

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 22, 2024



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Brown, Lauren; Duvall, Nancy; Higgins, Edwin; Keser, Adam (W); Langevin, Leisl; Larrow, Jeff; McGinn, Walter; Munroe, Heather; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Quinn, Eric; Rhynhart, Hans; Rich, Matthew; Samborowski, Leonard; Tuttle, Brent (P); Young, Scott
ADMINISTRATION: Favreau, Amy; Harten, Michael; Hughes, Karin; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Susi, Michael; Woodland, Julie
ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Asikainen, Samantha; Bessette, Andrew; Ellsworth, Robert (E); Morse, David; Paquette, Philippa; Sturdevant, Jon; Swenson, Christine

1. Call to Order

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

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary’s Report—Minutes of September 17, 2024

MOTION: (Beckwith/McGinn) To approve the minutes of September 17, 2024.
Unanimous

4. Board Reports

a. President’s Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sandford reviewed the correspondence included in the packet, saying there has been a rise in poor behavior by adults that resulted in two individuals being banned from campus recently. Brief discussion ensued. Also mentioned were a letter of support for Roseland Cottage, various letters of resignation and retirement, letters to and from trustees Garry Carrabeau and Jay Livernois, letters of appreciation to Sarah Andrews and Amy Ranta thanking them for their hard work on alumni weekend, and various letters of condolence.

ii. Head of School Screening Committee Update

The trustee-members of the screening/search committee shared that progress has begun to create a position statement, and so far, The Angeletti Group has been great to work with.

b. Committee Reports—questions/discussion on reports provided in the 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. 2024-2025 Budget Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi reviewed the Profit and Loss Report with the group, commenting that we are already watching food service and health care numbers closely.

ii. 2023-2024 Audit Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi shared that the auditors are at the testing phase, and no significant issues have been identified so far.

iii. Facilities Updates

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi described the work currently being done on three projects. 1.) The Buildings and Grounds Committee authorized improvements to the

plumbing, siding, and roof of the Cutler House. Costs are estimated to range between \$75-95k. 2.) Using Operating and Loos Center funds, roof repairs are planned at the Loos Center. The cost will be approximately \$135k. 3.) In the Academy Building, landscaping, air handling, and cupping on the front decks are among the lingering concerns.

iv. Other

A question was asked about teacher negotiations. Tax credits could be received as early as next week.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. October Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton provided additional detail to her comprehensive October Updates Report, available below these minutes. Discussion about academic honor society inductions included possibly combining more than one induction per evening and inviting interested members of the Board.

ii. Dance Studio Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton shared that private dance lessons have begun in the former school store space in the Student Center on South Campus. Students and adults are welcome, and fees are very reasonable. The objective is to experience dance for hobby and enjoyment. Additional discussion included praise for the high energy and positivity of the cheer squad and dance squad, particularly at the recent pep rally. Long-term plans could include the creation of an arts academy.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for External Affairs

i. Advancement Update / Annual Giving Day—Tuesday, November 12, 2024

Since Associate Head of School for External Affairs Jon Sturdevant was traveling overseas doing admissions work, Head of School Sandford shared his report. Highlights included the upcoming Giving Day on November 12 and the annual BOT holiday party on December 8.

ii. Alumni Weekend Recap

The recent alumni weekend was praised for its highly organized and fun components.

iii. Loos Center—Upcoming Events

Attendees were urged to watch for emails about the great shows coming soon to the Loos.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

d. Head of School Report

i. Expulsion Proposal

Head of School Sandford and Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes provided a comprehensive and detailed presentation regarding the practical and recommended use of hearing officers to manage student expulsion cases. Hearing officers serve to determine the facts and impartially follow the law and Board policy to deliver any consequences to students. As had been explained to the Board at previous meetings, the strict, legally required timeline for notifications and hearings has become even more challenging when overlapping with special education protections. In addition, having the ability to offer daytime hearings provides more equitable access to families and may allow for first-hand witness testimony during the school day. A handout detailing the types of incidents that would qualify for either a stipulated agreement, use of the impartial hearing officer, or a traditional Board hearing was discussed. Questions were asked and answered during the discussion. It was agreed that the expulsion committee would meet the recommended expulsion officer, and her term would be renewed annually by the expulsion committee. This proposal is expected to cost less than the current model.

