

MINUTES

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

Thursday, November 10, 2016

9:08 a.m.

I. Call to Order

John Axselle, 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

The Regional School Board and visitors recited the pledge of allegiance.

IV. Introductions

Each Board member introduced him or herself and stated their locality (listed in alphabetical order by locality).

Present:

Dr. Javaid Siddiqi, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mr. John Wright, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. John Axselle, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Mrs. Michelle 'Micky' Ogburn, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools
Mrs. Sarah Grier Barber, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Dr. James Lane, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. Jeremy Raley, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Dr. Michael Gill, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Dr. Pat Kinlaw, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Sheila Bailey for Dr. Melody Hackney, **Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools
Dr. Carol Carter, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Dr. David Myers, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Dr. Marcus Newsome, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Eric Jones, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools
Mrs. Renee Williams, **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
Mrs. Megan Perez, **Deputy Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Absent:

Ms. Martha Harris, **School Board**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. Deborah Marks, **School Board**, Hopewell Public Schools
Ms. Celestine Gaines, **School Board**, King & Queen Public Schools
Mr. Reeve Ashcraft, **School Board**, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Kimberly Gray, **School Board**, Richmond Public Schools
Dr. David Gaston, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools

Also present:

Dr. Wendy Ellis, Phil Tharp, and Michael Smith – MLWGS Administration
Lynn Reed, Sharon Parker, Deborah Snagg, and David Bortz – MLWGS Staff
Suzannah Stora – GS Foundation
George Nyfeler – PTSA President
Dr. Leslie Hausser – School Advisory Council
Julie May – Alum Parent
Daniel Jovin – MLWGS Senior
Marianne Macon, Peggy Feldmann, and Laura O'Brien – Advocacy Committee, past and present members
Dr. Jonathan Lewis – Interim Director

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Jonathan Lewis and thanked him for his service commitment as the Board conducts a search for a new director.

V. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Micky Ogburn, seconded by John Wright, the agenda for this meeting was unanimously approved.

VI. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Valarie Ayers, minutes for the regular meeting of October 20, 2016, were approved with John Wright abstaining.

VII. Recognitions

- Daniel Jovin ('17-Richmond), Lexus of Richmond, Pursuit of Perfect Leadership Award weekly winner for soccer, November 14, 2016.
- Farewell and honors to retiring administrators, Dr. Jeffrey McGee 2012-2016 and Mr. Philip Tharp 1991-2016.

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 provided by speaker Peggy Feldmann:

Good morning, I am Peggy Feldmann, a Richmond City parent. I am speaking on behalf of the PTSA Advocacy group concerning the recent Department of Education report that each of you has. I know you have not had it for long, so I would like to provide you with a parental synopsis of the report.

This report was required by the General Assembly after last year's Governor's budget proposal was amended by the GA, who came up with additions to the budget proposal after realizing inequalities in the DOE provided formula. The General Assembly included budget language stating this GA generated formula is effective only for fiscal years 2017 and 2018 and included appropriation act language directing the Department of Education to review and submit findings on the distribution methodology used to determine Governor's Schools tuition payments. It states:

"... The review shall include, but not limited to, consideration of the length of the academic program day with the intent to determine and provide an equitable distribution of tuition payments based on the actual length of academic program day, the appropriate state and local shares, and the academic model used by governor's schools in the configuration of the funding formula."

Here are a few issues:

First, the report discusses Foundations at the different schools. This is particularly disturbing that this topic is even in this report. DOE is trying to tie state funding to parent and community fundraising.

Note that nine of the ten schools that have foundations are all full day and 5/6 day schools. Only one 1/2 day school has a foundation and it is only 20 minutes shy of being a 5/6 day school. These statistics, which have nothing to do with answering the General Assembly's directive, only further prove the inequity of the resources within the Governor's schools funding model. It is only the longer day schools that are requiring resources from the parents and communities to provide adequate funding for the students.

Second, there is really only one option. The report describes two other options but these are just add-ons to Option One.

As stated in the report, Option One is similar to the approach proposed last year (and rejected by the GA), however, it does provide some clarity on how the numbers were generated last year.

Table 4 on page 10 shows the per-pupil funding amounts for each program used in the funding formula under this option. The \$5,647 amount (for support cost, teachers, assistant principal, and school counselor) is applied uniformly across all programs. The individual per pupil amounts for principal and librarian, vary based on program enrollment. A reasonable person can see that this chart makes no sense. Why does a school with 38 students need a principal,

an assistant principal, a librarian and a counselor? And why pull out only the Principal and Librarian; why not the counselor and assistant principal? These positions are also based on school size. Here it seems there is also a flaw in the formula for program classification weight for ½ day, 5/6 day and full day schools. MLWGS students take more courses, therefore there are more teachers whose compensation is not being adequately accounted for. This is the exact issue the GA brought forward!

Option One also states: *“In addition, the local per pupil funding maintenance of effort provision currently in the 2016-2018 budget could be maintained as part of this option.”* I know this was an issue with you last year.

Option 2 provides full day schools with resources 10% above the formula provided in Option One. *“This approach recognizes some of the differences in program scope, staffing, and operating costs between the shared-time and full-day programs without modifying the current program length weights or student enrollment used in the formula.”* This is exactly what the GA stated and asked DOE to review and determine an equitable formula. Instead, DOE added 10% and said that would be good enough to justify the differences. DOE concurs it is not an equitable formula. DOE states the issue is in modifying the current program length weights or student enrollment used in the formula.

In conclusion, this report does not answer what was asked of DOE by the General Assembly. The General Assembly realized last year that the problem was within the current program length weights, and it would stand that DOE should describe and amend the weights or the issues of the weighting. This was not addressed or accomplished in this report. I hope all of you concur with these issues and any others and will step forward to inquire to DOE and/or the General Assembly to correct and/or amend this report.

Thank you.

Dr. Eric Jones left the meeting.

Mrs. Laura O’Brien addressed the Board. Her remarks are summarized below:

Mrs. O’Brien also spoke to the new funding formula released by DOE and stated: “we have been at this for four years.” Our main message is that the funding for full-day Governor’s Schools is not equitable in comparison to part-day Governor’s Schools across the Commonwealth. We’ve been trying to fix this, and you’ve have been trying to help us fix this for four years. We need your help to close this deal.

Mrs. O’Brien stated she knew there was no money this year, but she had a feeling what can or may be going forward unless we intervene is language only that will apply for FY19. We have friends out there, somebody put the directive into the budget and requested this report and it’s based on actual program length. . .the report does not address that. Someone at the General Assembly gave us a wonderful formula this year where there is \$50 per course per student provided by the Governor’s School funding formula that is recognizing the actual length of the program day. But this formula is temporary.

We are asking for your help to potentially request a revision or addendum to this report so that it actually addresses what the General Assembly directed. We need your help, we need your voice. We've been at this for a long time which is attested to when this Board passed a proclamation in 2013 supporting this effort. We need to speak up for our students, speak up for the three full-time AYGS, our costs are just more than the part-day schools. We need to get this done so we can all move on and put our resources in other things.

We are here to provide you any information or background that is needed. What we'd really like is to have some of you accompany us to visit decision makers to get this done.

Thank you.

The Chairman addressed the Board with a reminder that they received this link via email and the item will be placed on the December agenda for further discussion and review.

IX. Director's Report

A. Verbal Updates

- **Strategic Plan Update** – policy calls for an update in odd calendar years. However, given Dr. McGee's transition, he presented a brief update now.

Since adoption in 2015, several areas have seen significant progress. Student support now has a school psychologist on staff and we are developing a system to support their socio and emotional needs with a particular eye towards retention and the anxieties that they experience. The curriculum has significantly been advanced in terms of updating to a digital platform where we are able to collaborate and engage on curricular updates. Significant advances have also been made around instructional technology in terms of training and establishing an ethos, and we have developed a technology plan that is being implemented. The infrastructure is being upgraded and we are planning for a 1:1 device pilot this year. The dual enrollment program has seen a concerted effort this year to strengthen, preserve, and expand with a number of new offerings coming forward for next year. We have also begun early conversations with VCU to explore the option of being able to offer a Bachelor's degree to MW students upon graduation, but would require an agreement with VCU and a development plan and may require some form of an extended school year. Personnel policies have been advanced. ESCo improvements are well along within the facility. Finance policies too have been advanced with progress made towards a needs-based budget. Lastly, we are closing in on consideration of a ten-point grading scale with information capture of a large amount of data from student historical grades to apply to a new framework that can be present to the Board for consideration sometime this school year for implementation next year.

- **Parent/Teacher Conferences November 3 & 7**
- **Tharp Retirement Celebration, November 11th @ 7:00pm.** All RSB members should have received an invitation.

- **Information Sessions for Prospective Families, November 14-16, 2016**
Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School will hold three evening information forums for students and families interested in knowing more about the program and the admissions process. Each session runs from 6:30pm to about 8:30pm, and they begin in the MW auditorium.
 - Monday, November 14 – special invitation to the prospective students and families from Henrico.
 - Tuesday, November 15 – special invitation to the prospective students and families from Hanover, King and Queen, New Kent and Richmond.
 - Wednesday, November 16 – special invitation to the prospective students and families from Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hopewell, Petersburg, Powhatan, and Prince George.
- **MLWGS Drama Presents Julius Caesar, November 17-19, 2016**

B. Coming Events

November 10, 2016, through December 15, 2016 (*see packet, Section IX.b for details*)

C. 2017-2018 Division Enrollment

With the beginning of the planning process for the next school term as directed by policy adopted May 18, 2000, amended December 18, 2014, and December 17, 2015, the school annually seeks this slot commitment statement from participating divisions.

Letters are being prepared for distribution in November to participating school divisions for their 2017-2018 student enrollment commitment. Note that each letter should be executed by the division superintendent and school board member, and returned to MLWGS by December 1, 2016.

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

Total seniors in the class of 2017 = 188 with approximately 40.4% or 76 students participating in mentorships with 83 professionals in the community covering a wide variety of interests. There are 9 seminar classes that serve the remaining 112 seniors or 59.5% of the class.

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.

Ms. Parker also touched on the student community service program that she manages which develops character and the ability to contribute, collaborate and lead.

Mentorship and seminar projects are presented at Senior Showcase June 1, 2017.

Dr. Marcus Newsome left the meeting.

X. Unfinished Business

None.

XI. Consent Items

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Javaid Siddiqi, the following consent items were unanimously approved: personnel actions, the fiscal status report of September 30, 2016, and donations report of September 30, 2016.

XII. Action Items

a. Policy Proposals

The following are submitted from the Policy Steering Committee for RSB approval:

2024 – Weapons in School *Amended*
8010 – School Absences/Excuses/Dismissal
8030 – Gang Activity or Association
8040 - Weapons in School *New Cross Reference*

Proposed policies are grounded in model policies of the Virginia School Board Association.

On motion by Micky Ogburn, seconded by Javaid Siddiqi, the above slate of policies were unanimously approved.

b. Revised Student Honor Council (HC) Code

Director McGee recommends approval of the October 2016 version of the revised Student Honor Council Code and referred to previous submissions as reference; June and August 2016. Dr. McGee mentioned the committee that worked on this task (*code revision*) was a diverse group put together with RSB recommendation. Dr. McGee stated the committee believes they have a put together a code that corrects confidentiality concerns and brings MLWGS into alignment with law. He further added that there is an anticipation to relaunch the council at the end of the first semester or perhaps the beginning of the second semester. Mr. Max Smith, a member of the administrative team, has agreed to sponsor council and has already begun talks with its members to engage in a program that gets information out to students so all are well informed of changes. The committee will monitor HC during the spring and plans to reconvene to consider data and any feedback they receive on its progress.

Mrs. Renee Williams left the meeting.

At the conclusion of Dr. McGee's recommendation, a lengthy discussion followed starting with Dr. Siddiqi questioning the college application, Article 7- Records, Item D, where the student must disclose that on their first offense they actually sought and received feedback from the HC. His concerns were: 1) how do we quality control this, and 2) this does not seem like it is our purview if they have not received an actual consequence other than from HC. Dr. McGee answered that 'HC code' will become Board policy with approval and although the HC and Board may prescribe that a first offense may not become part of the student disciplinary record, the student still has to answer specific questions on the common application. The committee felt that the Board might place families, students, and their advising counselors, in an awkward position if we tell them they do not have to report an offense that is not on their student disciplinary record, so the committee felt we needed this statement and by not having it would implicitly imply that the Board says that even though the student had a consequence they don't have to report it. The committee felt families and employees could interpret that this question does not have to be answered truthfully.

Again Dr. Siddiqi expressed concerns regarding quality control when the matter is left to the student to self-disclose; we know some will and some won't, and the ones that don't will have an advantage. Dr. Siddiqi asked if this proposal was vetted by an attorney to which Dr. McGee responded yes. Dr. Siddiqi encouraged a pause on this adoption [*for division research*] as he's fairly sure Chesterfield does not have a similar policy and with adoption, this action may cause a competitive advantage (or disadvantage) for students at MW compared to any other CCPS high school. Dr. McGee replied what is different is that MW has an honor council that does not exist in other high schools within the divisions. However, if an infraction comes to the administrative team for adjudication, that event will be listed on the disciplinary record and the student is informed that they must report.

Dr. Myers added that the idea here is that in most of our students in their schools are already self-reporting. Many divisions have policies that state counselors are not going to report this type of infraction so students are already self-reporting. The concern was for all the other districts around this table should a student get into trouble back in their district, it must be reported. The way this policy [*code*] was written is if you got into trouble you didn't really have to report that. The difference between the original code to the last revision was that we needed something in the document that said you should report an infraction just like any other school division does. Dr. Myers added, the system is rigged in that it is still up to the student to self-report; no one is monitoring. The statement was added to make this practice more consistent with other school systems.

Mrs. Barber also chose to speak as to why this particular language was added. She said it was set-up with two paths, 1) heard by an administrator on the first offense which automatically goes on the record, and 2) or heard by the HC which does not list a first offense on the record. When looking at the college application questions where the student has to report, while not on their record it would not be honest if they did not report. We tried to strengthen and clarify the policy so that we are not leading the student to do something that is not honorable or honest.

Mrs. Ogburn echoed the same concerns expressed by Dr. Siddiqi and asked if proposal language has been compared to language in any of the other divisions for self-reporting? What are the other districts doing with this exact same problem because, Mrs. Ogburn added, this is not enforceable? Is it an honor code violation if the student doesn't report? We [*the Board or*

MLWGS] could be entering into a continuous cycle of ‘you reported, you didn’t report but it’s the first violation,’ and we could be opening a can of worms that the language is not strong enough. Mrs. Ogburn concluded she would like to look at other policies before voting on this proposal.

Mr. Axselle offered in Hanover the student decides to report or not to report an infraction. Hanover does not tell them what or what not to report. He added that the root of the issue is that the HC be allowed to make a ruling on a disciplinary matter, but then tell them it doesn’t count. He added this proposal states a student should report, but if they do not it’s their business.

Dr. Lane added that guidance given in the school division is this is a decision the student is making with the college. While we can provide guidance; however, once we put it into policy it’s a policy debate if the student is actually in violation of the school’s codified procedures. The question is are we overreaching our purview as it relates to the student’s relationship with the college?

Dr. Myers additionally noted the problem is when the student doesn’t report and someone tells. He added it puts MW at risk of pushing this issue aside when the student responds I didn’t have to, it didn’t go on my record. However, by MW saying yes, you have to report and then if the student chooses not to, that’s between the student and the college. As none of the divisions have honor councils, if a student does get into trouble it goes on their discipline record. If then the student chooses not to report it’s on them, and nothing that New Kent did.

Dr. Siddiqi added an additional concern about leaving reporting up to the individual child as it puts them in a quandary as young people, who confronted with the idea of inflating their application; is not a place to put students in. Or, this policy mandates that all infractions go on the record. Dr. Myers offered that most divisions have gone to policies that do not allow counselors to report, and on the common application there is a place to check that the school division is not allowed to report school discipline. It’s up to the students in most divisions now. Dr. Siddiqi followed with this questions; ‘so if they do not report it’s a do-nothing policy? Why have it?’ Dr. McGee added that the reason we want this policy is that we want to have an honor council and how can we have an honor council that students choose to engage in peer review? He continued, let’s say it does go on their record, why would a student choose to go before their peers when they could just go before an adult? We wanted to have students still choose to engage with our honor council.

Dr. James Lane left the meeting.

Dr. Siddiqi stated he supports the HC but questioned the self-reporting issue. Also, does this incent those on honor council as rumors get around to have some of the same behaviors we are trying to eliminate?

Mr. Wright spoke to the motivation behind this particular phrasing and if it isn’t more for the self-preservation of the administration and Board than for the actual administration of the program. He noted that what Dr. Siddiqi pointed out of having the offense reported doesn’t change the fact that somebody is going to check the box that the school doesn’t report discipline and we have covered ourselves at that point. Continuing, Mr. Wright said if we

make the consequence of the student honor council similar in an offense of found guilty as to what administration would have found, then we have absolved ourselves of the need to advise the student here in this policy and this is unnecessary.

Mr. Axselle noted the Board has been working on this issue for six months and agrees we either incentivize the honor council option but state that the student must report, or if not reported to honor council then you keep existing language. Otherwise, a student may be lead to believe they do not have to report. Mrs. Barber added that students and their parents will review this policy before making a discipline route decision, but if you take this language out they will be making a decision on the assumption that will not be reporting their first offense if they go before the HC. However, when they fill out their college applications down the road then they may have been misled if they don't understand that the honorable thing to do is to report even though it is not on their record, we've misled them.

Dr. Bedden added his comments that he is baffled by the use of the word incentivize and to incentivize going before the HC when to incentivize means one will get something less. Continuing, Dr. Bedden talked about being a former principal at both a magnet school and at a non-magnet school who conducted a tribunal as part of its school law program, the incentive was to go before a jury of one's peers, not to change the consequence. And the jury of peers had the same scope up to a certain range of authority, in the belief that one's peers would see something different than an adult who wouldn't understand, not to avoid something. He noted the choice of wording in this conversation is concerning as it may misrepresent and we are getting into the issue of prompting students how to circumvent ethics versus the idea of going before a jury of your peers who may understand more of the situation and thus make a different decision than the adult(s). Whatever the consequence is, an incentive is one's peers may understand better and do something different.

Mr. Axselle asked for direction from the Board, as this issue keeps going back and forth. The committee only has two choices, either go back and report we take this away, or report that we leave this in. Mrs. Ogburn said her issue is the way the language is worded, not the section itself. Mrs. Barber asked for suggestions as to how the wording can be modified and in the interest of time, provide suggestions to Mrs. Barber via email prior to the December meeting.

Action on Honor Council Revised Code was tabled for the December meeting.

Dr.'s Siddiqi and Bedden left the meeting and there was no longer a quorum.

XIII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

a. Policy & Regulation Proposals

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

Pol 3016 – Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Classes

Pol 3030 – Homebound Instruction

Pol 3031 – Online Courses and Virtual School Programs

Proposed policies are grounded in model policies of the Virginia School Board Association.

Policies listed above will be submitted for approval at the December 15, 2016, meeting of the Regional School Board.

b. Board Development

Mrs. Barber requested this conversation with the thought to seek assistance from the VSBA around board development services for this body to find opportunities to be more engaged with the school. Mrs. Barber offered to take the lead with the VSBA looking for them to come to MW. Mr. Wright questioned if there was money in the budget, to which Dr. McGee responded, we would use monies from Professional Development for this purpose.

XIV. Information Items

Discussion of Student Clubs. Dr. McGee reminded that policies exist around curricular and noncurricular clubs and that two years ago the Board authorized MW administration to approve new club requests as long as they are in-line with Board policy. However, a bit of attention has been made recently around the newly formed Generation Action Club, but this club was in-line with policy. Three Board members confirmed receipt of constituent concerns regarding the mission of this club and its advocacy before the General Assembly and whether that was appropriate within the confines of the school, but also the vague language in its mission statement has to how they will advertise with posters, etc., inside the school. At times there are disturbing imagines that appear on Planned Parenthood advertising. Mrs. Ogburn said she was unsure of what kind of oversight we have on these activities and when do they cross the line and how will they be monitored. Mr. Wright also received communication that questioned if this was a genuine student organization and not an adult driven organization using students as a throughput. Mr. Axelle stated that while the Board transferred club approval authority to administration, he personally didn't like that action as constituents look to Board members to be responsible then the Board should be ultimately responsible and make the decisions on if we should have a club or not. But ultimately this club met guidelines. Mrs. Ogburn suggested preparation for opposing opinion clubs that may pop up.

Newly Approved Clubs: Operation Smile and Richmond Friends of the Community

Walker Cross Country wins 4th Consecutive Regional Title

Published Faculty: Paige Hawkins in Athletic Management, Oct/Nov 2016

Alumni News: MWGS might produce an actual governor on November 8th

Other: Finance Committee Minutes, October 6, 2016

XV. Superintendent's Steering Committee Report

Dr. Gill reported eight superintendent's met this morning who thanked Dr. McGee for his four years of work at MW and wished him well as he begins a new journey. They also welcomed Dr. Lewis to the school. The committee had another review of Honor Council Code and will

look again in December. The committee also took a first look at the funding formula report noted by our first two public speakers and will continue to delve into the data that will be a part of the December agenda.

There was also a brief discussion on the timeline for the search for the next director and thanked Dr. 's Jones and Myers and Mrs. Barber for their leadership and work with stakeholder groups. Dr. Gill noted that the characteristics survey which has been available for three weeks will be closing on November 15th and that responses collected will be coupled with stakeholder input from multiple meetings. That information will be used to write the job description that will be posted hopefully by December 1st, as well as selection criteria.

XVI. Closed Meeting

None.

XVII. Certification of Closed Meeting and Any Action Taken if Necessary as a Result of Closed Meeting

None.

XVIII. Announcements/Additional Discussion

None.

XIX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:45am.

Next Meeting

December 15, 2016, at 9:00 am. MLWGS, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 153, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190.

John Axselle III, Chairman

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk