

MINUTES

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

Thursday, March 18, 2010

9:00 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
Mr. John Axelle, *School Board*, Hanover 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 Public Schools
Ms. Kimberly Gray, *School Board*, Richmond 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
Dr. Stewart Roberson, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Jean Murray, Assistant Superintendent for Dr. Pat Russo, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Richard Layman, **Superintendent**, King and Queen Public Schools
Dr. James Victory, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Bobby Browder, **Superintendent**, Prince George 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
Mrs. Megan Marcinkevich, **Deputy Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Absent:

Mrs. Teresa Lindsay, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Robert Cox, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Mrs. Dudley Olsson, *School Board*, West Point Public Schools
Dr. Robert Richardson, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Dr. Margaret Meara, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Also present:

Karen Hoover, Phil Tharp, Pat Taylor, Penny Deck, Rachel Loving, Max Smith, and Sharon Parker, all MLWGS Staff, Logan Ferrell – MLWGS Student, Joan Yates – PTSA President, Hall Waller - GS Foundation, Jim & Rebecca Maguire – Parents, Rob Churchman – KPMG and Jordon Matthews – Prudential Financial.

III. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Ivan Mattox, the agenda was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Lisa Marshall, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the minutes of February 18, 2010 were unanimously approved.

V. Recognitions

Mr. Morton acknowledged the honor bestowed to the distinguished **Dr. Marcus Newsome**, who has been selected as the Region I Superintendent of the Year.

Senior, **Samantha Halle**, was presented with a medallion by Dianne Pettitt and Jordan Matthews of Prudential Financial, for her selection as one of Virginia's top two 2010 Youth Volunteers in the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. Samantha was selected because of the key role she has played at the children's bereavement camp known as Comfort Zone.

Seventeen **National Merit Scholarship Finalists** were presented certificates from their respective School Board Member/Superintendent:

Chesterfield: Dianne Pettitt

Susan Ballentine
Jacob May
Elizabeth Pickering
Elissa Trieu

Hanover: John Axselle

Victoria Spott

Henrico: Lisa Marshall

Sarah Angelo
Meredith Bearden
Chaitanya Bhave
Staige Davis
Jerry Fiala
Dylan Kolhoff

Gregory Tito
David Wagner
Natalie Wong

Richmond: Dr. Yvonne Brandon

Samantha Halle
Niklas Philipsen
Jocelyn Powelson

Not present: Kimberly Quick (Chesterfield), **National Achievement Scholar Finalist.**

Gold Key Scholastic Writing Award Winners were recognized for their achievement. In 2010 more than 165,000 works were submitted with only 1,111 writing manuscripts from the Region-at-Large earning this recognition. All Gold Keys will go on to compete at the National level with their piece. Mr. Jeff Hall, Fine Arts Department Chair, along with Mrs. Denise Yagel, English Department Chair, introduced our winners:

Henrico:

Aileen Bi in Short Story and Personal
Essay/Memoir

Benjamin Kenzer in Poetry (twice)

Marie Kuzemchak in Persuasive Writing

Prince George:

Bailey Kingsley in Poetry

Richmond:

Elizabeth Ballou in Science
Fiction/Fantasy and Short Story

Sean Youngstone in Poetry

Gold Key Scholastic Art Award Winners were recognized for their achievement. In 2010 more than 165,000 works were submitted with only 693 works from the Region-at-Large earning this recognition. All Gold Keys will go on to compete at the National level with their piece. Jeff Hall and Georgianne Stinnett, Photography Teacher, introduced the MLWGS winners:

Chesterfield:

Mackenzie Grasso – Photography Portfolio

Hanover:

Lauren Paul – Art Portfolio

Purnam Jantrania – Photography

Henrico:

Nicole Shuman – Art Portfolio

Natalie Wong – Art Portfolio

Maria Maguire – Painting

Richmond:

Ellie Rigsby – Digital Media

Isabella Zechini – Photography Portfolio

Deanna Gulick – Drawings

Mr. Morton thanked the Board and Superintendents for their willingness to recognize extraordinary student accomplishments in this format and affirmed the tremendous meaning it carries for MLWGS students.

