

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

**Attendance**

**March 20, 2008**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Superintendents**

**Present:**

Janet Crawley, Charles City County  
Marcus J. Newsome, Chesterfield County  
Stewart Roberson, Hanover County  
Fred Morton, Henrico County  
Richard Layman, King and Queen  
J. Roy Geiger, New Kent County  
James Victory, Petersburg City  
R. Francis Moore, Prince George County  
Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Richmond City

**Absent:**

Linda Underwood, Goochland County  
Margaret Meara, Powhatan County

**Others Present:**

N. Douglas Hunt, Director  
Joyce H. Charity, Clerk

**Board Members**

**Present:**

Barbara Crawley, Charles City County  
Dianne Pettitt, Chesterfield County  
Ivan Mattox, Goochland County  
Ann Gladstone, Hanover County (Representing  
John Axselle)  
Lisa Marshall, Henrico County  
Gwynn Litchfield, King and Queen County  
Kenneth Pritchett, Petersburg City  
Valarie Ayers, Powhatan County  
Lisa Dawson, Richmond City

**Absent:**

Teresa Lindsay, New Kent County  
Kevin Foster, Prince George County

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

**Thursday, March 20, 2008**

**9:00 a.m.**

I. Call to Order

Ivan Mattox, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order.

II. Introductions and Recognition

See Director's Report

III. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hunt asked that item d. Recommendation for Admission Process Review be stricken as the committee still has some work to do. On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the agenda was accepted with the removal of item d. Motion carried.

IV. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Lisa Dawson the minutes of the February 14, 2008 meeting were approved with the addition of Kenneth Pritchett as being present. Motion carried.

V. Public Comments

Mrs. Rebecca Maguire – GS Parent

*"Members of the Board, administrators, faculty, and guest. School security is my concern. I was very interested to read recently in the newspaper that the Henrico School Board has recently beefed up security at its high schools. As a matter of fact, each high school now has one or two security officers and one or two armed police officers. As I understand it, Petersburg, Richmond, Hanover, and Chesterfield Counties all have armed police officers in all of their high schools and some of them have security officers as needed. Now we at Maggie Walker are very fortunate to have an excellent security staff headed by Mr. Charles. Their work is essential but my request is that this school also obtain an armed police officer to be present during the school day. Now it's my understanding that Mr. Tharp, on a number of occasions, has requested from the Richmond Police Department that an armed police officer be present at this school during the day (be assigned to this school). It is also my understanding that on each occasion he has been turned down. And the reason given is that Richmond's Police Department does not consider Maggie Walker to be part of its jurisdiction since this is a regional institution. Now, I am told that police officers can be at this school within three minutes of a phone call. Three minutes can be a very long time. Furthermore, the presence of a police officer acts as a deterrent. I was also interested to learn that 95% of the high schools in the state of Virginia currently have an armed police officer assigned to the high school during the day. Maggie Walker, of course, is an exception. My question is has the board made a conscious deliberate decision that Maggie Walker not have the police officer? And my assumption is that's not the case. My request to the Board is to seriously consider the need for an armed officer to be present here and certainly if it is a question of jurisdiction, that can be resolved. And, I am sure that the question of funding has come up. It is my understanding that there are federal and state grants available for this purpose. And certainly, if the county school boards feel that it is important to have an armed officer at each of*

*their home high schools, the county students attending this school during the day should have that same protection. Sadly, it's been almost a year since this terrible event at Virginia Tech, and of course, there have been other terrible tragedies even in the last few weeks. The nature of the threat has changed and I ask that this school board, the board here, reevaluate the security system at this school, specifically I request that the Board obtain an armed police officer to be present here during the day. Thank you"*

#### **Lynn Foshee Reed – Faculty Liaison to the Board**

*"My name is Lynn Foshee Reed, and I am the elected faculty liaison to this Board. Over the weekend as I read through the board packet and was collecting my thoughts, I was struck by the accomplishments of our students and of faculty members such as John Barnes. Oftentimes their achievements go well beyond the metro area and even beyond the state. I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say that Maggie L. Walker Governor's School is one of the finest high schools in the nation. And I say that, not just as a teacher, but also as a parent of a student who is now here and one who is also a 2003 graduate. Now, having said that, I must once again raise the faculty concern that the Board please begin the thoughtful and thorough preparations for the eventual transition of the leadership of our school. If you recall in the 2005 state evaluation report there was such a call and recommendation made that a process be developed. In August of last year, Mr. Axselle, Mr. Mattox, and Dr. Jewell-Sherman met with the faculty and one of the issues that the faculty raised and communicated to these Board representatives was our concern that the Board begins the process. Since then I have found myself bringing up the same issue at least twice in this year. And again today, because to the outside observer there has been no action whatsoever, even though Mr. Hunt himself has indicated that he would like to finish his service in June of 2009 and that it would be 'ideal' to have his replacement begin in February 2009 so as to insure a smooth and orderly transition.*

*Ladies and gentlemen, February 2009 is only 11 months away. For informational purposes, I am giving to you now a copy of the approved process from 2002 and 2003 and there are a few handwritten notes because this was copied from a parent who was sitting in on one of the information sessions. I don't think you actually had to use this process because we were very fortunate to have Mr. Doug Hunt go from an interim to a permanent director. But I am sharing this so as to better illustrate the concern the faculty has that this process is not something that could or should be done in a hasty way. I have heard it said that the Board knows how to hire a principal and I do not dispute that. I have also heard it said that the director should know the politics of the metro Richmond area and therefore should be local. However, let me return to my original observation that this school regularly competes on a national stage. And I would ask you to consider that there are many additional qualities that would be just as valuable such as experience and education leading a school of gifted and high achieving students and teachers. It is the hope of the faculty that a national search will be considered so as the pool of candidates will encompass as many highly qualified candidates as possible. Finally let me suggest that the constituents of this school should be queried as soon as possible, so as to help you prepare a portrait of the future director. Students, parents, teachers, alumni, as well as members of this metro Richmond area should all be included in the process, and with the fourth quarter of this school beginning before the next meeting of this Board, there is a very real time-crunch looming. Please, please address this faculty concern and begin the selection process in the thoughtful and expeditious manner which has characterized your stewardship of our school. Thank you!"*

#### **VI. Director's Report**

Mr. Hunt recognized the following individuals: Dr. Lloyd Jackson, former Board Chair and Board Member from Henrico County, was recognized for his many years of loyal service to the Regional Board. Dr. Jackson was presented a gavel as a token of appreciation in recognition of exemplary leadership provided to the Regional Board. The Chairman commented that the Board appreciated not only Dr. Jackson's support, but his

leadership to Board members new to the Board. Mr. Hunt further commented that Dr. Jackson always questioned how things would affect the GS and the students. An open invitation was extended to Dr. Jackson to attend any Board meetings because of his wisdom, leadership, and experience which is valued by all.

Mary Jo Sisson-Vaughan, Liz and Burt Mebane, and Ann Schafer - all individuals who have supported the GS in time, talent, money, and many other ways were recognized for their contributions from the Maggie Walker auction, which started as part of the Fall Festival for the Academic Boosters. Mr. Maddox presented a plaque to each of them for their exemplary leadership and dedication to the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Night of the Dragon Auction, 2001 – 2008.

#### Student Recognitions:

Kim Kawa and Penny Deck – Senior Counselors presented the National Merit Finalist their certificates. Ms. Deck stated that in order for these students to become semi-finalist they competed against 1.4 million juniors across the country from approximately 21,000 high schools that entered the National Merit competition last year. To be chosen a semi-finalist, the students had to qualify by their PSAT scores and less than 1% of the high school students reached semi-finalist status. Ms. Deck further stated that in order to become a finalist, the students underwent another extensive application process which included writing an essay. The Chairman presented certificates to the following students: Henrico County: Marie Bertonneau, Ilya Dubovoy, Michael Giuffrida, Heather Jaros, Amber Kunkel, Jonathan Leibovic, Malcolm McConnell, Seth Zhai; Chesterfield County: Derek Chi, Elizabeth Leisey, Palmer Mebane, Jessica Merry, Dila Mignouna, Anna Mohan, Douglas Munroe, and Anant Shukla; Hanover County - Daniel May; and Richmond City - Michael Wong. Each student was given the opportunity to share their future plans for college and their involvement in organizations at the GS.

#### National Language Department – Dawn Grois, German Teacher

Two students, Kelsey Taylor and Logan Ferrell, reported on the German Business Fair they participated in held in Chesterfield County. GS manned a booth showing the influence of German business in Virginia and making the community aware of companies in the area. There were a few German businesses present giving out samples and other type of items that could be taken home. Logan Ferrell noted that he was a student speaker present at the fair to give a student's perspective as someone who learned German not only in high school, but in middle school. He stated that in the spirit of International Language Month, he mentioned a few things as to why keeping international languages in the classroom and in the future are so important. Ms. Grois announced that this is National Foreign Language Month and the GS suggested next year that they host the German Business Fair and invite all of the districts to participate as it was great to be a part of. Other activities the Foreign Language Department sponsored during the month were a student-run language bowl, an international pot luck, and in April they will host an International Festival which involves middle school students visiting the GS. She asked that if anyone had connections with German, Swiss or Austrian businesses, the GS would like to have those contacts to invite them to the GS to do a presentation next year.

