

MINUTES

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

Thursday, November 11, 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
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Dr. Norma Murdoch-Kitt for Ms. Kimberly Gray, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools
Mrs. Dudley Olsson, *School Board*, West Point Public Schools
Dr. Janet Crawley, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. Marcus Newsome, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mrs. Connie Foreman, Specialist-Gifted Education for Dr. Linda Underwood, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Dr. Stewart Roberson, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Pat Russo, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Mr. Charles Clare, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Dr. Alvera Parrish, **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. Gwynn Litchfield, *School Board*, King & Queen Public Schools
Mrs. Teresa Lindsay, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Robert Cox, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Dr. Robert Richardson, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools

Dr. Margaret Meara, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Also present:

Phil Tharp, Patti Chappell, and Wendy Ellis – Administration, Dr. Bill Boshier – VCU, Trish Sigler – FOVGS, Hal Waller - GS Foundation, Angela Dews – Richmond Education Association, Lynn Reed – Faculty Liaison to the School Board, Paige Hawkins, Georgianne Stinnett, Brenda Thornton, Michael White, Jeff Hall and John Barnes – Faculty, and Teresa Dula – MLWGS Student.

Mrs. Pettitt welcomed Dr. Norma Murdoch-Kitt, sitting as an alternate for Kimberly Gray, MLWGS designee from the Richmond School Board. The Chair acknowledged that alternates are designated by some school divisions from within their own boards.

III. Approval of Agenda

The Director requested two additions to the published agenda in the Recognitions category. On motion by Ivan Mattox, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the agenda with additions for this meeting was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A correction to the minutes on page 11 in the Board packet was noted: change November 16th to November 11th. On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, the minutes as submitted for October 21, 2010, with the correction requested, was unanimously approved.

V. Recognitions

MLWGS 2010 Regional Championship Field Hockey Team with Coach Paige Hawkins, representing the first time in MLWGS history that the field hockey team won the regional championship. Team members include: Margaret Beirne, Camilla Davis, Gabi deLeon, Nicole Duimstra, Lucy Page Kelly, Kathryn Marqueen, Shannon Marwitz, Katy May, Mary Menchel, Megan Morris, Eleanor Muse, Sara Reese, Siobhan Rigby, Kerry Sawyer, Lane Scher, Rachael Lindsay, Rachel Shannon, Carly Spraggins, Cassie Turnage, Katy Vollum, Rosa Waters, and Julia Whitehead. Also in attendance: Matt Mason, Ryan Johnson, Sarah Weatherford, and Harry Swanson – Managers.

Teresa Dula, the second MLWGS weekly nominee for the *16th Annual Lexus Pursuit of Perfection Leadership Award* for her academic and swimming achievements.

Dr. John Barnes, MLWGS Mathematics Department, was selected to appear in *Richmond Magazine*, November, 2010 as *one of six standout teachers from around this region*. A copy of the Richmond Magazine selection is included in the Board packet on pages 14 and 15.

Jeff Hall, MLWGS Fine Arts Department Chair – 2010 R.E.B. Winner. Mr. Hall's application to the R.E.B. panel included his perspective on the importance of art, even in these budgetary times. His specific proposal focused on research via travel to Europe to see the work of the European art masters, utilizing digital media to allow his study to be broadly shared with peers and students. Mr. Hall's curriculum vita includes tenure with Henrico County Public Schools where he was a core leader in the development of the IB Art Program at Henrico High School, whose gallery was named in his honor. Mr. Hall thanked MLWGS Administration, this Board, his wife, and colleagues for their support.

VI. MLWGS History

Dr. Bill Boshier, VCU distinguished professor of public policy and education, was introduced as an honored guest speaker relating his memories and experiences as founding superintendent for Governor's School.

He began, "I'm extremely proud of what this has become. It's amazing, not only from the organizational perspective, but the many young people with whom I still have a chance to interact that have been through the program." Dr. Boshier credited Dr. S. John (Jack) Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction, as ground zero for what is now MLWGS. His goal was to locate a school in the Richmond area that would focus on math and science. He recalled that Governor's Schools in the late 1970's and 1980's were summer programs, spread around the state and attached to universities. Early discussions included the merits of the North Carolina model, which took a residential approach. Planning concepts centered on trying to find something between an episodic approach and the residential approach.

As the superintendents continued talks with Dr. Davis, they had a stronger interest in government because of the proximity to the state capital as well as the national capital, with international studies coming into the proposal later. However, there are no minutes from those early Advisory Groups, but discussion probably occurred over 1 – 1 ½ years before anyone talked about programs. The earliest personnel designated for program work were Dr. John Davis, Janie Craig, Analou Aaroe, and Warren Stewart, Superintendent of Goochland County Public Schools.

Also looked at as a model that stood out in terms of cooperation was the Math & Science Center, which had been in existence approximately 15 years at the time. The superintendents decided that 1) the Governor's School would be located within the city for several different reasons, but one reason was the concern about the movement of people away from the city into the suburbs and the group wanted a stake in the city that would draw young people back and 2) Richmond would be responsible for housing the program and maintaining the facility (Richmond's Superintendent was Dr. Albert Jones).

Difficult issues of the early discussions included the state's distinction of the Governor's School as a program instead of a school. Also, the only way each of the divisions would participate was to call it a program of each of the divisions. Before the Planning Committee was ever involved, one of the technical issues debated included where test scores should go. In the conceptualization of the school one of the things agreed to was that this would

technically be a school, but being a school also meant that it was a program for each of the participating organizations.

Dr. Boshier continued his early involvement in various roles that included being part of the transition from Thomas Jefferson High School to the Maggie Walker building. He recalled walking through this building for the first time and being struck by the significance of the name: Maggie L. Walker.

In conclusion Dr. Boshier stated, "I work every day on public policy and policy is not created the same way programs are created. There is a piece of this history that is clearly policy, and programs don't exist without policy." He thanked the Board for this speaking opportunity.

Mr. Phil Tharp began his presentation on program implementation. A slide show was prepared and began with a photo of the first staff meeting held in August of 1991. Original faculty pictured include Dr. Steven Ballowe - Director, Mary Jane McKay - Global Studies, Pat Taylor - Math, Dr. Linda Noel-Batiste - English, and Phil Tharp - Science. Each was charged with putting together a task force for their disciplines and ordering supplies. Mr. Tharp stated that most Governor's Schools established after MLWGS have had about 18 months implementation time prior to seeing their first students to prepare; MLWGS had 2 ½ weeks.

Materials were distributed at the table for illustration that included early yearbooks and newspaper clippings.

Activities in late August included moving into the building and hiring personnel. Classroom supplies came from various sources: TJHS, the Surplus Warehouse, the Army Surplus Store, and various donations. Faculty shared office space and classrooms on the 3rd floor. The first supply order was placed in mid-September, whereas most schools are placing their annual supply orders for the new fiscal year on July 1st. Most of the expendable materials needed were not there.

IBM computer lab equipment was donated from a local company; however, the infrastructure of TJHS at that time would not support more than 20 amps in the lab so overhead projectors and computer banks couldn't be run at the same time.

The Class of 1995, the first 70 students, were the risk takers. Here were students that came from all over the Richmond and surrounding areas and the diversity of the urban, rural, inner city, and suburban meshed with these students. Each was required to write an initial essay on why they wanted to come to the Governor's School, which was used as an aid for the core teachers and supplement for background materials. What is now called FIRC was introduced with this class as Integrated Technology & Design.

The most memorable field trip in this first year involved a bus accident in front of the Executive Mansion in Washington, DC. The White House press corps descended upon this freshmen class within minutes. Injured students were transported to a local hospital while

uninjured students got a special White House tour by security team members. Local TV cameras were ready to greet the students upon their return.

Mr. Tharp displayed a picture of the first BOB Squad Team from 1992, led by Mrs. Kahtra Kayton, which won our first Regional Championship and later won the National Championship in 1995. Team members included: Amanda Goad - Henrico, graduated from Rice and earned a JD from Harvard, currently serves as Senior Council for New York City Environmental Law; Matthew Carter – Richmond, attended Oxford University, earning a PhD in the Classics and is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Ontario; Ya-Bing Chu – graduated from MIT and currently works at Zingta (software design); Sabrina Chan – attended Rice and Fuller Theological Seminary and currently serves as the Area Director of Inner Varsity Christian Fellowship in San Francisco; Josh Kaplowitz earned his JD from UVA and is currently an Associate with KMR, LLP; Paul Welch – Richmond, now teaches at San Francisco State University; Samuel Easterling – Johns Hopkins University Engineering; Algis Rudys – PhD in Computer Science from Rice and currently works as a software engineer for Google; Tanim Islam – CalTech and MIT with a PhD in Astrophysics from UVA and currently working as a software engineer at Ames Research-NASA; Jenny Dale – degree in Electrical Engineering from Rice and currently works as a software engineer for Lockheed Martin working on undersea systems.

Athletics expanded during the initial years of the program. Some of the early teams were combined with Thomas Jefferson sports.

The “Jefferson Cup” became a school tradition and was used as a gift of appreciation for visiting speakers and dignitaries.

Sharing space with TJHS required effort from both schools. The TJ daily schedule was different, starting and letting out earlier than the Governor’s School day. TJ worked on a bell system and Governor’s School worked off the clock system, a tradition which was brought to MLWGS. Morning announcements operated by flipping toggle switches in the main office to turn off certain rooms so that Governor’s School students didn’t hear TJ’s announcements and vice versa. Separate lunches allowed for sharing of the cafeteria. At the time, Dr. Pruden was the TJ Principal and Dr. Ulmschneider was an Assistant Principal and it was a group effort to schedule building space for activities to make sure it worked for both schools.

By the end of the fourth year of operation, Governor’s School had forty-five faculty members. Dr. Ballowe conducted an exercise of loading the entire faculty on a bus and driving them to Hopewell and back so they would understand the student experience. The ensuing years saw the student population grow from 70 to 495. A handout was provided of early program content materials.

Outside of shared athletic programs in the early years, a couple of academic programs were also shared; i.e., chorus and harp classes taught by RPS personnel.

In conclusion, Mr. Tharp thanked Richmond Public Schools for their cooperation and generosity in providing a home to Governor's School and also the Regional Board for their time and willingness to revisit school history.

VII. 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.

There were no public comments.

VIII. Director's Report

Group Photos were taken of the Board and Superintendents in attendance by Georgianne Stinnett – Fine Arts Department.

Mr. Morton updated the following activities for the Board:

Student slot commitment letters for 2011-2012 were distributed to Board members and Superintendents. A return date in December is requested.

Dr. Wendy Ellis' report on Open House. MLWGS concluded a successful series of events leading up to Open House that included 36 middle school visits representing all current participating divisions and private schools. The MLWGS task force included four administrators, four counselors, eight teachers, eighteen parents, and forty-seven students. Visits varied by two types, large specialty fairs at the high schools and visits directly at the middle schools. Dr. Ellis recognized and thanked Megan Marcinkevich for her assistance and coordination that kept team members prepared for each visit.

Each Open House (November 3rd and 4th) saw over 700 visitors. Attending families were divided into groups and taken through a number of rotations covering the admissions process, academics, counseling, student to student sessions, and parent to parent sessions. Dr. Ellis recognized over sixty student ambassadors for their assistance during Open House and thanked the MLWGS security team for services that included running a shuttle bus from the satellite parking area to the school. Megan Marcinkevich was again acknowledged for skillfully facilitating Open House and student ambassador coordination.

The Director recognized the Planning Committee for their assistance in scheduling middle schools visits. Also, in an effort to serve the public better, the Administrative team is considering adding a third night next year and changing the name Open House, as it is sometimes interpreted to mean that the night is a drop-in program as opposed to a scheduled orientation.

Constitutional Plaque Dedication Update: The Director distributed copies of a press release, agenda (subject to change), and an RSVP form. Mr. Morton thanked Henrico County Public Schools for their TV services which include a high definition recording that could be used by any of the divisions on their cable channels.

Mr. Morton noted that the date selected (November 22, 2010) was the date that fit the schedule of the two governors, but it is also a significant date in history...the day that President John F. Kennedy was shot, making the connection between the constitution and succession quite extraordinary.

The Director extended invitations to any Board members from the participating divisions, but requested an RSVP by next Tuesday (November 16th) to be included in the recognitions.

Mrs. Pettitt thanked the Director and his staff for undertaking this enormous event, particularly on the heels of recent Open House efforts. Additionally, the Chair thanked Barbara Marshall and Megan Marcinkevich for their assistance to the Board.

The Director notified the Board that MLWGS has recently been contacted by the State Department to accommodate an embassy delegation from France on December 2nd in an educational partnership building effort.

Coming Events - See Pages 21-22.

In conclusion, the Director mentioned that the Planning Committee has proposed that long-range planning discussions include the gifted advisory committees from each of the participating school divisions.

IX. Action Items

New Clubs: Submitted for review to this Board in October; there being no additional discussion on this item, on motion by Lisa Marshall, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the proposed new clubs and club name change were unanimously approved.

- **New Clubs:** The Culinary Club, Photography Club, Invisible Children, Habitat for Humanity, Science Fiction Club, and the Future Medical Professionals Club.

An additional request for a club name change is also submitted: The Poetry Club requests to be renamed The MLWGS GIS Young Writers Association.

X. Materials for Board Review

(Presented Out of Agenda Order to Allow Teachers Return to Classroom):

- a. International Trips** - Brenda Thornton and Michael White presented travel proposals listed on pages 27-31 for which The Director intends to seek Board approval in December.

Ms. Thornton gave a brief review of the Guatemala project which would take place during the summer of 2011 and mirrors last summer's student trip but with a larger service component. Trip costs are estimated today at \$1,900, subject to change. Planning also includes fundraising during the school year to help build a library in Guatemala. The full proposal is included in the Board packet.

Mr. White stated that he has a 15 year history working with educators in Rostov-on-Don, Russia running a summer program for gifted students. One of the goals of this program is to invite international students to enrich the cross-cultural educational experience. Mr. White has personally attended this program several times in the last ten years. Trip costs are estimated today at \$3,000-\$3,500 for three weeks. The full proposal is included in the Board packet.

The Director added that he has worked very closely with Ms. Thornton and Mr. White and intends to meet with the parents and students to discuss their responsibilities. The trip design has his full support because it meets the mission of the school. In the early years of Governor's School some trips were designed with academic credit; however, while not requesting that at this time, the Director believes that this is a natural development for a school for government and international studies.

Mrs. Marshall questioned medical insurance as an option in the travel proposals and stated that she feels strongly that if trips are school-sponsored, insurance should be a requirement. Ms. Thornton agreed.

Mrs. Pettitt sought information about fundraising which is included in Ms. Thornton's proposal but not in Mr. White's. Mr. White did indicate that he will be working with the Foundation for assistance. Mrs. Pettitt asked Mr. White how he proposes to help those students who do not have financial means. Mr. White stated that he intends to do fundraising to make the trip as affordable for as many students as possible.

Mr. Axelle agreed with the Director that it is contradictory for a school of international studies to shut down international trip opportunities. However, students must understand that trips are a privilege and a serious commitment is expected on their part. The Board will not tolerate any misbehavior; and in the event of violations, students will be dealt with individually rather than as a collective group. The Director supported Mr. Axelle's statement.

Mrs. Pettitt requested that, as part of the approval process at the December meeting, a statement from the Board - possibly on one of the trip permission forms - be included about individuals being accountable. She suggested utilizing an earlier statement created last year for the French Exchange. Mr. Morton stated that Pat Lacy (school attorney) designed a form last year that touches legal aspects of student accountability while making our expectations clear.

Mrs. Pettitt thanked Ms. Thornton and Mr. White for providing this opportunity and for their willingness to take on the necessary extra responsibilities to accomplish international travel and the impact it has on our students.

Friends of Virginia Governor's Schools (FOVGS) - Mrs. Trish Sigler, Chairman of FOVGS, addressed the Board sharing a brief overview of their work. FOVGS is comprised of the 19 Governor's School Directors and parent representatives and their purpose is to enhance funding, educate legislators, and increase Governor's School visibility at the General Assembly. FOVGS is funded by the schools directly, and from that funding they are able to sponsor the group's activities.

Capital Day, an annual FOVGS event, is where Governor's School students from around the state come to Richmond to meet with their legislators, thank them for past support and hopefully for future support. After the 2010 Capital Day, FOVGS restructured their campaign to start broad based support and funding conversations outside that format beginning before the GA session actually opens. FOVGS's request to the GA is to maintain steady funding levels for Governor's Schools, even though the Governor is calling for cuts. With the assistance of the PTSA, FOVGS will host their first Legislator's coffee on December 3rd at MLWGS and each Board member was invited to attend.

FOVGS also plans to work with the Executive side of the General Assembly with a letter writing campaign to the Governor's office and the Secretary of Education.

The efforts of FOVGS and Mrs. Sigler were applauded by the Board.

20th Anniversary Planning Update: The Director stated that the planning team, which includes Dr. Boshier, has only had one meeting to date. This item will be brought back before the Board in December when more details have been defined.

XI. MLWGS News Items:

- Richmond Times Dispatch Open House Ad, October 24, 2010
- Finance Committee Minutes, October 7, 2010
- Planning Committee Minutes, August 3 & September 21, 2010

XII. Superintendent's Steering Committee Meeting

The next Superintendent's Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2010 at 9:00am.

XIII. Closed Meeting

None

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

None

XV. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, on motion by John Axselle, seconded by Ivan Mattox, this meeting was adjourned.

XVI. Next Meeting

December 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