

MINUTES

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government & International Studies Regional School Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 17, 2010

9:15 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Dianne Pettitt, Chairman of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional School Board, called the meeting to order.

II. Introductions

Each Board member introduced him or herself and stated their locality, (listed in alphabetical order by locality).

Present:

Mrs. Barbara Crawley, *School Board*, Charles City Public Schools
Mrs. Dianne Pettitt, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mr. Ivan Mattox, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mrs. Lisa Marshall, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools
Mrs. Gwynn Litchfield, *School Board*, King & Queen Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Mrs. Dudley Olsson, *School Board*, West Point Public Schools
Dr. Janet Crawley, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. Marcus J. Newsome, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. Linda Underwood, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Ms. Sandra Crowder, Gifted Education Specialist, for Dr. Stewart Roberson, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Robert Richardson, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Dr. Brenda Petteway, Assistant Superintendent, for Dr. Alvera Parrish, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Yvonne Brandon, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools
Dr. Jeffrey Smith, **Superintendent**, West Point Public Schools
Mr. Fred S. Morton IV, **Director**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School
Mrs. Barbara Marshall, **Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Absent:

Mr. John Axselle, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Mrs. Teresa Lindsay, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Robert Cox, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Kimberly Gray, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools
Mr. Charles Clare, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Dr. Margaret Meara, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools
Dr. Bobby Browder, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools
Mrs. Megan Marcinkevich, **Deputy Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Also present:

John Walter – Mathematics Department Chair (18 years service at MLWGS), John Wilkes – Global Studies Department Chair (19 years service at MLWGS), Denise Yagel - English Department Chair (8 years service at MLWGS), Pam Edgerton – Science Department Chair (13 years service at MLWGS), Barrett Brown – International Languages Department Chair (15 years service at MLWGS), Jeff Hall – Fine Arts Department Chair (4 years service at MLWGS), Karl Zweerink – Counseling Department Chair (11 years service at MLWGS), Phil Tharp, Patti Chappell and Wendy Ellis – Administration, Hall Waller - GS Foundation, Paul Fleischer – Richmond Peace Education Center, Duke Price – Parent and Trisha Miller from Hanover County Public Schools.

III. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Ivan Mattox, the agenda was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The following correction was requested by Lisa Marshall : Page 12, 4th paragraph under UVA Study Recommendations reading “Mrs. Marshall stated that she believes that each jurisdiction still maintains the right of their Superintendent to make the final decision,” will be changed to “Mrs. Marshall stated that she believes under the Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School Board Charter each jurisdiction still maintains the right of their Superintendent to make the final decision,”

On motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the minutes as corrected for June 24, 2010 were unanimously approved.

V. Recognitions

Scheduled for recognition: Track Coach Jim Holdren. Mr. Holdren was unable to attend due to practice commitments. Mr. Holdren will be asked to appear before this Board in September.

Mr. Morton introduced the newest member of the Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School Leadership team: Dr. Wendy Taylor Ellis and emphasized a few highlights from her numerous background achievements:

- High School Teacher for Henrico County in the IB Program
- Worked at the Central Office level in Gifted Education
- Middle School Principal
- High School Principal for a small rural school division

Dr. Ellis and Mrs. Pat Taylor spent several days in June and July working together to allow for her smooth transition into this position.

Mrs. Pettitt welcomed Dr. Ellis to Maggie L. Walker Governor's School.

VI. Public Comments

The Public Information Period shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes (in the discretion of the Chairperson) to make his/her comments. Individuals representing groups will be allotted five (5) minutes. Citizens must schedule their appearance with the Board's Clerk, not later than 10:00am on the last business day before the meeting at which they desire to be heard.

Mr. Paul Fleisher, representing the Richmond Peace Education Center. "Good morning. I am passing out the latest summary of diversity figures that includes the latest class for Maggie Walker. As you might suppose, I'm here to talk once again about the ongoing efforts to increase diversity in the Maggie Walker School population, and most specifically among black students.

"While the paper is going around let me also advertise quickly the Richmond Peace Education Center is in the process of training our sixth group of teen conflict resolution trainers this September and we still have some spaces left in this year's training. If there is someone from your school division who would be a good candidate, eighth grade through age 20 to become a teen trainer, we would love to have an application from them.

"As you will see; I know there were some adjustments made in the admissions process over the last year, but unfortunately it seems the number or percentages haven't changed much. There seems to be maybe a little random fluctuation, but the percentage of black students admitted to Maggie Walker really has not changed much despite all the efforts. So, I'm here to encourage the School and School Board to continue the process of trying to find ways to make the admission process more equitable. We've added one little statistic to these printouts and this is for impact as suggested by a parent who works in the Human Resource field, and this is a statistic that the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission uses when they are judging hiring practices; the idea is to compare black acceptance to white acceptance. You can see that overall the rate of selection of black students is only about 7% the rate of acceptance of white students. We've also added that statistic for the three individual districts that we've given you information for. We've include the three larger school districts in your packet because that's where the statistical data is most valid because of the numbers, but I don't want you to think if you're from a small district that only brings a couple of students here each year this lets you off the hook because this is a school wide issue. I'm hoping we will be able to bring you some statistics next time we speak that may shed a little more light on that as well.