#### Model Congress – Mary Jane McKay – Sponsor.

The Model Congress Club traveled to Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts during February 21 – 24 to participate in their Harvard Model Congress Program. Students researched and assumed the roles of congressional members and Supreme

Court personages during this national activity for over sixteen hundred high school students from across the nation and foreign countries. Nine students prepared, wrote, and enacted legislation that ranged from environmental to tax issues that were assigned to them individually last November by the Harvard Model Congress staff. The following awards were received by Model Congress Club members:

Rachel Burk/Award of Excellence/House Judiciary  
Megan O'Donnell/Award of Excellence/Supreme Court/Special Programs  
Sarah Huang/Award of Excellence/Supreme/Special Programs  
John R. Roach/Award of Distinction/Education and Labor  
Madelaine Spangler/Award of Participation  
Nora Linkous/Award of Participation  
Tom Fisher/Award of Participation  
Kathryn Garrahan/Award of Participation  
Paola Illaraza/Award of Participation

Mr. Hunt announced that the GSMUN Conference 2008 will be hosted at the GS. He circulated the sponsor's handbook, which was compiled by the GS students, for the Board to review and noted it was an example of some of the things the GS students do. He mentioned the possibility of a sick bank and a donation bank where there is an opportunity for days to be donated for faculty members in need. He asked if the Board was aware of any. Steward Roberson, Superintendent of Hanover Schools, stated there are different regulations different school boards have and it is a matter of what is written into regulations and also there are models. Roy Geiger, Superintendent of New Kent Schools, mentioned there are a number of sick leave banks, but the notion of creating a donation bank, unless everyone does it evenly, it gets very problematic as to who is chosen to get what donation and it can become a big issue. For example, if two people have an identical illness and one is more popular than the other it could create huge divisiveness in a faculty. As for sick leave banks, there are at least 20 different models across the State and that information could be obtained.

Letters have been mailed out on the 14<sup>th</sup> and most parents received them on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The GS has been notified of those accepted (169). The faculty continues to be concerned about the process of hiring a new director. Lastly, Mr. Hunt mentioned the response received from Richmond City in reference to a request for a School Resource Officer (SRO) for the GS is a matter of personnel. The GS has made a request several times and reported there are different views. Some parents have spoken to Mr. Hunt in opposition of it which far exceeds those desiring the SRO position. Mrs. Dawson stated that the GS needs to look at the whole issue of school safety. She further stated there may be a joint effort with students, parents and administrators and try to examine where school violence issues appear and how the GS could deal with it. Mrs. Pettitt asked security wise, what does the GS have in place? Mr. Hunt stated the GS has a full time security person and several part-timers. The GS has coverage from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and for specialized basketball or other evening type of activities, with the public in the building, additional security is hired. In instances where moneys are being collected at the door, a Richmond City Police Officer carrying a side arm is present as part of that security. For dances and other activities, when outsiders could potentially be a problem, the GS has protection against that. The GS is very fortunate that the security personnel here are highly-trained and all are current or retired firefighters with EMT training from Richmond City. Mrs. Pettitt asked if a climate survey been done at the GS. Mr. Tharp, Coordinator of Administration, stated yearly one is done. The security force currently in place works very well with the GS students and is not just an adversarial role, but more of a coaching-type role in working with the students. They also have been able to be mentors in many cases to some of the students, in addition to what the faculty does. There is a good working relationship with the Richmond City Police force. As a training

component, not only with Richmond City but Chesterfield County Police as well, dogs in training were part of a search for weapons and drugs. Mr. Tharp noted that since the GS opened in 1991, there have only been three fights. Mr. Hunt added that the community has been very supportive of the GS. Mrs. Pettitt asked if the sale of the land across the street would impact the GS. Mr. Hunt informed her that the land would be developed into condominiums and a representative of the developer met with him. The condos will be private for sale and the developer will petition the City of Richmond to change Moore Street into a two-way street so the entrance and exit will be on the back side in lieu being on Lombardy Street. The developer came with the idea of the GS giving a letter supporting their request and Mr. Hunt informed them that he felt more comfortable if the letter came from the Board. The developer, once he has some drawings, will bring them in to present to the Board before asking any requests.

The Chairman, based on the comments made about a SRO, asked if the Board should put some energy into putting a committee together to study this issue further? He felt it was important to address since a parent had raised a concern. The Board needs to take action to investigate or give some input and filter it back to administration. Mr. Hunt stated if the Board would give them a couple of months to look at the issue, maybe survey the students, faculty, and get some information out to gather some data, and then report back to the Board before a group is put together. Mr. Hunt stated he was interested to see what the concern is. Maybe some other divisions and governors' schools could be contacted to get ideas. Mr. Tharp stated that a survey is done later in the year as a part of the state-wide report the GS submits and there is no reason this report couldn't be moved up. Mr. Hunt noted that there may be some specific questions for the support/non support of an armed person in the building. Mrs. Pettitt suggested the Superintendents could be of some assistance as to what they are doing in their schools. Whatever the GS does have to be monitored because of change on a regular basis and something needing to be in place that will not be forgotten in a couple of years.

