

Woods Charter school  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 17, 2020

Voting members present: Collette Drake, Amy Ising, Nina Lloyd, Amy Perkins, Kristina Sparrow, & Karen Trott.

Non-voting members present: Cotton Bryan & Rachel Lawrence

Absent voting members: none

Student Representative: no student representative appointed yet

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm via virtual Zoom meeting.

- I. The Pledge of Allegiance: due to our virtual meeting, there was no pledge of allegiance
- II. Public Comment: (written public comments may be added to the Public comment notebook). For this virtual meeting, the Woods community was asked to email *any public comments to the school board for Ms. Ising to address as needed.*
- III. Consent Agenda

<p>Principal's report <i>Mr. Bryan</i></p>	<p><u>Additional discussion/key points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Mr. Bryan gave a timeline summary of where we are today since March 14</li><li>● He gave a summary of the hybrid model Kindergarten is using currently for some in school learning and some virtual. 75% of kindergarteners attend school in person in A/B cohorts 2 days a week with 6 students in a cohort from 9am-12pm in masks. 25% of families decided to stay in full remote learning which is live streamed.</li><li>● There have been some small groups brought into the school for certain activities.</li><li>● Explore More, for grades 5-12, is a way to reach students and all them to get together virtually or outside safely. These activities are held on Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm being spearheaded by various teachers.</li><li>● Faculty child care is being provided for part of the day weekdays except Wednesday.</li><li>● Mr. Bryan listed special COVID funds which we are eligible for, which all expire 12/30/20.</li><li>● He listed steps that are being taken and some steps still in discussions to get school ready for the return to school.</li><li>● Athletics update was given</li><li>● Parent orientations at grade levels are being held or have been held.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers and administration is open to suggestions</li> <li>● He gave a list of common themes found in survey comments and his responses to those common concerns/questions.</li> <li>● 5 Key Metrics that the administration is using to make its decisions about reopening:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the percent positive COVID test rate (14 day trend).</li> <li>2) covid hospitalizations (14-day trend)</li> <li>3) survey responses from Woods faculty</li> <li>4) survey responses from Woods parents</li> <li>5) experience of other charter and private schools that have opened under various iterations of Plan B.</li> </ol> </li> <li>● Mr. Bryan gave the status of each of these 5 metrics currently including survey results from the faculty and parents surveys conducted in July and September.</li> </ul> <p>Based on all of the information presented with these five metrics, Mr. Bryan announced the administration team’s recommendation to the board. <b>The recommendation was that we stay in remote learning until after Winter Break and reevaluate at that time.</b></p> <p>In addition to this announcement, the report lists scenarios in a section titled, “When might we reopen? If not now, when?”</p> <p>The full Principal’s report can be found in the meeting packet.</p>
Minutes from, August 20, 2020 meeting	<u>Additional comment:</u> none

Action Taken: A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Karen Trott, seconded by Nina Llyoyd, and passed unanimously by the voting board members.

IV. Reports

Student Update Representative tbd	No report at this time. By next month’s meeting, we should have an elected student representative.
Faculty Update <i>Ms. Lawrence</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ms. Lawrence gave an update. School is very much open and reaching students virtually in different</li> </ul>

	<p>ways. An update of teaching was shared from all grade levels. Student council election in high school should happen next week. Woods will host the SAT for the first time during this academic year.</p>
<p>Finance committee <i>Ms. Trott</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Karen Trott shared August 2020 financial reports with the board as well as the up to date cash and cash equivalents for the year to date.</li> <li>● Written statements and charts are included in the meeting packet.</li> <li>● Ms. Trott reviewed our loan and the balloon payment we would need to make in 7 years.</li> <li>● A question was asked about our 3.9% mortgage rate if this is a competitive rate. Ms. Trott mentioned that this was something the Finance committee was looking into.</li> </ul>
<p>Foundation report <i>Ms. Jessica Oliver</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jessica Oliver shared her Foundation report.</li> <li>● So far, our annual fund is at \$39,000.</li> <li>● Grandparents/special friends day has been postponed if possible as well as the school wide Campout.</li> <li>● Gift card program is an easy way to help the school. 10% of our families have taken part in this program.</li> <li>● Annual fund week will still be happening. There will be an incentive for donating this year. Anyone who donates will be entered into a chance to win a luxurious getaway. Monthly sustainers will be automatically entered.</li> <li>● Into the Woods 5k is set for December 5th, at the foundation's October meeting, a decision will be made if the event needs to be virtual or can be a hybrid.</li> <li>● A decision will be made in January about the New Parents' Welcome reception in 2021.</li> <li>● Benefit auction date is April 23, 2021.</li> </ul>

	<p>Foundation Board will determine the format in February.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of Grants Awarded so far this year was reviewed.</li> <li>• A question was asked about the effectiveness of using Mail Chimp for newsletters. Ms. Oliver said the latest newsletter had about a 50% open rate.</li> </ul>
<p>Communications <i>Ms. Drake</i></p>	<p>No written report at this time. Colette Drake shared that she has reviewed the committee's information passed down to her. She shared the committee's goal which is to support Woods faculty and staff as appropriate.</p>
<p>Personnel <i>Ms. Ising</i></p>	<p>No written report at this time.</p>
<p>Board Development <i>Ms. Ising</i></p>	<p>No written report at this time. Ms. Amy Ising shared that an upcoming task of this committee is to look at the Board officer nomination process.</p>

V. Old Business

<p>Nominations for Board Vacancy</p>	<p>Each of the 5 board applicants spoke briefly about why he/ she should be chosen for this school board vacancy. The board members received each person's application to review prior to the meeting. All existing voting board members voted via a Qualtrics survey that Amy Ising sent us prior to the meeting. After all votes were cast and tallied, Ms. Ising announced that our newest board member would be Matt Young to fill the vacancy for the 2020-2021 school year. Congratulations was given to Matt. It was with heartfelt gratitude that each applicant was thanked for applying.</p>
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Action taken: no motion was needed. The voting board members voted for the board vacancy.

VI. New Business

<p>School Plan for Post October 2nd</p>	<p>Mr. Bryan shared information in his principal's report with the 5 Metrics as noted in the principal's report highlights above. The administration team used these metrics to guide its decisions for reopening.</p> <p>The administration team's recommendation to the board is that we stay in remote learning until after Winter Break and reevaluate at that time.</p> <p>Ms. Ising opened the floor to discussion or questions. Below are summaries of comments made:</p> <p>Many board members expressed that this was a difficult decision to make.</p> <p>After receiving the survey information to review earlier in the week, hearing the Governor's latest announcement at 3pm today, and receiving the administration team's recommendation this evening, this decision is not an easy one.</p> <p>It was mentioned often that we all want to return to school.</p> <p>It was also mentioned that if we return to school, it will be different from the school we all miss and want to get back to. Plan B would only be 2 days in person and 3 days at home, concerns about this were raised.</p> <p>A survey was conducted by students for high school students to complete. This information was emailed to board members. A board member brought up these survey results in our meeting. The majority of high school students surveyed would prefer Plan B.</p> <p>Requests for more specific information regarding Plan B as it pertains to Woods Charter School was a common concern among board member comments.</p> <p>Safety of faculty and students as well as families was mentioned</p>
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frequently as a high priority in this discussion.

A board member stated that the recommended timeline of waiting until January to possibly return is too long.

51% of schools in NC have returned to some form of in person teaching. A suggestion was made that we should be looking to those schools and how they have been successful.

Information from the Chatham County School board meeting today was referenced a few times specifically the presentation from Dr. Danny Benjamin, Professor, Infectious Diseases, Duke Department of Pediatrics information from the ABC Collaborative. It was suggested we possibly look into getting him to come speak at our school.

Concerns with Plan B were shared given the size of our classrooms, furniture in classrooms, etc. For Plan B, we need to look at it closely to figure out how it can work at Woods.

Concerns for how teachers would be able to handle Plan B teaching remotely and in person were also brought up.

Another common trend was wanting to honor the comfort level of the majority of our teachers in returning to in person teaching. Plan B will only work if teachers are there to teach.

Another comment was teachers and students are just getting into a groove with remote learning.

Another member asked after hearing these concerns, if realistically we envisioned ever going to a Plan B, or if there was a possibility it would be Plan A before we would return.

It was also mentioned that remote learning is not going smoothly for all and some students/families are struggling mentally and academically.

A question was asked for clarification on the timeline of this recommendation. Did this mean we would reevaluate our plan after Winter Break or before? Mr. Bryan stated that the wording of their recommendation could have been worded differently. It was the administration's intent that we stay remote until January, but we would reevaluate before we leave for Winter Break.

A suggestion was made that we continue with remote learning for four more weeks beyond October 2, and then reevaluate at

	<p>that time.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that if we evaluate this before Winter Break that we give ourselves ample time at more than one board meeting to discuss this before it is brought to a board meeting for a vote.</p> <p>Mr. Bryan asked those board members who raised questions about Plan B specifics what information they are wanting to know about Plan B.</p> <p>More discussion ensued. Ms. Ising stated we were getting close to 10pm, so we needed to decide on the recommendation that was on the table.</p> <p>A motion was made to continue with Plan C in accordance with the recommendation of the administration team through the end of 2020. This motion was made by Kristinia Sparrow, seconded by Collette Drake. The voting board members were polled. 3 members voted in favor of this motion, 2 members voted no.</p> <p>After the motion passed, a few members felt compelled to speak. A vote against this motion was not a vote against supporting our teachers and safety of the Woods community.</p> <p>It was reiterated that we, as a school, need to use this time between now and when we leave for Winter break to come up with Plan B and Plan A specific to Woods to share with parents and faculty. The board agreed to discuss this again at our October meeting, and vote on next steps at our November meeting.</p>
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Action Taken: A motion was made to continue with Plan C in accordance with the recommendation of the administration team through the end of 2020. This motion was made by Kristinia Sparrow, seconded by Collette Drake. The voting board members were polled, 3 members voted in favor of this motion, 2 members voted no. The motion passed.

VII. Closed Business: none

VIII. Adjournment Session	
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Action Taken: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:57pm was made by Kristina Sparrow, the motion was seconded by Nina Lloyd, and passed unanimously by the voting board members.