

MINUTES

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government & International Studies
Regional School Board Meeting
1000 N. Lombardy Street, Richmond, VA

Thursday, June 18, 2015

9:08 a.m.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Moment of Silence

The Chairman called for a moment of silence.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Jeff McGee led the pledge of allegiance.

IV. 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
Mr. Kevin Hazzard, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. Henry (Hank) C. Lowry, Jr., *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Ms. Cora Armstrong, *School Board*, King & Queen Public Schools
Mrs. Sarah Grier Barber, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Mr. Jerry Warren, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Kimberly Gray, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools (late arrival)
Dr. James Lane, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Dr. Jamelle Wilson, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Donice Davenport for Dr. Pat Kinlaw, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Stanley Jones, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Dr. David Myers, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Dr. Joseph Melvin, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Eric Jones, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools
Dr. Dana Bedden, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools
Dr. Jeff McGee, **Director**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School
Mrs. Barbara Marshall, **Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School
Ms. Megan Rainey, **Deputy Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Absent:

Mrs. Dianne Smith, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mrs. Michelle Ogburn, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Deborah Marks, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Dr. David Gaston, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. Marcus Newsome, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. John Fahey, **Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools
Dr. Bobby Browder, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools

Also present:

Phil Tharp and Wendy Ellis – MLWGS Administration
Wendy DeGroat, Lisa Williams, Cynthia Losen, Dawn Grois, Lynn Reed, Tinsley Pollard,
Deborah Snagg and Sharon Parker – MLWGS Staff
Burt Hazelwood, Marianne Macon and Laura Lewis – GS Foundation
Chamie Valentine – School Advisory Council (SAC) Chairman
Anne Hayes – PTSA Advocacy Committee
Brick Brickley - Parent
Bill Yates – Alumni Parent

V. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Cora Armstrong, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the agenda for this meeting was unanimously approved.

VI. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Cora Armstrong, minutes for the regular meeting of May 21, 2015 were unanimously approved.

VII. Recognitions

- The following departing distinguished superintendents were recognized for their service: Dr. Jamelle Wilson is leaving to become Dean of the University of Richmond, School of Professional and Continuing Studies; Dr. Stanley Jones is moving to Danville Public Schools as Superintendent, and Dr. John Fahey plans to enjoy retirement.

VIII. Public Comments

The Public Information Period shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes (at 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 no later than 10:00am on the last business day before the meeting at which they desire to be heard.

The following remarks were provided from a transcript by **Mrs. Dawn Grois**:

Good morning! My name is Dawn Grois and I have taught German at the Governor's School for almost 25 years. I am currently serving as the department chair of International Languages, and I am proud to have had one of my sons graduate from this school.

I am here today to express my thanks to all of you for your continued support of such a great institution. When I was asked to teach here in 1991, I jumped at the opportunity to be part of this unique effort of collaboration to create a regional school for gifted students. The vision of that original group depended on getting a group of risk-taking students with the support of their parents to attend. Those of us hired did not envision the challenges ahead of us and I applaud all of those involved in making this school a wonderful opportunity for those selected students to learn in an environment which stimulates their creativity, fosters community service, and teaches them life-long leadership skills.

We are now an established school with 25 years of history, and many people may believe that there is no need for improvement or change. Although we have achieved many of the original goals set forth for this school, we still have a lot of work ahead of us. The 5-year Strategic Plan has been long overdue and I appreciate Dr. McGee's effort and commitment to gather a 17-member team who represented all of the interests of this school. They worked together this year to come up with a plan which will help to address some issues, which need to be resolved.

This school has all the right people to achieve these goals: wise and experienced educational leaders, hard-working administrators, dedicated teachers, supportive parents, and students who are amazing!

We should remember the enthusiasm and innovative ideas that came out of that original group of planners, and emulate them. But we also need to evolve. It will take all of us to make it happen. As the famous German poet and universal genius, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, said: "It is not enough to know; we must apply. It is not enough to want; we must also do." (Es ist nicht genug zu wissen; man muss anwenden. Es ist nicht genug zu wollen; man muss auch tun.)

Let's not be divided by those who want no change. We need to go forward in a positive, supportive environment so that we can continue to provide a viable option for gifted students.

Thank you once again for allowing me to be part of this great school.

The following remarks were provided from a transcript by **Mrs. Cynthia Losen**:

My name is Cynthia Losen and I teach English. I am grateful for having this job—in my case—for nearly 25 years. Thanks for hiring Drs. Ellis and McGee, dedicated professionals who have begun creating a long-overdue policy manual. Thanks to them, we now *have* a fair teacher evaluation process.

Since August, I have been on the Policy Committee. Since August, the Board has passed 38 new policies and 18 new regulations that we vetted. Policies strengthen the integrity of the school because they make expectations clear. Thus, I do not understand why people call policies "creativity-killers."

One of the policies requires staff and students to sign acceptable use [of technology] forms—required in most public school divisions. In spite of that, innuendo abounded. Rumor had it that administration would apply the contract punitively; teachers would be “singled out.”

At one meeting, a teacher spread the proverbial compost on the weeds, suggesting that signing would result in action plans and dismissals. “Hello! I am actually *on* the committee,” I said, admittedly phrasing it more like a question, perhaps because it *was* so absurd. I might as well have been invisible, and without capacity for speech, for alarmism prevailed.

In the end, people signed. We were also asked to submit technology lessons. Like others, I complained, though I must now admit, they have made me a better teacher.

In February, my students created 30-second “Superbowl” commercials for Dante’s *Inferno*.

“Why would anyone want to visit Hell?” several students asked.

I had a number of reasons: it would be safe; people could interview the residents, curse them if they liked, take selfies with them, Facebook and tweet and SKYPE their adventures, not to mention bragging rights. If I had the money, I would *so* do that. I said something to this effect.

“What about making a commercial about how you *don’t* want to go there,” asked a student.

“Ah,” I said, “a public service ad.” The Project Exile commercials popped into my head. Barred cells close, locks click—the shouting, bellowing, crying, the [muffled] cursing. The clanging and banging and rattling—“a *cacophony*, to use a vocab word,” I added. Eyes rolled but some of them smiled. They were soooo hooked.

Most chose the PSA. The results were great. It was not just about the final product. Students had to justify their decisions, and it all came down to their understanding of the original text.

Maybe the Policy Committee needs to apply what I learned from teaching my students how to sell regions of Hell in 30 seconds. We should make it slick and funny, but memorable. Either that, or we could make a PSA about what this school would be like *without* policies. There are still plenty of us around to provide the testimonials.

When this school had no official policies of its own, we lived in fear. We couldn’t even trust our own judgments. Talk about a creativity killer. Policies represent a kind of contract, or covenant—one that protects all of us. And many of us truly appreciate Drs. Ellis and McGee for finally making this happen. Thanks to the board for finding these professionals to lead us into the future.

The Chairman thanked both speakers for their remarks.

IX. Director's Report

A. Verbal Updates

Class of 2019 Parent Orientation, Thursday, May 28th

Class of 2015 Information:

- 173 Graduates
- As a class they performed a total of 36,027 hours of community service, representing an average of 207 hours per student
- The highest total for community service was earned by Utkarsha Bhave (Henrico) with 900 hours
- Awarded over \$18.85 million in scholarship offers
- Average GPA was 4.08
- Average SAT score was 2,089 (Math – 694, Reading – 711, Writing – 685)
- Graduates going to 58 different colleges, 110 are staying in-state, 61 are going out-of-state, and 2 will study abroad in the United Kingdom and Singapore
- Of the 110 staying in-state, 91 or 83% are going to one of these four state schools: UVA, College of William & Mary, VCU and VATEch
- 24 were National Merit Finalists and 62 more received Commendations
- 5 were Presidential Scholar Candidates

2015 Achievement Profile (early view – certified in the fall)

B. Coming Events

June 18, 2015 through August 20, 2015 (see June 18, 2015 page IX.b, for detail).

