

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**  
**January 11, 2021**



These minutes are for informational purposes only.

**PRESENT:** Paquette, Philippa; Young, Scott; Harten, Michael; May, Val; Musko, Jason; Walley, David; Castle, Leah; Ignacio, Joey; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Woodland, Julie  
**ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION:** Child, Barbara; Michalski, Alina (alternate)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Paquette at 5:30 p.m.

**2. Community Participation – None.**

**3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of December 14, 2021**

**MOTION:** (Singleton/Young) To approve the minutes of December 14, 2021.  
Unanimous

**4. Course Revision: African-American, Black, Puerto Rican and Latino Studies**

Dr. Harten presented a revised proposal for the upcoming African-American, Black, Puerto Rican and Latino Studies course, saying it was recently revised to match the state's new requirements. The original course would have started this fall but was put on hold due to enrollment numbers. WALT and the department have already approved this course. Committee Chair Paquette plans to sit in on the class this spring. Committee members approved the course without additional changes or comments.

**5. Student Mental Health**

Dr. Harten reviewed a handout that listed changes to the mental health services meant to address concerns about ongoing stress and anxiety for students and staff during the pandemic. Highlights included the need for individuals to be more intentional when accessing help, struggles with executive functioning/organizational skills, and that it has been more time consuming for parents/teachers/counselors to deliver necessary help. Parents and guardians have been reaching out for services for themselves and their families; students have been reaching out for help with their peers; and many well-adjusted and high functioning students have also needed support to cope with increased isolation and uncertainty. More counseling services have been provided than ever before. The Academy has been working with Silver Linings for counseling services and has added an additional social worker to address the increased demand. Group discussion included:

- difficulties with online format/engagement
- how helpful the support of teachers has been for their [appreciative] students
- the recent addition of the Learning Lab has helped many students who have been avoiding school
- teachers have been frustrated/discouraged by students who refuse to engage
- observations about the general disparities between teachers who have different class sizes/prep requirements/course loads were made
- there are multiple challenges associated with AP classes for both students and teachers
- each family has needed to examine their expectations about their individual activity loads during the pandemic

**6. Virtual School**

Dr. Harten shared that twenty students are currently attending classes through our virtual school program. We will be piloting a new program in early February where we offer two fully virtual classes in the evenings (EST) for those students who must attend school in an online format.

### **7. Second Semester Update**

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton described the positions that were recently added in an effort to reduce class sizes. Full-time art and social studies teachers have been hired; more sections have been added in science and math; and two paraprofessionals will be added (we are still looking for one more). Several of the new employees have also volunteered to coach.

### **8. School Goal Update—Athletics**

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton praised athletic director Sean Saucier for coordinating additional diversity training. Soon, coaches and teachers will have an opportunity to attend “Sports Can Battle Racism” and approximately 30 faculty and staff members will be able to attend a “summer institute” program in August.

### **9. Current Events Discussion**

Committee Chair Paquette was curious about how recent national events were addressed in the classroom. Dr. Harten, Mrs. Singleton and the student representatives present said that teachers offered students a chance to express their thoughts and opinions without bias or agenda. A good portion of time was spent examining various topics and each student was able to respectfully express their opinion without judgement.

### **10. Other**

Committee Chair Paquette thanked the group for their incredible work.

### **11. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** (Harten/Ignacio) To adjourn the meeting at 6:23 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.*