"I'd like to encourage you to look at a couple of proposals: 1) I'd like to speak in support of Dr. Russo's proposal that he suggested last year and will be implemented this year, to select the top scoring individual from each middle school in the district. My hope is that that will have some effect on both increasing the diversity because of where people live in the various sections of each school district, but also may increase the pool because I think it will encourage kids who might otherwise not apply to apply because they know there is that one spot available. I would like to encourage each district to consider that and also to test it

out, let's see if it's going to help. You have this year's current class information on the books already, you have last year's, you have all the information about all those kids, so I would encourage the school to run those numbers, pull out the individuals – the top performing kid from each middle school, and let's take a look to see if that in fact will raise the level of diversity.

“I would also like to once again encourage you to follow the important recommendation in the UVA Study, and that is to abandon the use of a single matrix score. It's not considered best practices; it's what we did in Richmond Public Schools thirty five years ago when we first started the Gifted and Talented Program, we lumped all of our measures together into a single score and then we made a judgment, so we had a cut-off. But we stopped doing that twenty five years ago because it makes more sense to look at various aspects of a child's performance and ability; it's a little more work but if you look at ability, at achievement, at community involvement and leadership separately, and then make some judgments on the whole child, I think you get much more value from all that information and all those measures that you've spent time gathering on each child. So I would really encourage you to disaggregate the data that you collect and use that when you make your selections.

“I might say that we will be happy to work along with you; Genevieve Siegel-Hawley who I've been working with over the years and who you may know as an alumni of this school and now at the Civil Rights Project, is very expert in these areas, and we would be happy to provide assistance in whatever way you deem appropriate. Thank you.”

VII. Director's Report

Mr. Morton updated the following activities for the Board:

As follow-up to Public Comments the Director recalled that the Board was given a report in June in terms of our next steps, and stated we would be happy to share that with the speaker as we continue to look at and work with the data. It is important to remember that this is a complex set of challenges for us because while the school receives the students, we also have twelve school districts with a wide variety of challenges. It is work that we need to continue doing, but we are trying to be very thoughtful in the approach and we are looking at a wide variety of these issues.

One target for this year is to work with all middle school and elementary school counselors across the region. We've identified October 6, 2010 from 9:30am to 11:30am as the first middle school counselors day that will include a full orientation about MLWGS, actions to consider that will help students starting at the sixth grade level, and an opportunity to tour the school lead by our Student Ambassadors where they can see and understand the complexities, challenges and opportunities that exist here. This program will provide an opportunity to eighty counselors from eighty middle schools to expand their knowledge to thoroughly assist their students who wish to come to Maggie Walker. In the spring we will conduct a similar day(s) but target elementary school counselors so we may need to utilize two days as there are many more elementary schools than the number of middle schools. We are deeply committed to continuing this work to help the people that work with students on a daily basis in your divisions understand some of the possibilities.

Constitution Day: September 17, 2010 is designated as the national day of recognition; however, activities can be celebrated over the course of a week's time around that date. Working in collaboration with The GS Foundation a set of plaques will be donated from local law firms to MLWGS which are an original replica of The Constitution and The Bill of Rights. As part of the beginning of our 20th year commemoration we have invited the Governor to dedicate these plaques, and are currently awaiting his office to identify 30 minutes of time for this ceremony. The Board will be notified when plans are finalized.

August Professional Development: As part of the 20th year commemoration, while it should be a celebration of our history and successes, we should also look to the future. Who should we benchmark ourselves against? In line with this work we think the starting place is the faculty, but will also include this Board and the broader community. Reflecting what is different in the world now from 20 years ago; what do we need to do to ensure we continue what has been a cause of success, but what else do we need to consider as we look at the next 20 years?

Setting the stage next week on August 26th we will be taking the faculty to the Jepson Center at the University of Richmond in a retreat setting. The agenda currently includes the following guest speakers: Dr. Ed Ayers – President of the University of Richmond who is a cutting edge researcher in the Humanities field, Dr. Tom Huff – Vice Provost of Life Sciences at VCU who will speak to the emerging trends and what is changing around us, and Marshall Morton - Chief Executive Officer of Media General who represents a business perspective. Planning will also include spending time over the next six months building upon the insights learned from this retreat in a series of ongoing discussions.

Also in development is a collaboration with K-12 Insight to design survey mechanisms that gather multiple kinds of information from our community.

Mrs. Marshall inquired about bringing parents into discussions that involve taking Maggie Walker Governor's School to the next level. Mr. Morton responded that taking the school to the next level doesn't translate to making the program tougher and how can we do more. He doesn't believe we can ask the students to do more than they already are...but given the needs of the world can we work smarter with a greater focus? How do we look at integration across departments as we do the work? How can the work be more focused? Part of the solution will include the survey mechanisms so each parent can be involved. Mr. Morton has heard questions such as; why would you change anything? He responded; "We have to start thinking about the future as the kind of institution that we are, and how do we get better at what we are doing, not more; how do we get better... That's what effective organizations do." He stated; "I think that's what we're asking our students to do every day."

Mr. Morton stated this step is very much just the starting place. The review will be a matter of process over the next 6-8 months.

Mrs. Pettitt asked that the Board be kept informed as the process progresses and agreed that Mrs. Marshall's point was pertinent that we establish a foundation of understanding as to why we are doing this.

Coming Events are included in the Board packet on pages 21 and 22. Freshmen orientation is scheduled for August 31st and September 1st. Also, October 6th has been identified for the Middle School Counselors Orientation; more information will be provided as developed.

VIII. Action Items

a. Budget Adjustment

The Director stated MLWGS is in receipt of \$17,640 from VDOT for purchase of Right of Way for I-95 Bridge Repair, previously approved by this Board on November 5, 2009, and he recommends adding the amount to Miscellaneous Revenue. Funds will be utilized for vision and planning work for the coming year.

There being no questions or discussion regarding this budget adjustment; on motion by Ivan Mattox, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the Budget Adjustment Item was unanimously approved.

b. Authorize Director to Certify MLWGS Crisis Plan

Annual authorization is required allowing the Director to certify that review has taken place to the Virginia Center for School Safety VCSS. The only change in 2010-2011 to the previously certified manual is in Crisis Team members and contact information.

There being no questions or discussion regarding this request, on motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Gwynn Litchfield the aforementioned authorization was unanimously approved.

c. Annual Board Authorization of Signatures in Absence of Division Superintendent – Fiscal Year 2011 for DOE

Annual authorization is required allowing Philip Tharp signature authorization for the Virginia Department of Education in the absence of the Director.

There being no questions or discussion regarding this request, on motion by Lisa Marshall, seconded by Dudley Olsson, the aforementioned authorization was unanimously approved.

d. Reschedule October Regional School Board Meeting

The currently scheduled meeting date of October 14, 2010 conflicts with the State Superintendents Legislative Conference. The proposed new date requested is October 21, 2010.

There being no questions or discussion regarding this request, on motion by Lisa Marshall, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the aforementioned date change was unanimously approved.

e. Resolution of Support for Maggie L. Walker Postage Stamp

Melvin Jones, President of the Maggie L. Walker Alumni Association has spearheaded a postage stamp project honoring Maggie L. Walker and has asked the school and this Board for support. Mr. Morton met with both Eric Cantor and Bobby Scott of the Virginia Delegation while in Washington, DC recently and both are supportive of this project. To that end, we propose the attached Resolution draft.

There being no questions or discussion regarding this request, on motion by Ivan Mattox, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the aforementioned Resolution of Support was unanimously approved.

IX. Materials for Board Review

a. Personnel

Provided as information for the Board, Mrs. Margaret Storti, Part-Time Chorus Teacher has resigned her position. Mrs. Storti was able to obtain full time employment in a private school.

b. MLWGS 20th Anniversary Commemoration Initial Discussion

The Director noted this item was provided to alert the Board that we are in the early discussion phase of looking to develop an activity for the spring that commemorates the anniversary of this institution that has provided a spectacular education to students.

c. New Club Proposals

Two proposals are submitted for Board Review; 1) The Write Thing To Do Club sponsored by Lisa Williams, English Department and 2) Japanese National Honor Society sponsored by Tadao Uchisawa, Foreign Languages Department with a stipend of \$233.00 attached. Approval for both will be requested in September.

Mrs. Marshall noted two typographical errors in the Constitution submitted for The Write Thing To Do club. Mrs. Williams will be notified to correct this document.

X. Informational Items Provided

MLWGS News Items:

- MLWGS Student Attends Summer Academy at NASA
- MLWGS Alumni Earns Fulbright Scholarship
- City of Richmond Proclamation declaring July 15th as Maggie Lena Walker Day

XI. Superintendent's Steering Committee Meeting

No report was presented; however, Dr. Newsome announced that the 2010/11 Region 1 Professional Development Consortium will include school divisions outside of Region 1. The first session this year will be held on August 24th at the Jepson Center, University of Richmond. The scheduled keynote speaker is Erin Gruwell of the Freedom Writers Foundation. Three subsequent sessions are scheduled and your representatives have those dates.

Dr. Newsome thanked Dr. Brandon and her team at RPS who has continued to build on regional partnerships by inviting several school divisions and their staff last week to hear Bill Daggett, a preeminent speaker on rigor relevance and relationships.

XII. Closed Meeting

None

XIII. Certification of Closed Meeting and any action, if necessary, as a result of closed meeting.

None

XIV. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, on motion by Ivan Mattox, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the meeting was adjourned.

XV. Next Meeting

September 16, 2010 at 9:00am. MLWGS Board Room, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 226, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190 or x2111.

Dianne Pettitt, Chairman

Fred S. Morton IV, Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk