

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE
March 9, 2022



These minutes are for informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Asikainen, Samantha; Despres, Victoria; McGinn, Walter; Quinn, Eric; Rhynhart, Hans; Rich, Matthew; Trivella, Joan; MacKinnon, Leila; Smith, Adeline; Hughes, Karin; Rigney, John; Saucier, Bobbie-Jo; Singleton, Holly; Woodland, Julie; VanderSwaagh, Shannon

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Marrow-Rivera, Danielle; McDonald, Haley (alt.); Samborowski, Leonard; Sandford, Chris

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-chairman Trivella at 7:00 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of January 12, 2022

MOTION: (McGinn/Rhynart) To approve the minutes of January 12, 2022.
Unanimous

4. DEI Update

Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes shared that recent DEI efforts have been focused on clarifying the “why” of the school’s DEI initiatives to students by highlighting the need to become effective global citizens/workers and human beings. DEI directly relates to The Academy’s mission statement in its effort to support equity and inclusion. A student survey earlier in the year garnered quality student and staff input; it is hoped that an end-of-the-year survey will indicate increased growth and generate additional useful feedback. Efforts have been made to separate politics from the topic. Discussion ensued.

5. Advisory Update

Director of Student Engagement Danielle Marrow-Rivera shared the following updates from her department:

- She and members of the DEI team have been coordinating DEI activities as part of advisory sessions.
- The student newspaper has been resurrected, and students are considering changing its name from *The Centaurian*.
- In collaboration with The Last Green Valley, a new hiking club should begin next year.
- A new Art Outreach Club started last week.
- The new I Am Me Club consists of 16 super-engaged, strong boarding students. Meeting topics have included yoga, hygiene, health, mindfulness, work in a soup kitchen, organizing a clothing drive, and various guest speakers.

6. STRIVE Presentation

Director of Student Support Shannon VanderSwaagh and STRIVE teacher Victoria Despres shared a PowerPoint presentation about the STRIVE program. Program features include inclusion classes with direct support, community-based experiences, project-based experiential learning, and a blend of functional academics and curriculum standards. Practicing skills through work in various “pop-up shops” utilizes applied reading and math skills by following recipes, taking measurements, performing cost analysis, creating surveys, developing marketing plans, etc. New England Kitchen and Flooring was thanked for its donation of kitchen cabinets, counters, fixtures, and appliances. The kitchen design supports diversity by offering great flexibility and access for students. The Unified Sports program, led by coaches Shannon VanderSwaagh and Lisa Sumner, has had two active, fun and successful fall soccer and winter basketball seasons so far. Athletes now participate in track and field events. The

STRIVE transition program is built for 18–22-year-old students who seek to gain work force training or to engage in higher educational opportunities. Vocational training, work study, and job shadowing has been achieved through partnerships with local businesses such as Foscett Equipment, the Inn at Woodstock Hill, local banks, and more. Discussion ensued. Shannon VanderSwaagh and Victoria Despres were thanked for their comprehensive presentation.

7. Other – None.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: (Rhyhart/Quinn) To adjourn the meeting at 7:39 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.