

## MINUTES

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

Thursday, March 15, 2012

9:00 a.m.

#### I. Call to Order

Kenneth Pritchett, Chairman of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional 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 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. Diana Winston, **School Board**, Henrico County Public Schools  
Ms. Cora Armstrong, **School Board**, King & Queen Public Schools (late arrival)  
Mrs. Sarah Barber, **School Board**, New Kent Public Schools  
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, **School Board**, Petersburg 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 (late arrival)  
Dr. Janet Crawley, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools  
Dr. Marcus Newsome, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools  
Dr. Linda Underwood, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools  
Dr. Jamelle Wilson, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools  
Dr. Pat Russo, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools  
Mrs. Lorianne Smith, Director of Human Resources & Instruction for 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  
Ms. Linda Minor, Gifted Coordinator for Dr. Jeffrey Smith, **Superintendent**, West Point Public Schools  
Mr. Don Skeen, **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. Dudley Olsson, *School Board*, West Point Public Schools  
Dr. Robert Richardson, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools  
Dr. Margaret Meara, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Also present:

Phil Tharp and Patti Chappell ó MLWGS Administration, Karen Hoover ó Staff, Sharon Parker ó Faculty, Hal Waller, Doug Scheibe and Burt Hazelwood ó GS Foundation, Julie Weissend ó PTSA President, Bill Yates, Chamie Valentine and Karen Akens - Parents.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Diana Winston, the agenda for this meeting with a request by the Director to withdraw FY13 budget proposal (IX.b), was unanimously approved.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

On motion by John Axselle, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the minutes for February 16, 2012, February 23, 2012 Special Session and February 23, 2012 Budget Work Session were unanimously approved.

**V. Recognitions**

Student **Christian Vivadelli** (Richmond) along with Coach Rob Sultzer, was recognized as Maggie Walker's first ever **State Swim Champion**.

**MLWGS Model Congress** dominates at **Harvard Model Congress Conference** held in Boston, February 23<sup>rd</sup> -26<sup>th</sup>. Sponsor Mary Jane McKay introduced students who received individual awards for excellence: **Chris Benos** (Chesterfield), **Stephen Dwyer** (Chesterfield), **Matt King** (Henrico), **Anand Singh** (Chesterfield), **Yash Tekriwal** (Henrico), **Annie Valentine** (Richmond) and **Johnny Mac Yates** (Richmond). Not in attendance: **Gray Whisnant** (Henrico).

**VI. 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.

Mrs. Chamie Valentine thanked the Director's Search Committee for their responsiveness to community input and for their work securing a new director for MLWGS.

## VII. Director's Report

- a. **Max Smith - Sponsor, Melody Wang** (Chesterfield) and **Michael Drash** (Henrico) ó GSMUN Secretary-General (**Governor's School Model United Nations Club**) gave a brief presentation describing their upcoming 15<sup>th</sup> annual conference March 30-31, 2012 at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School.
- b. The Director reviewed the status of MLWGS's **timeline** and **framework** for review and development of the **MLWGS policy manual**. Mr. Skeen asked for Board participation on a committee that will be formed to identify areas that need immediate attention.
- c. **Director Updates:**
  - Complimentary note cards as a gift of appreciation from MLWGS Art students on the table in conjunction with Youth Art Month
  - Spring Drama: Sweeney Todd - March 15-17, 2012
  - N. Douglas Hunt Athletic Pavilion dedication: March 22, 2012
  - Shadow Days for accepted students: March 26-28, 2012
  - Spring Concerts: April 3-4, 2012
  - Spring Break: April 9-13, 2012
  - Rising 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Registration: April 23, 2012
- d. **Coming Events** - See Pages 32-33 in the Board packet

## VIII. Action Items

### a. **Board Recognition Proposal for Student/Faculty**

The Director recommends the Board maintain their current recognition structure for students and faculty during regular meeting sessions but limit the time for said recognitions to twenty minutes.

After brief discussion, on motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Kimberly Gray, the Director's recommendation was unanimously approved.

### b. **Format of April 26, 2012 Board Meeting: Work Session or Regular Meeting**

On January 19, 2012 the Board approved their 2012 calendar of meetings with April 26<sup>th</sup> designated as a **Work Session or Regular Meeting**. The Director recommends that the Board approve a regular session format for their April meeting.

After brief discussion, on motion by John Axselle, seconded by Kevin Hazzard, a regular meeting format for April 26, 2012 was unanimously approved.

