

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**September 3, 2025**



These minutes are for  
informational purposes only.

**PRESENT:** Bessette, Andy (C); Brown, Lauren; Higgins, Edwin; Langevin, Leisl; McGinn, Walter; Morse, David; Paquette, Philippa; Quinn, Eric; Rich, Matthew; Swenson, Christine; Tuttle, Brent (P); Filippelli, Lawrence; Harten, Michael; Hughes, Karin; Rhyhart, Hans; Singleton, Holly; Ten Eyck, Beth; VanderSwaagh, Shannon; Woodland, Julie

**ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION:** Blackmer, Robert; Ellsworth, Robert (E); Keser, Adam (W); Munroe, Heather; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B)

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Community Participation** – None.

**3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of August 6, 2025**

**MOTION:** (Rich/Tuttle) To approve the minutes of August 6, 2025, as presented. All voted Yes except Philippa Paquette, Cary Bentley, and Lauren Brown. Motions passes.

**4. Correspondence**

Head of School Filippelli highlighted a single letter of resignation and a flyer advertising the PMC Kids Ride scheduled for Saturday, September 20. Organized by Academy seniors Clara Dowdle and Kaylee Saucier, this first annual kids ride should be a meaningful and impactful event. The Board was encouraged to attend if possible.

**5. Governance Committee Report / BOT Retreat Discussion**

The Governance Committee is planning an interesting and informative retreat, and hopes all trustees will be able to join them at Assados Kitchen and Bar in RI on September 27, at 9:00 a.m.

**6. Facilities and Budget Update—H. Rhyhart**

Chief Finance and Operating Officer Hans Rhyhart reviewed an early Profit and Loss report for the 25-26 school year, noting concerns about meeting the projected revenue goals set last year. So far, there are no surprises, and his department plans to keep a close watch on healthcare costs this year. The auditor is working on the audit.

After a section of pipe failed in the water suppression system in the field house, several thousand gallons of water flooded the gym floor, several other spaces with tile and carpet, office spaces, the locker room, classrooms, storage areas and more. Repairs to the gym floor are expected to be completed in twelve weeks.

The apartment created over the summer in Warren is now ready for occupancy.

FLIK is implementing a new pay system to allow better tracking of food use and payment. Not only will food costs be capped this year, but each month will feature flat billing.

**7. Return to School—H. Singleton**

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton provided a detailed overview of this year's return to school, mentioning New Student Day on August 25, class meetings for the upper classmen, the opening of fall athletics, and upcoming events such as Family Night, the PMC Kids Ride, and a virtual financial aid night.

## **8. Enrollment Update—J. Sturdevant**

Since Associate Head of School for External Affairs Jon Sturdevant was attending an alumni event in NYC, Head of School Filippelli provided Mr. Sturdevant's update. About one hundred sixty-three boarding students from 32 countries are currently enrolled, and most have moved onto campus. At least three additional students will arrive in the spring. Private tuition revenue has surpassed \$5M, which is the most successful year ever at The Academy. Mr. Sturdevant thanked the members of his team for all their hard work.

## **9. Academic Update—M. Harten**

Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten described the additional work spent drafting our two-year AI goal, various training and professional development topics shared with staff during the opening days (AI in the classroom, Narcan use, music in the curriculum, belonging, and book discussion groups about student anxiety and creating a thinking math classroom). Dr. Harten also announced that The Academy has left Eastconn's Perkins Grant consortium and will apply on its own with the help of an advisory board of community partners.

## **10. Student Life Update—K. Hughes**

Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes provided encouraging statistics that illustrated advances made to reduce chronic absenteeism after beginning a pilot program at the end of the 24-25 school year. Data also indicates discipline and expulsion rates continue to show a downward trend. Additional updates included the following:

- Nearly all the advisor positions have been filled for student activities.
- The health office successfully hired a second trainer.
- The school counseling office's switch from Naviance to Schoolinks should provide a better user experience and save money.
- Current trends in daily attendance and chronic absenteeism were discussed.
- The background of Public Act 23-167 related to "challenging behavior" and school climate was provided.

Dean of Students and Residential Life Beth Ten Eyck described the current residential life community, saying staff and student orientations were very successful. There are currently 24 dedicated dorm parents with more moving in during the months ahead. Noteworthy changes to the program include a mandatory evening study hour and a new morning duty structure for staff to help get students to first-block classes on time.

## **11. Special Education Update—S. VanderSwaagh**

Director of Student Support Shannon VanderSwaagh shared the following updates:

- In 24-25, 100% of special education students graduated on time.
- All students in the therapeutic academy earned a full year of credit.
- The pilot attendance recovery model significantly improved attendance for many students.
- The outside contractor used in 24-25 has been eliminated. Delivering these services in house this year should provide superior services at a cost savings.
- A record number of students (16) participated in the extended school year program over the summer.
- The STRIVE program grew by four students.
- The EmpowerEd program will be utilized to help students build college and life skills.

## **12. Other Items – None.**

## **13. Executive Session—Security Updates and Personnel**

**MOTION:** (Tuttle/Paquette) To enter into an Executive Session to discuss Security Updates and Personnel matters, inviting Head of School Filippelli, Chief Finance and Operating Officer Hans Rhyhart, and Julie Woodland to attend at 7:45 p.m. Unanimous

The meeting returned to regular session at 8:01 p.m.

**14. Possible Action Based on Executive Session – None.**

**15. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** (McGinn/Brown) To adjourn the meeting at 8:01 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.*