

MINUTES

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

Thursday, October 15, 2015

9:05 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

Ms. Devon Bortz ('16-Richmond) 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
Mrs. Dianne Smith, **School Board**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mr. Kevin Hazzard, **School Board**, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. John Axselle, **School Board**, Hanover County Public Schools
Mrs. Michelle Ogburn, **School Board**, Henrico 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
Dr. David Gaston, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools (late arrival)
Dr. Marcus Newsome, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. James Lane, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Dr. Pat Kinlaw, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Melody Hackney, **Interim Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools
Dr. Carol Carter, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Dr. David Myers, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Ms. Stephanie Bassett for Dr. Joseph Melvin, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Ms. Renee Williams, **Interim Superintendent**, Prince George 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:

Dr. Deborah Marks, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Mr. Jerry Warren, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Kimberly Gray, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools
Dr. Rick Richardson, **Interim Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Eric Jones, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Also present:

Phil Tharp and Wendy Ellis – MLWGS Administration
Wendy DeGroat, Sharon Parker, and Deborah Snagg – MLWGS Staff
Devon Bortz ('16-Richmond) and Michael Benos ('16-Chesterfield) - Students
Laura Lewis – GS Foundation
Peggy Feldmann – PTSA President
Anne Hayes – PTSA Advocacy Committee
Sydney Bland and Laura O'Brien – Citizens

V. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Cora Armstrong, 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 September 17, 2015, were unanimously approved.

VII. Recognitions

- Devon Bortz ('16-Richmond), named to Governor McAuliffe's Council on Youth Entrepreneurship.
- Michael Benos ('16-Chesterfield), Lexus of Richmond, Pursuit of Perfect Leadership Award weekly winner, October 12, 2015.

VIII. Public Comments

The Public Information Period shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes to make his/her comments. Individuals representing groups will be allotted five (5) minutes.

The following remarks are not recorded verbatim:

Mrs. Anne Hayes, PTSA Advocacy Committee Chairman, addressed the Regional School Board (RSB) regarding legislative agenda, state funding and cancelling the annual October luncheons.

Advocacy has cancelled its annual October RSB luncheons this year as they focus on getting a budget request to the Governor's desk for Academic Year Governor's Schools (AYGS) for additional funding in the upcoming budget; however, EduPac (student advocacy) is recommending inclusion of RSB members at their December 8th legislative coffee to be held at MLWGS.

As a follow-up from the September RSB meeting where there was discussion regarding preparing a legislative agenda for 2015/2016, Mrs. Hayes distributed the committee's proposal to board members for consideration. Advocacy's agenda includes recommendation language from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) – Decision Package submitted September 28, 2015, which includes a request for a new funding formula that would increase over-all currency for AYGS by \$3.6 million. Through every step in the process to increase state monies and get a more equitable funding formula in place, Advocacy was advised by the Secretary of Education, VDOE and the Department of Finance that all stake holders need to be supportive and on board with this change. Concluding, Mrs. Hayes stated it would be helpful to have the backing of the RSB in this endeavor and her committee is hopeful that a funding increase will be part of Governor McAuliffe's 'K-12 education is a top priority' commitment.

Mrs. Laura O'Brien addressed the RSB regarding state funding.

To begin, Mrs. O'Brien thanked Dr. Newsome for his service to this community and to Chesterfield County (retirement announcement, effective June 30, 2016).

Three years ago, the MLWGS PTSA Advocacy Committee partnered with the Appomattox Regional Governor's School (ARGS) PTSA in Petersburg to work on funding for Governor's Schools. As you know our group identified an inequity in the state funding formula for Governor's Schools where full-day schools receive about the same per student funding as part-day. Our group pursued a budget amendment to address this, known as the 9/6 proposal. As you will recall this board endorsed that budget amendment proposal.

As a result of the advocacy efforts of our two parent groups, in late 2013 Governor McDonnell included an order for a study review of the state funding formula for Governor's Schools. The [October 2014 study](#) produced by Secretary of Education Anne Holton found that the current funding formula is *arbitrary and has disproportionately* impacted full-time Governor's schools including ARGs, MLWGS and Thomas Jefferson High School in Fairfax. The Study proposed several options for correcting the funding formula.

Over the past year, our group has consistently communicated with the Virginia Department of Education in order to encourage them to formulate a new funding formula for Academic Year Governor's Schools.

The state budget process is now underway with education as a top priority. To help address underfunding at MLWGS and all Governor's Schools, we are asking Governor McAuliffe to fix Governor's School funding in his proposed budget due on December 17th. Timing is excellent as Governor McAuliffe recently expressed his commitment to making education a top priority in his upcoming budget. A few weeks ago we were delighted to see that VDOE had submitted a \$3.6M appropriation request and a new formula for consideration by the Governor. In a recent meeting, Secretary Holton has indicated her support of this proposal. Our PTSA advocacy group is asking for your support of this appropriation and

new formula. We request your signature on our change.org petition which is now close to 4,000 supporters. Since the next month is critical in the Governor's budget development process, we respectfully request that you please join this statewide discussion and reach out to key decision makers at the state level so that you can express your support of this effort to fix Governor's School funding. To help with this, we have talking points and we will soon have a link to an online resource which we will email to you.

The Chairman thanked both speakers for their remarks.

IX. Director's Report

A. Verbal Updates

- National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists for 2016 = 9.
- Recruitment activities for prospective students: nightly information sessions on November 9, 10 and 11 at MLWGS; Radio One and National Public Radio (NPR) advertising during the first week of November, website and social media, Planning Committee coordination of middle school visits, recruitment materials and dissemination, and in-school visitation by elementary students (Goochland).
- Fall Festival 2015 was an outstanding event with great student presentations and performances. This year a large stage and tent was loaned to MLWGS by Henrico County Parks and Recreation to whom the community extends its gratitude.
- Legislative Update: after the VDOE decision package was issued a group of Governor's School (GS) directors and members of advocacy met with Secretary Holton and her assistant. Based on this meeting a statement was created that all directors could sign supporting the package going forward. Dr. McGee noted while there was consensus around the package, he expressed concern about the '*maintenance of effort*' provision in the statement. He stated; "throughout the process I have been open with Dr. Lane, advocacy members, and Secretary Holton that this statement could potentially derail the whole process and we need to be sensitive to this issue moving forward." As we know, there are nineteen AYGS programs and many of them receive the predominant amount of their funding from the state; there is real concern from them about '*maintenance of effort*.' However, MLWGS receives 73% of its funding from local sources. But, all are very excited about the progress that has been made on this issue.

Dr. McGee reminded members that the school's strategic plan stipulates its RSB consider a legislative statement and migrate that statement back to their respective boards in advance of each annual Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) conference in November.

As a side note, Dr. McGee will serve as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of Friends of Virginia Governor's Schools (FOVGS) in the short term (through the end of the current year). FOVGS represents all of Virginia's Governor's Schools keeping the needs of high ability students on everyone's radar moving forward.

Dr. Lane stated, ‘the funding statement was a primary discussion point at the Superintendent’s Steering Committee (SSC) meeting held this morning and was also the group’s first opportunity for review.’ The superintendents are in consensus that they have a major concern with the ‘*maintenance of effort*’ requirement that could be attached to this funding and have sent Secretary Holton a note in opposition to the statement if it includes this language. The reasons stipulated for superintendent opposition include:

- 1) There is some question to the constitutionality of overriding the SOQ’s and mandating a funding level above the SOQ on school divisions. The superintendent’s believe and have witnessed in other programs where they have a ‘*maintenance of effort*’ requirement (only seen with federal funding, this would be the first such state move), time and again the superintendents have been forced to cut slots to programs rather than make adjustments in difficult times. The superintendents want to serve more students and think that a ‘*maintenance of effort*’ requirement will serve fewer students during down turns.
- 2) The superintendent’s do not believe the state should put any ‘*maintenance of effort*’ requirement on localities when the state is not meeting its own ‘*maintenance of effort*’ by fully funding the SOQ’s.
- 3) The superintendent’s believe in strict local control; a school board has the right to set funding levels for schools.

The ‘*maintenance of effort*’ requirement would leave the superintendent’s vehemently opposed to this statement.

Dr. Lane stated Secretary Holton had already answered back from the morning’s exchange of emails and indicated her hope is the Governor’s School directors, advocacy members, and the superintendents could come to a consensus. Acknowledging the statement wasn’t brought to the SSC in advance of submission to Secretary Holton, Dr. Lane stated, ‘the superintendent’s will be right there pushing for additional funding if ‘*maintenance of effort*’ can be removed from this statement.’

Dr. Bedden’s observation on the package was it addresses nineteen AYGS, stipulating there are vast differences between these institutions. Could this package have been brought together by a pool of people that embraced it without understanding the far-reaching larger implications of what it means for Maggie Walker and Appomattox? *Maintenance of effort* could turn out to be an example of a decision made now that will have implications down the road that wasn’t thought about. Program wise, Dr. Bedden stated, “this [MLWGS] could be a competing interest...so I have to sustain this [MLWGS] but I’ve got a budget reduction somewhere, do I offer less Pre-K? The district no longer gets to choose what is important to its local community.”

Dr. Newsome expanded the discussion by stating that several organizations believe the state’s funding has been unconstitutional and has not met its obligation. Further, while organizations such as a school board, the VSBA, or the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) may get consideration; nothing gets attention like parents. He suggested joining together through an organization (example used: Parent/Teacher/Student Association - PTSA) and stipulate ‘we want to take a serious look at this and may need to explore the legal ramifications of failing to follow-through on the constitutional obligation of the state to fund public education.’

Dr. Bedden referred to litigation in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

Concluding, Dr. Lane reiterated the superintendent's want to work for increased Governor's School funding and should consensus be reached around removing the '*maintenance of effort*' requirement, they are in complete support on the rest of the statement. However, as currently proposed, this is a non-starter as it impacts everything else in each locality.

B. Coming Events

October 15, 2015 through November 12, 2015 (see page IX.b, for details)

C. 2016-2017 Student Slot Letters

Provided at the table for each Superintendent and Board member were division 2016-2017 student enrollment commitment letters for MLWGS. Executed letters are due back to MLWGS by November 1st as addressed in Policy No. 1029.

Dr. McGee stated the Policy Steering Committee would review Policy No. 1029 to assess amending by moving the slot commitment due date back to at least the November RSB meeting.

D. MLWGS Recruiting Schedule

Middle school visits by locality were detailed on the packet attachment.

E. Senior Seminar/Mentorship Program and Community Service with Sharon Parker, Coordinator

Total seniors in the class of 2016 = 177 with approximately 35% or 62 students participating in mentorships with 55 organizations covering a wide variety of interests. There are 9 seminar classes that serve the remaining 115 seniors. Ms. Parker is currently in the process of reviewing 14 new seminar proposals for next year.

Elective field experience is also available to the student who cannot obtain a mentorship that offers the opportunity to experience a mentorship (mostly during the summer). While the student doesn't do the research involved with a mentorship they do get the journeyman experience while being mentored by someone in the field.

Mentorship and seminar projects are presented at Senior Showcase June 1, 2016.

X. Unfinished Business

None

XI. Action Items

a. Policy and Regulation Proposals

The following was submitted from the Policy Steering Committee for Board approval: Policy No. 3003-Academic Standards & Community Service *Amended*, Regulation 5065-R6 Compensatory Time for Exempt Professional Employees *Amended*. Proposed policy and regulation are grounded in model policy of the Virginia School Board Association.

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Cora Armstrong, the above-mentioned policy and regulation were unanimously approved as a slate.

b. Interdisciplinary Trip to Canada 2016 – Matt McGuire, Sponsor

The Director recommends approval of Mr. McGuire's interdisciplinary trip proposal to Canada in May 2016 with the maximum number of students changed from 12 to 12-14 to accommodate growth in interest.

On motion by Cora Armstrong, seconded by Dianne Smith, Mr. McGuire's trip request was unanimously approved.

c. Additional Approval of School Advisory Council Expanded Membership per Amended Bylaws September 17, 2015

The Director recommends approval of the expanded 2015-2016 School Advisory Council (SAC) membership slate as detailed on the attachment which includes additional and replacement members. Two positions are still awaiting newcomers; one from the PTSA and one from the Planning Committee as Mr. Anthony Washington recently accepted a different position within Richmond Public Schools.

On motion by John Axselle, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the expanded SAC membership roster submitted for 2015-2016 was unanimously approved.

d. MLWGS Yearbook Contract

Director McGee recommends utilizing available cooperative contracts through Chesterfield County Public Schools that are valid through the end of this calendar year with (4) one-year renewals optional to provide a total 5-year contract with Herff-Jones. Pricing from vendors was based on 300 color pages/100 pound paper; however, Walker was able to further negotiate the price down with Herff-Jones as typically the school only utilizes 200 pages. Other vendors submitting quotes were Jostens and Taylor Publishing dba Balfour Publishing.

The Director was pleased to announce that Walker's 2015 yearbook won 1st place in the VHSL 2A rating.

Dr. Lane thanked Dr. McGee and Mr. Tharp for taking the time to ensure the school procured the best pricing yearbook contract.

On motion by Cora Armstrong, seconded by Dianne Smith, Herff-Jones was unanimously approved to provide MLWGS with yearbook services.

XII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

a. New Policy Proposals

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

Policy No. 1009.1	Items for Adoption, Revision, Suspension
Policy No. 3007	Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires
Policy No. 3020	Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
Policy No. 5006.1	Evaluation of Support Staff
Policy No. 5007	Support Staff
Policy No. 8032	Vandalism

Proposed policy is grounded in model policies of the Virginia School Board Association. Approval will be requested at the November 2015 meeting of the Regional School Board.

b. Interdisciplinary Trip to Guatemala 2016 – Stephanie Welles, Sponsor

An interdisciplinary trip to Guatemala March 23 – April 1, 2016, is proposed by Stephanie Welles, International Languages Department, and duplicates the Regional School Board approved Guatemala 2015 trip where students develop an understanding and skills for interacting with people from a different culture. The Director stated no large presentation would be made for this proposal as it is essentially the same as in previous years; however, Mrs. Welles was on-hand to answer questions if needed and noted, if approved, this would be the fifth time the RSB has authorized an interdisciplinary trip to Guatemala.

Approval for this activity will be sought at the November 2015 meeting of the Regional School Board.

XIII. Information Items

- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, October 1, 2015

The Director expanded on details contained within the Finance Minutes, specifically relating to Mr. Ralph Westbay's (RPS) query about adopted and amended budgets which is generated when additional revenues are received that were not adopted. Dr. McGee stated the Policy Steering Committee will work to develop clarifying budget policy that will specifically identify when it is necessary for board action on fiscal amendments.

Additionally, Dr. McGee drew attention to the paragraph addressing adjacent parcels of land that have again become available for purchase and should Walker procure those lots to utilize for additional athletic field space and /or tennis courts.

- New Student Clubs Approved by Administration September 30, 2015
- MLWGS Golf Conference 33 Champions, 3rd Consecutive Year
- Congratulations Goochland and Henrico: honored by the Data Quality Campaign

- Congratulations Chesterfield: Cosby HS named National Blue Ribbon School

XIV. Superintendent's Steering Committee Report

This report was issued during the Director's Verbal Update; however, Dr. Lane took a moment to thank Dr. Newsome for his service and extended congratulations on his retirement announcement. Many other members added to this sentiment.

Mr. Axselle was also welcomed back from his recent absence.

XV. Closed Meeting

None

XVI. Certification of Closed Meeting

None

XVII. Announcements/Additional Discussion

None

XVIII. Adjournment

On motion by John Axselle, seconded by Cora Armstrong, the meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Next Meeting

November 12, 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