MOTION: (McGinn/Rich) To approve the use of an impartial hearing officer for expulsion hearings, as discussed at the October 22, 2024, Board of Trustees meeting. The hearing officer shall report to the Board annually.

Unanimous

ii. Academic Report

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten used PowerPoint to present his annual Academic Report. Some highlights included a 99% graduation rate for the class of 2023-2024, The Academy being named to the AP School Honor Role for the first time, that Apple Distinguished School representatives plan to visit the school in March, and a detailed analysis of SAT scores. Discussion included test-taking improvement methods and philosophy.

iii. Annual Holiday Gathering—Sunday, December 8, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Head of School Sandford hoped Board members would be able to attend this event.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

6. Other Items – None.

7. Executive Session—Personnel and Legal

8. Possible Action Based on Executive Session

An executive session was not needed.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: (Beckwith/McGinn) To adjourn the meeting at 8:21 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

- WA has been named an Apple Distinguished School for 2024-2027– the first high school in Connecticut to receive this recognition!
- The Hill Singers have been invited back to WFSB to perform on December 13, 2024.
- The WA Pep Band, under the direction of Tyler Langworthy, was selected by UConn to play at selected sporting events. This fall, they have been playing at hockey games!
- The Woodstock Academy was recognized by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve for ongoing commitment to support employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve Forces.
- For the first time ever, College Board recognized The Woodstock Academy with a Bronze Award on the 2024 AP School Honor Roll.
- Many new honor society induction this year: National Honor Society (55), Tri-M Music Honor Society (16), Math Honor Society (28), Science Honor Society (57).

Student Achievements

- Abigail Converse (W) and Christian Menounos (B) were selected at the 2024-25 Connecticut Association of Schools Scholar-Athlete Award. Kira Greene (W) and Colton Sallum (P) were selected at the 2024-25 Connecticut High School Coaches Association Scholar Athlete Award. And Alvaro Medrano Lopez (I) was selected as the 2024-25 Prep Scholar Athlete.
- Alvaro Medrano Lopez (I) was selected at the Soccer Gatorade Player of the Year.
- Maggie McHue (W) and Evelyn Young (I) were selected to attend Laurel Girls State Program; Evelyn Young was also bestowed a Girls State Achievement Award.
- Ivan Lin (P) was a finalist for the Connecticut representative for the 2024-2025 National Student Council board.
- 17 students received National Recognition Program Awards 2024 from CollegeBoard: Noemia Amaral (C) – First Generation Achievement, Rural Achievement; Aiden Bachand (B) – African American Achievement; Mason Bourget (W) – First Generation Achievement; Greysen Dery (P) – First Generation Achievement; Chandler Folkerts (W) – Rural Achievement; Kira Greene (W) – Rural Achievement; Adyson Grether (P) – First Generation Achievement; Sophie Gronski (W) Rural Achievement; Spencer Mayo (W) – First Generation Achievement, Rural Achievement; Ivar McDonald (W) – Rural Achievement; Shawn Mugagga (I) – African American Achievement; Connor Racine (W) – Rural Achievement; Maya Rodrigues (P) – Hispanic Achievement; Mia Sorrentino (B) – Rural Achievement; Olivia Tracy (B) – Rural Achievement; William Wasko (W) – First Generation Achievement, Rural Achievement.

Upcoming Events

October 25th – Trick-or-Treat Street, 4:00—6:00 PM, north campus
October 26th & 27th – Prep Soccer Tournament
November 5th – Remote Learning Day
November 8th – 2024 Talent Show, Loos Center, 5:00 PM
November 12th – Giving Day
November 21st – Louise Pigott Gallery Exhibit Opening, The Gallery, 5:00 PM
December 12th – Winter Concert, Loos Center, 6:00 PM