## VII. Action Agenda Items

### a. Fiscal Year 09 Operating Budget

On motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Valarie Ayers, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 09 Operating Budget. Motion carried.

### b. Standard Fee Waiver for Building

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Lisa Marshall, the Board approved the standard fee waiver for building usage requested by Virginia Commonwealth University. Motion carried.

### c. National Board Certification

On motion by Lisa Dawson, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, the Board approved the application for the National Board Certification for the GS. Motion carried.

### d. Recommendation for Admission's Process Review. Stricken.

### e. Personnel Action

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Valarie Ayers, the Board approved the personnel actions. Motion carried.

### VIII. Materials for Board Review

2008 – 2009 School Calendar – Mr. Hunt directed the Board to review the 2008-2009 School Operating Calendar, which has been designed to follow the calendars in the local school divisions, and be prepared to vote at the April meeting.

In reference to feedback on hiring a new director, the Chairman stated the Board needs to take action as quick as possible to appoint a committee from the Board or identify someone from the Board to start looking at the proper protocol for meeting with the faculty, parents, and individuals the GS serves. He asked the Vice-Chair to consider chairing and starting the process. Doug will be contacted later for his input as to who should serve on the committee. Doug stated that the various groups that are represented needs to have vital input as to the characteristics of the person being sought. The Chairman stated it is very important that Board members actively be part of the process, as well as others, to get input. Mrs. Pettitt mentioned the survey form is a viable tool as it gives data from every individual being solicited for input. A survey could be crafted and distributed to the PTSA and students to get feedback and it will be more organized. Once this data is compiled, the Superintendents could look at the info and use it in their operation as well as “looking at people” to bring before the Board. Fred Morton, Superintendent of Henrico Schools, commented that the notion of a survey and gathering information across the spectrum is a great idea and in this age of technology, the ability to have a tool to fill out on the computer via e-mail can only be used once could rapidly collate the information instead of it being done by hand.

Secondly, Mr. Morton stated that with faculty, parents, and students, he suggested a criteria development session that is fully interactive with the presentation about the process would allow individuals to interact in small groups and talk. Mr. Hunt commented he was concerned about a director coming on board July 1 and having a “feel” for the job. He felt when a person is hired during the summer; there is little input for the next school year. If a person is hired the beginning of second semester, that is when major hirings are taking place, a master schedule is compiled, and other things that are done in the spring that has a major influence on the next school year. If possible, it is the best scenario that everyone could operate under and if done early enough, it could give the location the person is coming from the same opportunity. Some moneys have been placed in the budget to support a person coming in early if the Board wants to go in that direction. Mr. Hunts plans to be at the GS until the end of June 2009 unless he is directed otherwise. Marcus Newsome, Superintendent of Chesterfield County Schools, commented that ideally it would be great for someone to experience a solid transition but also felt the parents, students, and faculty need to know that if one gets a highly competent person that does not come on board until July 1, there are still some advantages because the GS has a strong solid school Board and a faculty in place. The person that comes on board inherits the direction that has been established by the outgoing director, faculty, and staff. It would be ideal if the new director could come early but the anxiety should not place the new individual in a position to feel that the staff and community feel they are going to be disadvantaged because they did not get the opportunity come in early. Mr. Hunt felt a head start and overlap time is good. James Victory, Superintendent of Petersburg Schools, recommended the next step be the Vice Chair and some volunteers start to put something on paper to process with a timeline and that way the Board could have something written that they could react to. The Chairman stated he would speak to Mr. Axelle and may be he and Mrs. Pettitt could co-chair the committee.

IX. Information

None

X. Superintendents' Steering Committee

Janet Crawley, Chairman of the Superintendents' Steering Committee, stated the Committee met on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March and was updated on action agenda items a-d and most of their time was spend discussing the admissions' process. The Superintendents are very supportive of the process that has been made and its direction.

At this point the Chairman gave each Board member an opportunity to make any comments. Mrs. Ayers encouraged the Board to look at the students' art work in the hall as it was amazing.

XI. Closed Meeting

None

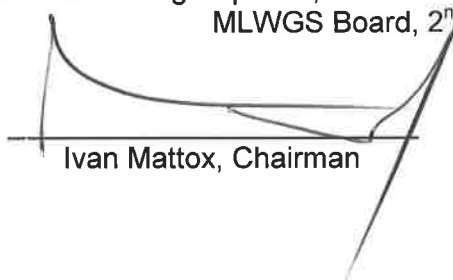
XII. Certification of Closed Meeting

None

XIII. Adjournment

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the meeting adjourned.  
Motion carried.

XIV. Next Meeting: April 17, 2008  
MLWGS Board, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

  
Ivan Mattox, Chairman

  
N. Douglas Hunt, Director