X. Unfinished Business

None

XI. Action Items

a. Policy Proposal

The following is submitted from the Policy Steering Committee for Board approval: Policy No. 0002 – Facilities Planning *Amended*, Policy No. 0003 – Construction Planning, Policy No. 1002 – Unexpired Term Fulfillment, Policy No. 1012.a – Advisory Committees to the Regional School Board *Amended*, Policy No. 1022 – Regular School Board Meetings, Policy No. 3012 – Health Education/Physical Education, Policy No. 3013 – Driver Education, Policy No. 4009 – Drugs in School, Policy No. 5000.1 – Staff Hiring Procedures, Policy No. 5000.2 – Employment of Family Members and Policy No. 5100 – Part-Time Exempt and Non-Exempt Substitute Professional Staff Employees . Proposed policies are grounded in model policy of the Virginia School Board Association.

On motion by Kimberly Gray, seconded by Barbara Crawley, Policies No. 0002, 0003, 1002, 1012.a, 1022, 3012, 3013, 4009, 5000.1, 5000.2 and 5100 were unanimously approved.

b. FY16 Student Fee Schedule

Updated from FY15, the proposal presented reflects projected costs in all subject areas. The proposed fee schedule was posted to the school website for public communication along with fee waiver information.

Chairman Hazzard acknowledged the generous support provided by the GS Foundation subsidizing services such as student fees for those in need. Mr. Hazelwood, Chairman of the GS Foundation, stated the amount approved for subsidy in FY16, including rollover funds from FY15, is \$13,000.

Mr. Tharp remarked: “occasionally, savings are found when summer orders are placed;” however, the exception this year is AP Economics which he recently learned, would be increasing to \$52/workbook (listed as \$37.50 on proposal).

On motion by Cora Armstrong, seconded by Kimberly Gray, the FY16 Student Fee Schedule was unanimously approved.

c. Contract for Window Painting and Reglazing

Announced and advertised via the school website and the Richmond Times Dispatch, bid opening on April 17, 2015 netted two contractors: Valos Painting and Contracting and Creative Contracting LLC. After vetting references, the Director recommends the Regional School Board award a contract to Valos Painting and Contracting.

On motion by Kimberly Gray, seconded by Barbara Crawley, a contract award was unanimously approved for Valos Painting and Contracting.

d. Approval of the 2015-2016 Governor’s School Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors

Director McGee recommends approval of the candidate slate submitted by the GS Foundation.

Ms. Gray questioned, with acknowledgement by the Chair, that it is still hard to obtain candidates from outlying areas. This is a continuing issue and applies to many committees or volunteer bodies within the school. The Chair remarked for the record that School Advisory Council (SAC) is requesting approval of electronic participation for members in their proposed by-laws amendment as a way to increase membership and attendance, noting there currently is no prohibition against such action.

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Kimberly Gray, the GS Foundation Board of Directors slate was unanimously approved.

e. Personnel: School Year 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

The Director recommends approval of the personnel actions listed on item XI.e– Folder B (exempt).

On motion by Hank Lowry, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the Board unanimously approved the personnel actions requested.

f. Textbook Adoption

After completing proper protocols for public viewing and comment period conducted by Dr. Wendy Ellis, the Director recommends textbook adoption for 2015-2016 with editions in Mathematics, English and Social Studies and new editions of current texts in Social Studies, International Relations, Science, AP Environmental Science, Honors Physics, German 1 and Italian 1.

On motion by Cora Armstrong, seconded by Kimberly Gray, the Board unanimously approved requested textbook adoptions.

g. Assignment of Reserve Funds

The Director requested the Board waive first read for this action to meet the compliance deadline of June 30, 2015 for GASB 54 and for the Board to approve the distribution of assigned funds as detailed on page XI.g, pending completion of required audits.

On motion by Kimberly Gray, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the Board unanimously approved assignment of reserve funds pending audit completion.

Mr. Hank Lowry left the meeting.

XII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

a. New Policy, Form and Regulation Proposals

The following are submitted from the Policy Steering Committee for Board review:

Policy No. 6000	Requests for Information
Regulation No. 6000-R	Requests for Information Regulation
Form 6000-F1	Request for Public Records
Form 6000-F2	Record of Inspection and/or Delivery of Copies
Policy No. 6005	Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities
Policy No. 6011	School Visitors

The Chair inquired about cross references denoted by TBD; and explained by the Director means the policy committee has yet to vet that particular reference included in the VSBA template but is retained so as not to lose the citation. Discussion ensued regarding future policy submissions to include all vetted cross references, or deleting those references until updates are available.

Proposed policies, forms and regulation are grounded in model policies of the Virginia School Board Association. Approval will be requested at the August 2015 meeting of the Regional School Board.

b. School Advisory Council (SAC) Membership 2015-2016

Director McGee reviewed the slate of candidates presented, noting that late additions not listed include students Mara Guyer and Zachary Troidle, and Mrs. Chamie Valentine representing the PTSA. Approval for this slate will be requested at the August meeting.

The Chair requested feedback from Board members regarding SAC's suggested goal of future electronic meeting participation to broaden membership and to ensure reaching a quorum. Based on discussion that followed, no concerns were expressed but Ms. Gray recommended face-to-face meetings be stipulated as the preferred method of meeting. Skype was suggested for visual/electronic participation.

c. Annual Certification of Crisis Plan for 2015-2016

The Director advised Board members that action is necessary at their August 2015 meeting for approval of the MLWGS Crisis Plan, previously adopted August 21, 2008. Updates will be added as required. Certification to the Virginia Center for School Safety is required by August 31, 2015.

d. Annual DOE Authorization of Signatures for 2015-2016

The Director advised Board members that action is necessary at their August 2015 meeting for approval of the annual DOE Authorization of Signatures.

Mr. Jerry Warren, Dr. Eric Jones, Dr. Donice Davenport and Dr. David Myers left the meeting.

XIII. Information Items

- Finance Steering Committee, June 4, 2015

Student News:

- Senior Showcase June 3, 2015
- BoB Squad at National Tournaments (HSNCT in Chicago and PACE NSC in Reston)
- Hailey Akens ('15-Henrico), Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Woman of the Year
- Student (Taylor Hausser, '15-Chesterfield) to Study Arabic in Morocco on US Department of State NSLI-Y Scholarship
- RTD: Runner-Up Scholar Athlete of the Year Eliza Bellamy ('15-Richmond)
- RTD: Walker Track is first school in VHSL history to go six-for-six in state competitions + Baseball Results
- Walker Girls Soccer Wins Conference 33 Championship
- Boys Tennis Doubles Champions (Karl Katlaps, '17-Richmond and Pierce Tarry, '17-Richmond) + Individual Boys Tennis VHSL State Runner-Up (Karl Katlaps)
- Girls Tennis Individual VHSL State Champion (Anna Soffin, '18-Henrico)

Awards and Recognition 2014-2015 Year-to-Date Report

Other News:

- MLWGS Receives ROSMY Catalyst Award

- Maggie Walker Educator Selected for Award (Jeff Hall, Fine Arts)

XIV. Superintendent’s Steering Committee Report

Reported by Dr. Lane, the Superintendent’s Steering Committee did not meet prior to this meeting.

XV. Closed Meeting

None

XVI. Certification of Closed Meeting

None

XVII. Announcements/Additional Discussion

Ms. Gray complimented the Clerk for well-organized and informative monthly packets that provide members the ability to link items quickly.

The Director thanked Board members on behalf of the students and parents for their engagement with MLWGS.

XVIII. Adjournment

On motion by Mrs. Crawley, the meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Next Meeting

August 20, 2015 at 9:00am. MLWGS Board Room, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 153, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190.

W. Kevin Hazzard, Chairman

Jeffrey McGee, Ph.D, Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk