you letters.

ii. BOT Retreat on February 18, 2020

Head of School Sandford suggested the Board use the retreat to discuss how best to manage any decreases in enrollment as well as how best to proceed with building a partnership in China. Board direction may be needed with certain legal issues. The Board was urged to share any other topics prior to the meeting and it was hoped they would all attend.

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

There were no questions or comments.

8. Woodstock Academy Administration Reports

a. Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Report

i. 2019-2020—Budget Update

Interim Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Guillot reviewed the Revenue and Expense Report summaries, saying revenue is trending a bit ahead on the budget and expenses are on

pace for this point in the school year. Clarification questions were asked and answered.

ii. 2018-2019 Audit Approval

The draft management letter from the auditors, along with the associated responses from administration below each point, was reviewed. It was noted that many items were “housekeeping” in nature, such as the mention of Accufund. The Board was reminded that the complete 2018-2019 Audit Report was available online under the BOT Finance Committee tab. Given that the night’s review was considered a “first read,” BOT approval would be appropriate at the March BOT meeting.

iii. Academy Building Project

Interim Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Guillot said the grant funding from the State Preservation Office has become available again. The Academy Building Project has four stages: (1) Spire, (2) Roof, (3) Exterior and (4) Interior. Since approximately 25% of the project is eligible, it is possible over \$1.15 million dollars could be generated through tax credits. He thanked the Historic District Commission for scheduling a special meeting in January to allow our grant application to move forward. The next Historic District Commission meeting will be January 29, 2020, when an informal discussion is expected. With Kevin Chrobak’s and Bob Smith’s help, we are currently working on an application to attach National Landmark status to the Academy building. The new, school-side entrance will be accessible to all.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. January Update

Associate Head of School Singleton provided her January update which featured school programs, student achievements, noteworthy staff and faculty, and upcoming events (handout attached below). She was especially proud of The Academy’s improved ranking for ECE classes (from #10 to #7)

and

she took a moment to review changes made to the new policy about final exams. Dr. Harten alerted the group to an upcoming visit from Roni Cohen-Sandler, who planned to speak to parents of middle school and high school student about having difficult conversations with teens. More info will be sent out to the community.

ii. Academic Report

Dr. Harten provided his annual academic report to the Board, beginning with the 100% graduation rate and an over 86% college placement rate. A list of the colleges which the Class of 2019 selected to attend was offered, followed by charts illustrating student performance in tests such as AP, ECE, PSAT/SAT, and Next Generation Accountability standards. Monitoring of the achievement gap continues. A summary of progress on the 2019-2020 Academic Initiatives related to homework and end-of-course assessments was presented. Questions were asked and answered during Dr. Harten’s presentation.

MOTION: (Musumeci/Tuttle) To ask Board Secretary Paquette to craft a letter on behalf of the Board praising the administrative team for achieving a 100% graduation rate for the Class of 2019.

Unanimous

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for Advancement

i. End of Year Giving Update

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant provided an update from his department.

A total of \$195,737 has been raised for the E. E. Ford Grant leaving only \$4,263 remaining to reach the full \$200,000 match that we will spend over the next three years. The \$200,000 and any additional funds will go into the long-term endowment fund and continue to support the Beagary Investment Grants & Scholarships (BIGS) funds on an annual basis. Thanks to these BIGS funds, there are students who would not otherwise be able to participate in a variety of experiential learning opportunities and there are faculty who are now able to run programs for entire classes and groups. The WA Foundation has raised \$281,927.41 in gifts and commitments this fiscal year. It has developed the framework for a Legacy Giving Society and has met with several advisors to support this effort. More detail will be shared at the next BOT meeting.

ii. Other – None.

iii. Board questions/discussion – None.

9. Head of School Report

i. Update: Head of School for Finance and Operations Search

Head of School Sandford said one candidate was moving forward to meet the Executive and Finance

Committees at a “Meet & Greet/Interview” which would be held on February 4, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in a location to be determined. If the Board declines this candidate, an outside search firm will be employed to generate more applicants.

ii. Other

Assistant Head of School for Enrollment Amy Favreau informed the administrative team that seven new boarding students and one new day student will be starting this spring.

iii. Board questions/discussion – None.

10. Other Items – None.

11. Executive Session—Early Retirement MOU

MOTION: (Tuttle/Asikainen) To enter into Executive Session to discuss the Early Retirement MOU, inviting Head of School Sandford, Holly Singleton, Michael Harten, Bill Guillot, Jon Sturdevant, John Rigney, and Julie Woodland to attend at 8:24 p.m.

Unanimous

The meeting returned to regular session at 8:25 p.m.

12. Possible Action Based on Executive Session

MOTION: (Beckwith/Carabeau) To change the language on the WAEA MOU discussed in Executive Session from “five member” to “two member.”

Unanimous

13. Community Participation – Brent Tuttle reminded the group about a walk/run 5K at Pomfret Community School to support their 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C.

14. Adjournment

MOTION: (Musumeci/Larrow) To adjourn the meeting at 8:27 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.

January Updates from the Associate Head of School

What is Happening...

School Programs:

- The Academy is ranked #7 in the state for total number of students enrolled in UConn Early College Experience classes for 2019-2020! (This is up from our #10 ranking for the last few years.)
- Student Council collected 44 pints of blood at its fall blood drive.
- Academy student volunteers for The Salvation Army were recognized for logging the most volunteer time over the holiday season with 74.5 hours. These students included: Alexia Bourbeau (B), Emma Redfield (W), Tessa Houlihan (W), Bryn Kusnarowis (W), Emma Durand (W), Rachel Lambert (W), Stella Du (T), Daisy Li (T), Jocelyn Mayotte (W), Aleya Wesler (W), Brooke Nagle (W), Lily Brin (P), Sarah Tavares (W),

Amanda Bond (W), Hunter Cordier (W), Reagan Couture (W), and Caitlyn Sroczenski (W).

Student Achievements:

- Paula Hernandez (E) has been selected as the Volleyball Gatorade Player of the Year!
- Ethan Bove (W) has been selected at The Academy representative for the Governors' Scholarship Program.
- Connecticut Association of Schools' Artists of the Year include Chandler Creedon (W) for performing arts and Christine Faist (W) for visual arts.
- 10 students participated in the Connecticut Music Educators' Association Eastern Regional Music Festival: Chandler Creedon (W), Keegan Kelleher (W), Jady LaFlamme (W), Olivia Mawson (P), Meaghan O'Brien (B), Owen Ritzau (T), Vincent Tocci (W), Rockwell Valentine (W), and Nicholas Webster (W).
- Among 10,000 submissions, the following students were selected for publication in YoungWriters Magazine: Arriel Quant (T), Shawna Cudworth (W), Lillian Bates (B), Cameran Steiger (P), Emily Ross (W), Nina Vasquez-Nichols (B), and Katinka Sule (T).

Staff and Faculty:

- Tom Young has been designation as one of the two state "Supercoaches" for playVS.
- John Rigney's article on the Hyde to WA transition was published in the National Association of International Schools Magazine. Here is the link: <https://www.nais.org/magazine/independent-school/winter-2020/reflections-on-closing-one-school-and-reopening-its-campus-as-another/>
- Val May was selected to attend and present at the National Science Teacher Association Conference in Boston in April.

Upcoming Events:

01/22 – Piano Recital, 6:00 PM, AH136, South Campus

02/05 – Family Night, 6:00 PM, North Campus

02/13 – Our Town, 7:00 PM, Bates Auditorium

02/14 – Our Town, 7:00 PM, Bates Auditorium

02/15 – Our Town, 7:00 PM, Bates Auditorium

02/20 – Woodstock Rocks, 6:00 PM, Loos Center for the Arts

02/28-03/01 – First Robotics, all day Saturday & Sunday