2010 AAA Virginia Scholastic Bowl Champions (BOB, Battle of the Brains) lead by Dr. John Barnes, Sponsor. The team double eliminated Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology to win the state championship by a score of 280-150, giving the Dragons their 4th state title. Team members are:

Chesterfield:

Eric Tyler

Tommy Casalaspi

Henrico:

Sarah Angelo

Greg Tito

2010 Catholic Forensic League State Debate Champions lead by Mr. Dan Brown, Sponsor. CFL is comprised of both public and private schools in Virginia making this competition possibly the most challenging of the debate tournaments across the state. Mr. Brown noted that seniors on this team have managed to win the CFL State Championship each year of their career here at MLWGS. Team members who will be attending Nationals in Omaha, Nebraska in May are:

Chesterfield:

Maryam Patton – 1st Place in Lincoln-Douglas

Kimberly Quick

Mitch Caudill – 1st Place in Public Forum
Team Captain

Elsa Schultz – 1st Place in Public Forum

Kelsie Taylor

Logan Ferrell

Powhatan:

Dallen McNerney

2010 Virginia Life Smarts Champions (sponsor Don Blanton was not available). This competition is a consumer smarts challenge with BOB Squad style questioning. The MLWGS team went undefeated this year. Team members are:

Chesterfield: Jesse Lynch

Goochland: Emily Qiu

Henrico: Dylan Kolhoff

Richmond: Adrianna Scheercook

Mr. Morton shared that, while not in attendance, the MLWGS '**We the People**' team won the Virginia State Championship for the 13th consecutive time, and will be competing at Nationals in Washington, DC next month.

Lastly, special recognition and congratulations were directed to **Dr. Richard Layman** (King & Queen Public Schools) and **Dr. Jean Murray** (Henrico Public Schools) who will both retire at the end of June after many years of service.

VI. Public Comments

None

VII. Director's Report

Mr. Morton opened this portion of the meeting with two MLWGS club presentations:

- Mrs. Martha Hicks, Science Department Member and Sponsor of the Science National Honor Society, shared a brief overview and invitation to each division for the upcoming Middle School Science Day at MLWGS on Saturday, April 17, 2010. A flyer describing this event was included in each board member's packet, and a copy will be retained in the permanent record. SNHS Co-President Jocelyn Powelson (Richmond) was present to describe Science Day activities.
- Mr. Max Smith, Global Studies Department Member and Sponsor of Model United Nations Club offered thanks to the Board for allowing the Model UN Club to address them about the 13th Annual GSMUN Conference on March 26 and 27, 2010 at MLWGS. Conference Officers in attendance are: Elsa Schultz (Chesterfield) – Secretary General, Logan Ferrell (Chesterfield) – Director General, and Samantha Halle (Richmond) – Director of External Communications. Each Board member was issued a packet of information by Ms. Halle explaining details of this conference. Information about how each district could become involved is listed on the last page of the informational packet.

Next, the Director noted inclusion in the Board packet on pages 19-23 of a winning student essay by Johnny Mac Yates entitled "Maggie Walker: More Than Just a Namesake" from

‘The Lady, the Landmark, the Legacy’ contest sponsored by the MLWGS Civic Society. This essay is included because it is a well written piece that provides historical information on Mrs. Walker, and some of her most quotable lines are apropos for the times we are living in right now. She reminds us not only to “have faith; have hope; have courage, and carry on!” but also to, “let us have a bank that will take the nickels and turn them into dollars.”

Coming Events are included in each packet on pages 25 and 26 for review. Of special note, the Board was extended an invitation to attend a showing of the MWLGS spring musical “Aida,” March 18 – 20, 2010. Mr. Morton spoke of the production’s professional quality stating, “Musically, it is probably one of the stronger shows I have seen in a long, long time.”

VIII. Action Items

a. FY2011 Operating Budget

With recent passage of Virginia’s budget by the General Assembly, we ask that the Board move to adopt the MLWGS budget presented so work may begin on pertinent personnel issues. Mr. Morton did stipulate that MLWGS will be bringing amendments to this version in a future meeting that will cover three areas:

- 1) The General Assembly reinstating VSBA Technology Funds. This will restore \$26,000 to the MWLGS budget upon the Governor’s signature.
- 2) Henrico has indicated an interest in purchasing up to five (5) additional slots. If a commitment is made, a revision to the tuition line item will be made.
- 3) Composite Index. In the newly adopted Virginia budget, school districts will be held harmless for CI adjustments; however, because of how the legislation was crafted, Governor’s Schools were not included, so it is possible that MLWGS could still see a reduction in funding levels. At this time it is still to be determined if this point has been resolved and Governor’s Schools will be treated as everyone else.

Mr. Morton and Mr. Tharp entertained questions from the Board concerning the budget as presented. Mrs. Marshall asked for illumination of the Package Policy line item on page 3 of the budget (page 32 in Board packet) showing an increase from \$0 to \$24,047. Mr. Tharp informed the Board that FY10 coverage was pre-paid out of FY09 funds. Mrs. Pettitt asked if the same pre-payment applied to the next item, Auto Insurance. Mr. Tharp affirmed that transaction.

Upon additional review of the insurance section, Mrs. Pettitt asked for explanation of the increase in Workers Compensation Coverage premiums. Mr. Tharp stated he would review the details before responding so he could provide accurate information.

*Mr. Tharp provided the information to this question at the end of Audit Approval, Section, VIII.b, but is listed in this location of the Minutes for consistency with the question: As with the other package policies, Workers Compensation of \$18,000 was pre-paid in FY09 for FY10, but each summer the WC provider conducts a payroll audit

and will bill for adjustments, thus the additional \$7,800. The \$21,000 shown reflects anticipated premium costs for FY11.

Mrs. Pettitt inquired about Local Travel detail and what was eligible. Phil Tharp confirmed it was primarily for faculty/staff mileage reimbursement for middle school visits. The Director noted the geographic region comprises 7,000+ sq. miles.

Mrs. Pettitt asked about the total number for faculty/staff employed. Mr. Morton stated MLWGS employees 91 in total: 75 full-time and 16 part-time. Most of the part-time positions are instructional personnel; however, 5 are part-time security officers. Mr. Morton clarified for those who serve on both Boards, that he has confirmed with Dr. Ruffa of the Appomattox Governor's School that MLWGS is in the same position concerning budget development: no reduction in staffing, no increase in staffing or salary, with a 6% operating reduction.

There being no further questions or discussion; on motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the FY2011 Preliminary Operating Budget as presented was unanimously approved.

b. FY09 Audit Approval

Board members were provided an Executive Summary in their March packet of the full draft audit report submitted in their February packet. Mr. Rob Churchman of KPMG was available for questions from the Board.

Mr. Churchman explained that MLWGS showed positive revenue over expense for FY09 as listed on page 2 of the summary (page 37 in your packet), raising the fund balance to 1.186 million. The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and MLWGS statements are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. As with previous audits recently submitted, KPMG proposes the same two improvement observations that management has agreed to, as all the audits were conducted at the same time. Questions and comments from Board members were invited at this point.

Mrs. Marshall asked for verification that the Administration is accepting KPMG's recommendation concerning Student Activity Funds management. Mr. Morton affirmed this position.

There being no further questions or comments, on motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Lisa Marshall, the FY09 Audit Report prepared by KPMG, was unanimously approved.

In conclusion, the Director stated it is MLWGS's expectation that we now have the processes and structures in place to bring an annual audit in late fall each year. He also recognized and thanked MLWGS staff Karen Hoover and Phil Tharp, along with Lynn Bragga of Richmond Public Schools, for their hard work and flexibility to complete these reports and to get MLWGS in-line and current.

***See Section VIII.a on previous page for Phil Tharp comments submitted at this point in the meeting.**

IX. Materials for Board Review

a. Textbook Adoption Recommendations

A description of the process and people involved are described in your packet on pages 40 through 42. All of the books proposed are currently on display in the back of the room and Mrs. Taylor spoke to the merits of each title:

Social Studies (Global Studies I & II) – No change in the series of books currently used, but the recent revision is vastly improved.

International Languages (French I, II & III) – No change in the series of books currently used, but again, the recent revision is vastly improved. These books will also give MLWGS full access to on-line textbooks at no additional cost.

Science (Biology) – This selection does represent a change of series for MLWGS. We found our recommended title to be a good book for introducing students into MLWGS's rigorous science program who bring with them a wide background in science experiences; and for critical thinking and problem solving involving real world designs.

Science (Meteorology) – The selected title captures authentic experiences using case studies, real time data, computer simulations and heavy use of technology.

English (World Literature & Composition I & II) – During the last adoption cycle seven years ago, we spent quite a bit of time on the selection we brought you that was a university anthology because it was the only book on the market at that time that gave us the depth and full text material that was needed for our World Literature I & II. The difficulty we end up with is this is for 9th and 10th graders, not looking at your senior level students. This is the first year we have found a book in hard cover print that is an anthology written for the high school student at the AP level; a book that emphasizes writing and rhetoric. Also, the selected book utilizes the heavy integration of visual literacy, which is an area that is growing in importance. And lastly, this selection takes a pairing of the classics and World Literature and looks at culture and identity and how they develop.

Mathematics (Algebra II, Algebra II Plus) – This is a grade level adoption. The chosen selection offers tremendous on-line resources and the use of technology is superior to anything else we've seen.

Mathematics (Equations, Functions and Problem Solving) – This class is MLWGS's equivalent of Algebra 1.5. We feel our selected title will adequately serve students who have either a) not had Algebra I before, or b) who have completed Algebra I but did not come through with strong enough skills to be successful; and challenges students by getting back to a conceptual, procedural approach before moving into

Analytic Reasoning. Dr. Pat Wright helped to develop this course for us back in the early days of MLWGS. E, F & PS is somewhat of an unusual course that requires an unusual textbook.

In conclusion, the underlying considerations for all titles recommended are: state standards, national standards, are they appropriate for gifted students, and the availability of on-line resources.

Dr. Newsome asked for an explanation/description of the heavy use of technology in the Algebra textbooks. Mrs. Taylor stated it involves the use of a traditional graphing calculator along with Excel spreadsheets and data analysis, taking a very data driven approach.

Mr. Morton stated all books discussed today will be available at the end of this meeting for your viewing and that MLWGS will bring this cycle of textbook adoption to you at the April meeting for approval.

b. 2010-2011 School Operating Calendar

Phil Tharp was asked to review for the Board the 2010-2011 proposed operating calendar included in their packet. He noted a formatting change requested by internal staff adding and highlighting (in yellow) grade distribution schedules. Also, last year MLWGS received a comment about making the calendar more color oriented for those with color blindness to still be able to see these dates on-line, so we changed some dark greens highlights to a different tint. A black/white copy is still available in print. The calendar presented is in-line with the four largest division's winter and spring breaks.

The Director reminded the Board this item will be brought back for approval at their April meeting.

X. Informational Items Provided

MLWGS News Items:

- January 7, 2010 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
- February 4, 2010 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
- March 4, 2010 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
- Samantha Halle News Articles (2)
- The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards
- BOB Squad Wins State Championship
- FOVGS Day at the General Assembly

The Director noted we normally don't report on the informational items provided; however, he would be happy to respond to any questions Board members may have at this time.

Mrs. Pettitt inquired about the status of the Foundation audit. Mr. Morton indicated that their audit was aligned with what we were doing during the MLWGS audit.

Lastly, the Director revisited pages 27 and 28 in the current Board packet to highlight for your attention activities omitted under the original Director's Report section: as previously mentioned **We the People** won its 13th consecutive state championship; initial data indicates we have the largest number of students in the history of this school applying for **AP's Exams**; the **Robotics Team** will be competing this week at Regional competition at the Siegel Center, and the spring drama production of **Aida**. Mr. Morton also reminded the Board about the **French Exchange** program underway at the end of March into the first part of April, with French students visiting us around mid-April. Barrett Brown, Chair of the Foreign Language Department will be conducting this trip and we are very excited about this experience for our students. Also, on March 29th **Ambassador Jacques Paul Klein**, Under Secretary General of the United Nations (ret.) will be speaking here for MLWGS students and conducting an evening presentation to the general public and student groups. Students that will be attending the Shadow Day on March 29th (Chesterfield) will have the opportunity to hear Amb. Klein speak.

XI. Superintendent's Steering Committee Meeting

None

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 John Axselle, seconded by Ivan Mattox, with unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned.

XV. Next Meeting

May 20, 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