Woodward Academy Parent Community

Parent Community Board Meeting Minutes: October 27, 2015

Attendees:

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<tr>
<th>X Abernathy, Kimberly</th>
<th>X Masters, Sally</th>
<th>X Johnson, Pam</th>
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<tr>
<td>X Anderson, Cristina</td>
<td>X Mednick, Kirsten</td>
<td>X Wofford, Dori</td>
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<td>X Andrews, Rochelle</td>
<td>Mercurius, Janelle</td>
<td>X Zelcer, Randi</td>
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<td>X Atkins-McDonald, D.</td>
<td>X Obenshain, Betty</td>
<td>X Marinac, Stephanie</td>
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<td>X Auffant, Amy</td>
<td>X O’Neil, Randy</td>
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<td>Bell, Kim</td>
<td>X Patel, Nilam</td>
<td>Gulley, Stuart</td>
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<td>Bowden, Michelle</td>
<td>X Reak, Laura</td>
<td>X Spiller, Marcia Prewitt</td>
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<td>X Clapes, Diane</td>
<td>Reamsnyder, LJ</td>
<td>X Freer, Chris</td>
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<td>X Corbin, Karen</td>
<td>X Riviere, Gretchen</td>
<td>X Pahl, Lin</td>
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<td>X Cottingham, Sarah</td>
<td>X Roberts, Robbie</td>
<td>X Patty McIver</td>
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<td>Dunkle, Mia</td>
<td>X Robinson, LaKesha</td>
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<td>Earwood, Diana</td>
<td>X Rosenthal, Michelle</td>
<td>X Rebecca Eckstein</td>
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<td>X Fraser, Rebecca</td>
<td>Schifilliti, Sheila</td>
<td>X Nneka Johnson</td>
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<td>X Gorjala, Pramoda</td>
<td>X Taylor, Teri</td>
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<td>X Johnson, Marie</td>
<td>Thompson, Suzette</td>
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<td>X Kahlert, Sue</td>
<td>X Weiner, Heather</td>
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<td>X Kumar, Kumudha</td>
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X- Present

Call to Order

Pramoda Gorjala called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Comments

Ms. Marcia Prewitt Spiller, Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs

- We are proud to have many new talented teachers at Woodward this year. They come from a variety of previous employments offering diversity in experience.
- This year’s focus for faculty and administration is “Teaching and Learning”. Summer reading was “The Essential Conversation” by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot. This takes a look at building relationships and trust in the critical dialogue between parents and teachers.
- We have developed for teachers 1) Innovation Teams for each school that meet 1 time per month 2) Growth and Alignment teams and 3) Vertical Alignment Teams. We will map Core Teams through Atlas mapping configuration. There will be a living document on line to provide resources for teachers Academy wide.
- We have redesigned our Mentor-Intern Program to make it more Woodward centric. Every new teacher has a Mentor who will meet with them twice a month to help with curriculum, professionalism, viewing the classroom, etc.
- We have developed a new Academy wide performance evaluation for teachers. Previously teachers were evaluated by their principals. Now there will be one document for all teachers Primary through 12th grade. The various school principals had great input as well as informal feedback from students. These evaluations will run in three year cycles. The following are the five components for evaluation:
  - Planning & Preparation
  - Environment
  - Student Growth
  - Instruction
  - Professionalism
Ms. Marcia Prewitt Spiller continued

- We have a new Transition class on Main Campus for the 2nd grade. There are 8 students in this class.
- We have a new Primary School Principal – Eric Mitchell and Primary School Assistant Principal – Erica Ellis
- We were excited for our Arts department fall play “Tracks”. We would like to increase advertising for our programs. Ms. Spiller believes one of the most effective ways is by increasing our word of mouth advertising.
- Our band has beautiful new uniforms. Woodward has an excellent band who took the title, Grand Champions, in their division in a recent competition.
- Feedback on the new Haiku learning system being used in the MS has been exceptional. It is a learning application replacing Edline. We are currently trying to work out the training schedule needed for implementation next year.

Dr. Chris Freer, Vice President and Dean for Student Life

Arts & Athletics

- We are proud of our Arts program and we are continuing to get the word out about our Arts programs and presentations in the same manner as we do for our Athletic program. We have large posters hanging at Richardson Hall for student awareness.
- ESPN was on campus last Friday conducting interviews with Coaches, Students, and Principals about Elijah Holyfield – Senior football player
- We are very proud of our Athletics:
  - Girls softball are in the playoffs for the 6th consecutive year against Buford
  - Cheerleading is going well with the team placing 2nd in an earlier tournament
  - Cross Country is doing the Last Chance Invitational with the State Championships looming
  - Girls Volleyball is advancing to the Final Four on October 28 against Buford
  - Varsity Football is 8-0 placing 3rd in state in one poll and 1st in state in another poll. There are 7 division I prospects on the team. These students are great leaders, good students and community activist. The last time we had a perfect season was in 1997. We are looking forward to another this year.
  - Robert W. Woodruff Marching Band looks great in their new uniforms
  - Senior night is fast approaching with recognition of all seniors

Character Development

- Connie White, Director of Learning at Woodward gave a talk about Our Online Digital Footprint for the 10th – 12th grade. It emphasized strong character while online. She reminded the students that your footprint never goes away and it can be pulled up by anyone including colleges and prospective employers.
- Every student signs an honor pledge as a freshman in the US. The signatures are located in a glass case on the 2nd floor of the Humanities building as a reminder of their pledge. The students reaffirm yearly beginning in 9th grade.

Service Learning

- Tutoring is on track for Hapeville Elementary and the Jesse Draper Boys & Girls Club.
- Our annual Canned Food Drive is coming up the Friday before we leave for Thanksgiving break. It is an Academy wide food drive to help Shelters and Food Banks in the Atlanta area. 20 cans or $20.00 is requested. Woodward is #1 in Private School donations in pounds of food and contribution!
Dr. Chris Freer, continued

Changes in Uniforms

- Our goal is to make students look good and uniform in appearance
- Continuing to monitor skirt length to comply with new requirements. Detentions are given to those not in compliance
- Added a new winter coat – heavy fleece, water repellent
- Added a new red tie for seniors only
- Added girls leggings – white, black or navy blue only – Academy wide
- We have a new Pea Coat – Men’s and Women’s Styles. It is for all ages and does not have a Woodward logo. It comes in black only. They are available at US Wings and Mills Uniforms
- Introducing gabardine pants for girls - Academy wide.
- Current fleece coats, sweatshirts, jackets, and sweaters are still available. Vests have been discontinued but still may be worn.
- He reminded us of the meaning of the colors we use at Woodward Academy. Red letter jackets (grades 9-12) can be substituted for winter jackets for those who have earned this recognition. Athletes and Band members can letter with other clubs earning a patch
- An email will be sent out school wide shortly outlining these changes

Rebecca Eckstein, Vice President for Admissions

- Enrollment is up this year: 2675 was our student goal and 2700 was our actual number of students Academy wide
- We are proud of our increase in SSAT scores. The 6th, 8th and 9th grades showed an increase in scores with the 7th grade remaining the same as the prior testing results.
- Our Main Campus Admissions Open House will be November 1 from 2-5 p.m. We have 2,362 people that have RSVP’d as compared to 1,900 last year. Of the 2,362, we have 1,000 families for the PS and LS
- Woodward North will have their Admissions Open House November 8 from 2-4 p.m. They will be giving out red WA bags and water bottles with admission information. The RSVP’s match last year.
- A new Transition class for 3rd grade has been added at WN
- Marketing: We have several avenues of our current marketing campaign this year.
  - Redesign of Woodward’s website – trying to move to page 1
  - Advertising on WSB
  - Google Ads
  - Facebook Ads
  - T.V. Commercial/Magazine Ads
  - Billboards in Buckhead, Porsche Complex, 85 South, Airport, and Medlock Bridge Rd
  - Ads at Movie Theaters in Johns Creek and South Atlanta before Minion Movie
  - Mentions on Good Morning America
  - Other helpful avenues of marketing: Fill out review on Yelp and tweet messages
- SSATB survey of what people visiting WA want in an Admissions Open House: They overwhelmingly stated they wanted engagement with parents, students, and faculty. Ms. Eckstein asked that, as volunteers, we engage the parents and answer their questions or direct them to the proper people.
- Questions were asked from Board members about the best way to guide the parents and students. Gregory Smith will be at the PS from Admissions and Rebecca Eckstein will be available for LS, MS, and US during the Main Campus Open House.
- Ms. Eckstein asked if anyone would like to be a mentor family for new families coming into Woodward Academy to please email her.
Guest Speaker via Skype: Robert Mitchell ’17 – Upper School Environmental Science Student

- Nneka Johnson, IT department set up Skype call
- Pramoda welcomed Robert Mitchell and a fellow student as well as Monica Kuhlman who is their Environmental Science teacher
- The presentation was on: “Responsible Purchasing of Electronics Without Conflict Minerals”

Below are the highlights:

- Conflict Minerals are minerals mined from places of major conflicts, such as the Congo
- People are dying mining these minerals while the mine owners get rich
- ITSCI is a mining organization that can oversee these mines to help prevent the abuse of these people forced to mine these minerals
- Human Rights are being violated by Warlords who use children and threaten workers and their families to make them work, usually for little or no money.
- We need to make people aware of where the minerals that are used in our everyday electronics and phones originate
- There are several companies such as Apple and Intel that do not get these minerals from these areas.
- Please go to Enough.org for more information

Pramoda thanked our guest speakers for presenting this important message.

Approval of Minutes

- Rochelle Andrews made a motion to approve the minutes from September 22, 2015
- Betty Obenshain properly seconded the motion
- Minutes were approved

Treasurer Report – Marie Johnson

- Marie thanked the individual treasurers for their timely reports

Parent Community President’s Report – Pramoda Gorjala

- Pramoda welcomed our new Board Members
  - Stephanie Marinac – MS Vice Chair
  - Pam Johnson – LS Secretary/Treasurer
- Thanked everyone for volunteering for the upcoming Admissions Open House
- Pramoda will send an email regarding details and locations to serve during Open House
- She encouraged all to fly Woodward house flags and attach WA magnets to their cars, wear school colors, and wear their PC badges during the Open House
- She asked for various committees to use posters, if possible, on display tables to show highlights of their events
- She reminded everyone about the Nominating Committee meeting directly following the Board meeting

School and Committee Reports

Welcoming Committee – Liz White for Diana Earwood

- Off to a good start with filling representative positions and additional volunteers. Currently we have:
Welcoming Committee continued
- Upper School – Vanessa Erbrick, Katherine Lowe
- Middle School – Kristi Fernandez, (one additional rep needed)
- Lower School – Kirsten Mednick, (one additional rep needed)
- Primary School – Felicia Elibert (one additional rep needed)
- Woodward North – April Mehraban, (one additional rep needed)
- Additional Volunteers – Becky Carpenter (MS), Kathryn Clayton (MS), Melanee Watson (LS), Alicia Wood (PS)

- Working with Admissions team, Pramoda and PC Board to support Admissions Open House on November 1 (Main Campus) and November 8 (WN)
- Meeting in the works for January to “kickoff” the event planning for Welcoming Committee

Concessions – Karen Corbin
- SGD went well
- All games are completed except for varsity football
- Preparing for basketball in three weeks
- Record revenue for last Friday’s varsity game
- Continue to need volunteers

Consignment Shop – Teri Taylor
- Cleaned up from summer
- Need Oxford shirts and ties, especially teen sizes
- Need Winter items
- Need new uniform pieces
- Request possible communication through room parents, Facebook and newsletters for these items

Parent Programming – Kumudha Kumar for Suzette Thompson
- We completed our second Design Thinking presentations with “Why Do Parents and Students Need to Have Conversations About Learning.” Feedback has been very positive.
- We had a very successful presentation on Executive Functioning with Dr. Carol Matheson. This focused on the 8 subtypes of kids with ADHD and practical tips/interventions
- Love and Logic sessions are being extended due to participant interest.
- Upcoming events include:
  o Nov 5, in Gresham Chapel at 8:30 a.m. From Stressed to Success: Conscious Parenting for Kids in a Complex World” presented by Diane Dempster
  o December 1, in Gresham Chapel at 8:30 a.m. “Helping Parents Maintain a Long Term or Big Picture Perspective.” Presented by Mark Crawford, Ph.D

Academy Coffee – Sue Kahler for Michelle Bowden
- We have held three successful Academy Coffee mornings so far. They have been well attended by individuals, small meeting groups, and an exercise group.
- Working on a permanent place to house our Academy Coffee
- Next date will be November 4 in Gresham Chapel Activity Room

Super Goober Day – Kirsten Mednick
- SGD was a wonderful success! Parents were thrilled with the shaded area. Over 2,000 in attendance
- Thank you to all volunteers who did a wonderful job
- Sold over $700 in wristbands on the day of SGD
- Parents were glad there were no tickets this year
- Follow up meeting with team and Cristina Anderson who will capably lead next year.
Communication – Randi Zelcer
- Thanked everyone for sending in their individual newsletters. Main newsletter should go out on November 2

Woodward North – Michelle Rosenthal
- We all had a great time at SGD
- We had a successful Mom’s Night Out
- Our 4th – 6th grade parents had a great tour of the Middle and Upper Schools
- Looking forward to our Halloween parties
- Looking forward to Dr. Gulley coming on November 6 for our next WNPC meeting
- Faculty refreshments on November 6
- WN Admissions Open House on November 8
- Family night, Rock & Read on November 13
- Book Fair the week of November 16
- The Friday before Thanksgiving break we will have our PK/K Thanksgiving celebration and Feast, which is always a loved performance.

Primary School – Randy O’Neil
- October 1 Halloween decorations were up. This was chaired by Kelly Anderson.
- Halloween classroom parties scheduled for October 30. Very exciting time for PS.
- We are reaching out to the Jesse Draper Boys and Girls Club regarding the Star Tree Project. We are planning on fulfilling hundreds of star tree gifts this year for the children.
- We are planning to offer the E-Star Tree option this year. Parents can pick a star from an electronic list in Sign Up Genius in hopes of increased participation by the PS families.
- On October 1, the Sunshine Club presented birthday cupcakes to teachers/administration/specials/facilities that had birthdays in the summer and in September/October. Ronna Levinson hand delivered cupcakes to each person.
- Upcoming events
  - Admissions Open House November 1
  - Canned Food Drive Begins November 2
  - Thanksgiving decorations are up on November 2
  - Holiday decorations/Star Tree/Collection Letter all happening on November 16

Lower School – LaKesha Robinson

September and October Events:
- Currently hosting the LS Book Fair (October 26-30)
- Hosted a teacher preview and parent coffee
- Advertising teacher wish lists for Book Fair
- Promoting online sales of Book Fair
- Supporting room parents as they host Halloween parties
- Hosted two teacher appreciation events
- Acknowledgement and celebration of faculty birthdays
- Welcomed our new Secretary/Treasurer – Pam Johnson

Upcoming November Events:
- Teacher appreciation luncheon
- Canned food drive
- Holiday decorating November 18
Middle School – Gretchen Riviere

Welcomed MS Parent Community Co-Chair, Stephanie Marinac

October Events

- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon on October 14. Sheila Cornelius and Brantley Abrams organized a delicious luncheon. Slideways catered the event with burgers and sandwiches and parents brought side items.
- October 23 – MS Fall Social and the Family Tailgate and BBQ
  - Held at the MS from 3-6 p.m. It was an afternoon of inflatables, bull rides, games and snacks. Thank you to the MS Faculty for planning and supervising.
  - The MS Parent Community provided the food for the event including ice cream
  - Amanda Ayres chaired the Tailgate and BBQ and did an amazing job!
  - The LS cafeteria and courtyard were well decorated. Mr. Champ was the DJ, the MS Cheerleaders held a pep-rally and the WA corn hole game was set up.
  - Low Country catered the event. 630 meal tickets were sold.

November Events

- December Child Project: Stephanie Marinac will work with Mrs. Fitch to coordinate information to homeroom teachers and parents about this project.
- Each homeroom will work with DFACS as secret Santas to provide toys and clothing to children in South Fulton County foster care. The homerooms will have a gift wrapping party for the toys.
- Holiday decorations will go up on November 30. This is chaired by Laura Drucker

Upper School – Diane Clapes

October Events

- A social gathering for senior parents was held on Saturday, October 17. It was held at the home of Lisa and Rick Jackson. Approximately 80-90 people were in attendance.
- We held a very successful Red Cross Blood Drive, led by Kay Lee Bender, on October 20.
- Teacher’s luncheon was held on October 21 and was put together by the grade level coordinators for the 10th grade. The theme was farm to table and everything was fabulous.

November Events

- We plan to gather at the WA PC Coffee on November 4 and cut ribbons that the students will wear on Veterans Day during Woodward’s observance of that day.
- We will be decorating for the holidays on November 19.
- We will treat the students to donuts, milk and juice on the morning of November 20.

Comments

- Robbie Roberts presented Pramoda Gorjala a birthday present and thanked her for serving as Parent Community Board President this year.
- Pramoda thanked everyone for coming and participating in the Board Meeting.
- Pramoda reminded everyone that a breakout meeting for the Nominating Committee is being held directly after Board Meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly Abernathy, Executive Board Secretary
Woodward Academy Parent Community