

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
June 17, 2025



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary (7:07); Brown, Lauren; Duvall, Nancy (C); Ellsworth, Robert (E) (7:15); Higgins, Edwin; Keser, Adam (W); Larrow, Jeff; McGinn, Walter; Munroe, Heather; Paquette, Philippa; Quinn, Eric; Rich, Matthew; Swenson, Christine; Tuttle, Brent (P); Young, Scott

ADMINISTRATION: Filippelli, Larry; Hughes, Karin; Rhynhart, Hans; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Susi, Michael; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Bessette, Andrew; Blackmer, Robert; Langevin, Leisl; Morse, David; Perkins-Banas (B), Melissa; Samborowski, Leonard

1. Call to Order

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

President Swenson welcomed new Head of School Dr. Lawrence Filippelli and new CFO Hans Rhynhart as she thanked the outgoing Head of School, Chris Sandford, and the outgoing Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations, Michael Susi. She and the Board are grateful for their partnership and wish them both great success as they move forward.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of February 18, 2025, and February 25, 2025

MOTION: (Beckwith/Paquette) To approve the minutes of February 18, 2025, and the minutes of February 25, 2025.

Unanimous

4. Board Reports

a. President's Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sandford reviewed the correspondence included in the packet, highlighting letters from Board Secretary Paquette thanking Trustees Len Samborowski and Hans Rhynhart, a letter from the State Dept. of Education confirming Dr. Filippelli's appointment as Head of School, letters of condolence, and various letters of resignation and retirement. There were no questions.

ii. Policy #8331, WA Employees Emeritus

With her recent retirement, the administration proposed honoring Lori Carminati as Staff Emeritus after her 45 years of dedicated service to The Academy.

MOTION: (Tuttle/Duvall) To accept the recommendation of Head of School Sandford and confer the title of Employee Emerita to Lori Carminati and amend the text in Policy #8331.

iii. Nominating Committee Report

At the Nominating Committee meeting held earlier in the evening, the committee is recommending the following slate in the 2025-2026:

President: Mrs. Christine Swenson

Vice-President: Mr. Edwin Higgins, Esq.

Vice-President: Ms. Lauren Brown '98

Vice-President: Ms. Heather Munroe '87

Treasurer: Dr. Walter McGinn
Asst. Treasurer: Mr. Matthew Rich '15
Secretary: Mrs. Philippa Paquette
Asst. Secretary: Mr. Eric Quinn

iv. September Retreat Planning

It was agreed to begin work on a new strategic plan in the coming school year, one that could take the Board into the next decade. Several possible dates in September and October were entertained.

- b. Committee Reports**—questions/discussion on reports provided in packet
There were no questions or comments.

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 summary revenue and expense reports along with the profit and loss report for the year. There were no questions.

ii. Approve 2024-2025 Auditor

Brief discussion ensued.

MOTION: (Higgins/McGinn) To continue with Maletta and Company for the 2024-2025 audit.
Unanimous

iii. Finance and Operations Transition Report

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi and Hans Rynhart shared examples of the various departments they have reviewed together during this transitional period.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. Academy Updates

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton shared a detailed list of achievements celebrated by students, faculty and staff. A list of academic highlights and areas of academic focus for the next school year were also shared. Her entire report can be found at the conclusion of these meeting minutes.

ii. Attendance Recovery Interventions

Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes detailed the innovative, and so far, quite successful way the administration has been approaching issues of absenteeism. Rather than punitive measures, they have seen improved school attendance by approaching absenteeism using collaborative problem solving, restorative solutions, preserving the connection to sports/activities, and using time equitably to allow recovery options. Plans are in place to expand and grow this practice in the 2025-2026 school year.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for External Affairs

i. Enrollment Update

Associate Head of School for External Affairs Jon Sturdevant's enrollment update mentioned increased numbers of boarding students to date and growing opportunities through improved relationships. It is hoped that a recent pause in visa appointments will not be too detrimental to the program. He hopes for a good year.

ii. Advancement Update

Associate Head of School for External Affairs Jon Sturdevant shared plans for the annual golf outing, alumni weekend, family weekend, and events in the Loos Center. Now that funding has been secured to for the Loos Parking Lot Expansion Project, work is expected to be completed by fall 2026. The group greatly appreciated the generosity of these recent donations to make this project possible.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

d. Head of School Report

i. South Campus Improvements and Naming

Head of School Sandford shared more information about the incredible number and types of projects that Pat Morgan and the Beagary Trust have supported over the years. Our students and school community have benefited greatly for her generosity over the years.

MOTION: (Bentley/Tuttle) That the gymnasium on South Campus be officially named the Morgan Gymnasium.

ii. Head of School Transition Update

Outgoing Head of School, Chris Sandford and future Head of School Dr. Lawrence Filippelli shared the many ways they have shared information together to ensure a smooth transition. Brief discussion ensued about the best ways to approach the development of the Board's new strategic plan.

iii. Annual Meeting Preview—August 12, 2025

The annual meetings have been scheduled for Tuesday, August 12, 2025. Other than the Foundation meeting, the meetings will be held in person at the Loos Center, with no remote option available.

The annual Board photograph will be taken at the conclusion of the meeting.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None

6. Other Items

Once he officially begins work on July 1, 2025, Head of School Filippelli plans to meet with the sending town partners.

7. Executive Session—Legal

8. Possible Action Based on Executive Session

An executive session was not needed.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: (Paquette/Tuttle) 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.



June Updates from the Associate Head of School

Student Achievements

- For the 18th years in a row, the Model UN Team -- Tanner Graham (W), Madilyne Ead (B), Ivan Lin (P), Maggie McHugh (W), Evelyn Young (I), and Campbell Favreau (W) -- received an award for Excellence for Research and Preparation and won a Delegation Award of Excellence. Evelyn Young also won an individual Award of Excellent.
- Abigail Converse (W) and Maria Jose Castaneda Banderas (I) won 1st Place in Biotechnology, and Heath White (P) and David Sumner (B) won 1st Place in Problem Solving at the Connecticut State Technology Student Association Conference.
- Girls Track & Field Team won the Hartford Invitational (beating the 2nd place team by 19 points!)
- The Kindness Club received the 2025 Challenge to Educational Citizenship Award.
- The Baseball Team won the ECC Championship (back-to-back!)
- All 18 students enrolled in the CNA program passed the certification test. 5 students already have jobs!

Faculty & Staff Achievements

- Sharon Geyer was selected as an AP Chemistry reader.
- Tom Young won a UConn ECE Instructor Award for Excellence in Teaching Statistics. He was also selected as an AP Statistics reader again this year.
- Mark Smolak was selected as an AP U.S. History reader this year.
- Val May was selected as an AP Biology readers again this year.
- Josh Welch received the Honorable Mention 2025 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Educator Award!
- Sean Saucier selected to the ECC Advisory Board AND the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors' (CAAP) Advisory Board.
- Denzel Washington was appointed to the board of The Northeast Connecticut Education Foundation.

Academic Highlights of 2024-2025

- 100% Graduation for the Class of 2025
- Formation of DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America, focus on preparing students for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management)
- School Community & Morale: December Holiday Give-Away Calendar, March Spirit Month
- Technology Committee: Technology Plan, AI guidelines for students & employees, AI onramp & AI Academy
- Approved to pilot the AP Business Principles for 2025-2026
- Attendance Recovery Pilot program

Academic Focus for 2025-2026

- Master Mentor Program
- Attendance Recovery Program
- Business Department expansion
- SAT & NGSS score improvement
- Continuation of AI focus in PD
- Student Support Personalization
- Curriculum Leaders