**c. Board Meeting Packets: Digital or Paper**

The Director proposes a digital format that will change how the Board receives their monthly packets and includes:

- 1) Board members would be expected to provide their own laptop or device. MLWGS can still provide hard copies to members that may not have access to a computer.
- 2) Up to 5 MB can be attached to an email successfully.
- 3) Download packets onto a personal laptop prior to meeting.
- 4) Internet connection could be available but would be limited depending on the number of requests.
- 5) Dr. Newsome suggested using a projection system in conjunction with the digital format.

After discussion, Valarie Ayers moved to adopt the digital format with a projection feature, seconded by Diana Winston. The motion carried with the following vote:

Barbara Crawley: Aye  
Dianne Smith: Aye  
Kevin Hazzard: Aye  
John Axselle: Nay  
Diana Winston: Aye  
Cora Armstrong: Aye  
Sarah Barber: Aye  
Kenneth Pritchett: Aye  
Valarie Ayers: Aye  
Jerry Warren: Aye  
Kimberly Gray: Aye

**IX. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion**

**a. Policy for Directory Information**

The proposal listed on pages 37 and 38 of the Board packet is presented to establish that MLWGS maintains compliance with FERPA regulations. The proposal generally reflects Richmond Public Schools policy, but specifically addresses what MLWGS does with this information and how it is used by the PTSA and Foundation. The Director has vetted this policy proposal with the Virginia School Board Association.

Board approval for Directory Information policy will be sought at the April 26, 2012 meeting.

## **b. FY2013 Proposed Operating Budget**

Withdrawn

## **c. Rental Rate Changes**

Phil Tharp remarked the last time rental rates were revised and Board approved was 2005. In his presentation he stated that rates presented today were determined after review and discussion with facility personnel from the large participating divisions.

Mr. Axselle questioned if these rates allow for full expense recovery on rentals. Mr. Tharp replied that overall these rates do recoup costs even though summer activities skyrocket expenses for inside usage.

Mr. Hazzard asked if contracted personnel rates reflect those recently approved by this Board for MLWGS's custodial contract. Mr. Tharp answered; yes, with an additional amount added to recoup the cost of miscellaneous supplies such as toilet tissue and other expendable supplies normally purchased. As clarification to a query by Mrs. Ayers, Mr. Tharp confirmed MLWGS does add additional charges for custodial services to contracts above the facility rental fees.

Dr. Browder requested information regarding placement of rental income monies. In response, Mr. Tharp stated rental income is placed in Operational Expense Recovery and paid out (example: custodial and security services/fees) on the expenditure side. He then stated, "If any amounts are left over, MLWGS has a little flexibility to use them in other areas such as instructional supplies." Dr. Browder suggested a tracking system of events for facility usage whereby MLWGS might demonstrate to various bodies (i.e., Board of Supervisors) the extra funding needed for operation of facilities.

## **X. MLWGS Informational Items**

- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, March 1, 2012
- Foundation Update
- Student News
  - We the People State Champion (15<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Win)
  - Forensics Team Sweeps District Tournament
  - Junior Breaks School Track Record
  - Sophomore Wins Poetry Out Loud Contest

Mrs. Winston reported on "Project Citizen," having recently been introduced to this activity and organization through a Henrico school. Project Citizen is a civics project where students propose laws they wish to see enacted; students research policy and propose how it could be implemented with a formal presentation of their findings before a legislative committee. Mrs. Winston suggested that Mr. Skeen make our Social Studies teachers aware of this organization.

## **XI. Superintendent's Steering Committee Report**

Dr. Parrish reported that during the committee's meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup> the Superintendents had a lengthy and sensitive discussion regarding MLWGS's budget. Mr. Skeen was present and the group provided feedback to him regarding his presentation concerning various aspects of the budget with ideas and options that need to be considered going forth. Additional decisions will be made before moving forward with the budget. In addition, the committee had planned to have additional discussion regarding input for the transition of the new director, but time ran out. However, the committee has planned ways to communicate electronically on this matter.

Dr. Russo questioned Mr. Skeen in regards to budget and determining how the legislative process impacts MLWGS going forward. For example, if there are further reductions to be made, is MLWGS in a position, especially with staffing, to be able to do that with contracts going out by the April board meeting. Mr. Skeen responded that his team is hopeful they will be able to make a presentation in April, while still investigating all possibilities, again awaiting data we don't yet have and depending on how quickly we receive additional legislative information. Stating his concern was from a logistics standpoint, Dr. Russo asked for clarification regarding if MLWGS would be in a position, should it have to make some difficult decisions relative to staffing, be able to adjust contracts. Mr. Skeen said that his team has had those discussions and yes, the school would be in a position to make appropriate suggestions.

In response to Dr. Russo's concern and speaking for the Henrico board, Mrs. Winston stated, "The hits that we have taken as a board, and the cuts that we have had to make as a board, and operating in more than a flat budget, that I do not see that reflected here at the Governor's School and my board does not see it reflected here at the Governor's School. And that is a concern of the board in continuing to fund this, and looking at reduction in staff in areas where this school is smaller than a comprehensive high school and it has staffing, auxiliary staffing that far exceeds what a high school would be. So I just, I bring it. I represent the board of Henrico County, we are a large participant in the Governor's School, it is a costly outlay for us to be able to do this with the specialty centers that we have and the reductions that we have taken in our own budget, I mean we've cut another, well fifty-eight million dollars in the past three years we've cut out of that budget. So we are bare. I use John's quote, we are to the bone as I know Hanover and our other areas are. My board would like to see that reflected here because it is an extension of Henrico County and they do not see that in looking at the operation of the Governor's School. So, I bring that concern from my board."

Ms. Gray pointed out that contained in the finance report there is discussion of flat tuition, knowing there was a prior suggestion of a tuition increase, but it appears to be revisited and going with the flat tuition suggestion in our regional budget.

Mr. Axelle acknowledged reading that report and stated, "When I saw that I began to think, flat versus reduced, because to piggy back off what Mrs. Winston said, we've just been through major cuts which include personnel for the fourth year in a row and we are not uncommon. I don't think there is a board member or superintendent sitting around this table that hasn't gone through the same thing over the last four years. And I'm not trying to beat up on the Governor's School, but I think constituents and communities are sitting and saying, okay fine, I'm looking at people being cut and things being reduced, but I don't see it at the Governor's School, I mean the Governor's School, doesn't appear to be, I'll say it that way, reflecting the same reductions and so forth. So, I will just speak for myself in this; I would probably be weary of a flat budget at this time. I would suggest from my standpoint to look at reduction in cost over current cost. Because candidly, we need all the help we can get. I'll tell you right now in Hanover we need all the help we can get. Talk about rates, you come to a football game Friday night next year we are going to charge you \$5.00 for a cup of water." He then stated, "Things are lean and mean. We've cut, and I know everybody at this table has had to do the same thing, people have to walk out the door type thing and it's not a pleasant situation at all. I know that we are already thinking about 13-14 and that picture looks even worse. So, I think this is something seriously as you go through this, my recommendation anyway, would be to seriously start looking at ways of reductions because it may be from the divisions represented here may have to be looking at reductions as far as funding versus flat, if I may."

Ms. Armstrong added that, "I'm from a very, very, very small school system in King & Queen, and when I first came on the school board there, my question, I had a lot of questions about the Governor's School, about the expense of how much we were paying to send students to be able to come and be a part when our daily population at the high school and the elementary schools are suffering, and they had to help me to understand the importance of the gifted program. I'm a little better understanding it now and being here with you all is helping me understand a little bit more. But I totally agree with you because of the fact that we are juggling now, we are really juggling, and when you cut as much as you can, unfortunately programs like this one are going to have to suffer. Because even if we have gifted children, we just don't have enough money. And so I feel bad about it because to hear those students come in and do all those great things and the possibilities that they can have as they grow up and get out into the world, this school has a great hand in that. But at the same time; I guess it's the rock and the proverbial hard place."

In conclusion, Dr. Parrish added that the Superintendent's gave very specific feedback and examples to Mr. Skeen concerning ways to look at reductions in the budget. The Superintendent's also made comparisons of cuts and decisions being made at the school division level, and looked at the percentages of reductions in the divisions versus percentages in the presentation that was being made, and there was an issue of alignment of the same kinds of hard decisions and cuts that were being considered here. This is the feedback the Superintendents gave Mr. Skeen and the next proposal should include suggestions the Superintendent's provided.

**XII. Closed Meeting**

None

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

None

**XIV. Announcements/Unfinished Business**

Mrs. Ayers asked the Board to observe some of the great artwork on display in the hallway.

Mr. Pritchett reminded board members to pick up their photographs from Mrs. Marshall as they depart the meeting.

**XV. Adjournment**

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

**Next Meeting**

April 26, 2012 at 9:00am. MLWGS Board Room, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 226, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190 or x2111.

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Kenneth Pritchett, Chairman

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Donald Skeen, Director

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Minutes Recorded by:  
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk