



A GUIDE TO ACADEMIC TEAMS AT THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL

Academic Quiz Bowl

Faculty sponsor: Mrs. Hana Reed, hreed@gsgis.k12.va.us

The Academic Quiz Bowl Team, better known as BoB Squad for Battle of the Brains, participates in local, regional, state & national quiz bowl competitions. The team fields a team for the Channel 6 (WTVR) Battle of the Brains high school show. The team prepares from June to November for the tournament it hosts in December called GSAC, the Governor's School Academic Competition, a tournament among mid-Atlantic area quiz bowl teams which raises money for the Maggie Walker team. Team members meet during lunch most days, and area tournaments occur throughout the year. National championship tournaments occur from April to June.

Chess

Faculty sponsor: Mr. Tom Boyle, tboyle@gsgis.k12.va.us

The Maggie Walker chess team participates in the Greater Richmond High School Chess League. The team meets throughout the year during lunch to play chess and plan for upcoming matches. Regular season matches are held either at Maggie Walker in the chess room or at the opposing team's school. Four players represent the team at each match. There are approximately ten regular season matches to determine divisional winners. The season typically runs from October to March, with regional and state playoffs in late March. Maggie Walker often sends a delegation to the VSCA state championship playoffs, typically in March.

Debate

Faculty sponsor: Mr. Dan Brown, dbrown@gsgis.k12.va.us

The Debate team participates in the Catholic Forensic League (CFL) and in the Virginia High School League (VHSL). The CFL holds regional, state, and national tournaments. Team members participate in one of three different types of debate: Student Congress, Lincoln-Douglas (LD), and Public Forum (PF). Student Congress simulates congressional debate, whereas LD is one-on-one and more philosophical. Public Forum is facts and statistics-driven in which teams focus on current event topics. The debate team meets weekly during lunch, and February and March are the most intense months leading up to the state tournament.

Forensics

Faculty sponsor: Mr. Dan Brown, dbrown@gsgis.k12.va.us

Forensics is a public speaking club that competes in various categories such as extemporaneous speech, dramatic interpretation, humorous interpretation, and declamation, among others. While officers meet weekly, the team meets as needed during lunch. In preparation for competitions, participants practice with the coach during lunch or after school. This club spans the school year, but the busy months are December through March, with the national competition being held at the end of May.

Future Problem Solvers

Faculty sponsor: Mrs. Donna Bennington, dbennington@gsgis.k12.va.us

Future Problem Solvers engages students in creative problem solving. Teams of students are given a futuristic scene and with a limited amount of time must come up with proposed problems and solutions. FPS fosters skills in cooperation, time management, and quick thinking. Meetings are held monthly during a lunch period, but occur more frequently in January when the team works a qualifying problem for the state qualification in March/April leading up to the State Bowl in May.

History Bowl

Faculty sponsor: Mrs. Stephanie Burr, sburr@gsgis.k12.va.us

History Bowl focuses on state and national history bowl competitions, founded by Dave Madden of Jeopardy fame. At the tournaments, there is competition at the junior varsity and varsity levels. Teams of students compete in the bowl, and individual students compete in the bee. The State History Bowl and Bee is held in Charlottesville in mid-March and the National History Bowl and Bee is held in Washington, DC in late April. For more information, check out www.historybowl.com and www.hs.historybee.com

Lifesmarts**Faculty sponsor: Mr. Don Blanton, dblanton@gsgis.k12.va.us**

Lifesmarts is an educational opportunity that develops the consumer and marketplace knowledge and skills of students in a fun way. The Maggie Walker team meets regularly during the year, but in February, the team ramps up to meeting twice weekly for the state competition in March. The team usually meets over lunch, but in February meets off campus at a library, student's home, or other convenient locations. For more information, the website for Lifesmarts is www.Lifesmarts.org.

Model Congress**Faculty sponsor: Dr. Jeff McGee - jmcgee@gsgis.k12.va.us**

Model Congress is the academic team for those with a passion for politics. Students simulate the functions of Congress by writing and debating bills. The team meets weekly during lunch with some after-school practices and extra planning sessions. Team participants may attend two or three conferences during the school year, one in the fall and one or two in the spring. The group also hosts its own conference, the Walker Model Congress, in March.

Model United Nations**Faculty sponsor: Mr. Max Smith, msmith@gsgis.k12.va.us**

Model United Nations (Model UN) strives to simulate the real United Nations, providing opportunities for realistic policy-making, oratory, and consensus-driven leadership. The team meets weekly during lunch with some after-school practices and extra planning sessions. Team participants may attend two conferences during the school year, one in the fall and one in early spring. The team holds its own conference, GSMUN, in March.

Robotics**Faculty sponsor: Mr. Harold Houghton, hhoughton@gsgis.k12.va.us**

The Maggie Walker Robotics team is "Team 422", the "Mech Tech Dragons", and competes in FIRST Robotics competitions. Competitions involve designing and building a robot to compete against other teams' robots. Volunteer mentors guide each team, and, in addition to those students interested in engineering and programming, the team includes students who assist with fund-raising tasks, design spirit wear and banners, and who enjoy working with younger children (on FIRST Lego League teams). The build season runs from January through February, and the team meets most weekday afternoons and on Saturdays. The team participates in two regional competitions during March and April. The team also participates in the Virginia Regional competition hosted by VCU, and attends the International FIRST championship in late April or very early May.

Technology Students Association**Faculty sponsor: Mr. Tom Boyle, tboyle@gsgis.k12.va.us**

The Technology Student Association, TSA, is an international organization serving both middle and high school students. The Maggie Walker chapter uses the first part of the school year to recruit members, develop a slate of officers, and decide in what competitive events individuals or teams will participate. The team meets during lunch as needed during the first half of the year and then every other week through the time of the state conference in the second half. Top finishers in each event at the regional competition participate at the state conference, and then can move on to compete at nationals. The state conference is usually in early May, and national conferences are held at the end of the school year at a different location each year. For more information see the Virginia State TSA website www.virginiatsa.org and the National TSA website www.tsaweb.org.

We the People**Faculty sponsor: Mr. Sam Ulmschneider, sulmschneider@gsgis.k12.va.us**

We the People is a yearly competition sponsored by the Center for Civic Education and held in Washington D.C. at the end of April. Maggie Walker's team is composed of seniors studying constitutional philosophy, law, politics and history in the "We the People" elective. The class prepares them for a competition styled as a congressional hearing, with the team divided up into six units, each of which focuses on a particular area of Constitutional scholarship. Each unit prepares short speeches in response to formal prompts and engages in a Q&A with a panel of judges. To qualify for the national three-day competition, the team must first win its state championship.

For more information and opportunities to volunteer, please contact Academic Booster Chair: Bill Benos, bbenos@williamsmullen.com