

# **MAGGIE L. WALKER GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL**

## ***FOR GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES***

### **FIVE -YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

**July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025**

#### **Regional School Board**

The Regional School Board of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School is composed of one school board member from each participating school district. Its primary purpose is to set policy, which guides the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School, and represent and interpret the objectives, goals, programs and needs of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School.

Mr. John D. Wright, (Vice-Chair) Goochland County Schools  
Ms. Harwood Hall, King and Queen Schools  
Mr. John Axselle, III, Hanover County Schools  
Mrs. Valarie Ayers, Powhatan County Schools  
Ms. Sarah Grier Barber, New Kent County Schools  
Mr. Royce Paige, Charles City County Schools  
Mr. J. Scott Barlow, City of Richmond Schools  
Ms. Linda Hyslop, Hopewell Public Schools  
Mrs. Michelle Ogburn, (Chair) Henrico County Schools  
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, City of Petersburg Schools  
Ms. Debbie Bailey, Chesterfield County Schools  
Ms. Jill Andrews, Prince George County Schools

#### **Superintendent's Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee is composed of the Division Superintendent of each participating school district, or the superintendent's duly appointed designee.

Mr. Jason Kamras, Superintendent of City of Richmond Schools  
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, Superintendent of Prince George County Schools  
Dr. David W. Gaston, Superintendent of Charles City County Schools  
Dr. Melody Hackney, Superintendent of Hopewell Public Schools  
Dr. Eric L. Jones, Superintendent of Powhatan County Schools

Dr. Carol B. Carter, Superintendent of King and Queen Schools  
Dr. Amy Cashwell (Chair), Superintendent of Henrico County Schools  
Dr. Jeremy Raley (Vice-Chair), Superintendent of Goochland County Schools  
Dr. Maria Pitre-Martin, Superintendent of City of Petersburg Schools  
Dr. Mervin B. Daugherty, Superintendent of Chesterfield County Schools  
Mr. Brian Nichols, Superintendent of New Kent County Schools  
Dr. Michael B. Gill, Superintendent of Hanover County Schools

**School Leadership**

Dr. Robert Lowerre, Director  
Dr. Wendy Ellis, Associate Director for Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Max Smith, Assistant Director for Operations

**Policy Authority: Regional School Board Policy No.: 0013**

The MLWGS Regional School Board will adopt a comprehensive strategic plan. The plan will be developed by the MLWGS staff with community involvement and will include, or be consistent with, recognized standards in international education and all other plans required by state and federal laws and regulations. The Regional School Board shall review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. Prior to the adoption of the plan or revisions thereto, the Regional School Board will post the plan or revisions on the school's internet website if practical and make a hard copy of the plan or revisions available for public inspection and copying and will conduct at least one public hearing to solicit public comment on the plan or revisions.

**Strategic Planning Team**

A 15-member representative group of MLWGS' leadership, students, staff, faculty, counseling, Regional School Board, Superintendents Steering Committee, PTSA, School Advisory Council, Foundation, and Alumni.

Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, Regional School Board  
Dr. Jeremy Raley, Superintendent of Goochland County Schools  
Dr. Robert Lowerre, Director  
Dr. Wendy Ellis, Associate Director, Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Max Smith, Assistant Director, Operations  
Ms. Maggie McKenna, Student (Henrico)  
Ms. April Smith, Student (Henrico)  
Mr. Taurus Patterson, Student (Chesterfield)  
Mr. Dickson Benesh, Teacher  
Ms. Wendy DeGroat, Librarian  
Mr. Craig Martin, PTSA (Richmond)  
Ms. Jewel Caven, Foundation (Richmond)

Mr. Michael Larkin, Parent (Richmond)  
Ms. Barry Bowers, School Advisory Council (Hanover)  
Ms. Faith Alejandro, Alumni

### **Strategic Planning Process**

MLWGS' strategic planning process began in August 2019 when Dr. Robert Lowerre, Director gathered together a 15-member representative group of MLWGS' staff leadership, faculty, students, a member of the Regional School Board, a member of the Superintendents Steering Committee, and other stakeholders together to begin work on a five-year strategic plan. The staff, faculty and other stakeholder groups had been working for more than a year on stakeholder surveys and it was decided to take information from the surveys and update the existing five-year plan. Consultant Amy Nisenson was hired to work with Dr. Lowerre, other school leadership, and the Strategic Planning Team to create the strategic plan.

The GOALS of the project were for Amy Nisenson to work over a six to eight month (September 2019 to May 2020):

- Serve as consultant and facilitator for MLWGS's planning process and retreats
- Prepare the final document
- Present results to the Board
- Work with MLWGS staff to provide an implementation plan

Deliverables of the Project were:

- Work with Robert Lowerre, Director of MLWGS, his leadership team, and a strategic plan committee to review the 2015-2020 plan and update it to reflect new priorities for the next five years.
- Work with the above groups to create a plan to go to the School Board for approval.
- Complete the final plan for approval in March 2020
- Work with Robert and staff to create an implementation plan.

## Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan created by MLWGS addresses the following goal areas: A Welcoming and Responsive Environment; Curriculum and Instruction; and a Safe School with Effective Management of Resources. The Standards for Excellence provided a framework for improvement planning and for the strategic plan. In addition, the strategic planning team brainstormed about critical issues that the MLWGS faced over the last few years, and this framed the goal areas. The final plan will be presented to the Regional School Board for a “first read” in March 2020 and scheduled to be voted on at the May 2020 meeting.

### APPROVAL TIMELINE (Adjusted due to Covid-19 School Closure)

September 2019 – Initial planning meeting with Director and Consultant

October 2019 – Process established by Director and Consultant

November 2019-March 2020 – Strategic Plan Committee meetings

June 2020 – Strategic Plan is introduced to the Executive Committee of the Regional School Board

August 2020 – Strategic Plan is presented to Regional School Board and opened for Public Comment

September 2020 – Strategic Plan is adopted by the Regional School Board

### STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE (A framework for improvement planning)

- 1. Mission and Purpose:** MLWGS maintains, communicates and commits to a shared direction and purpose.
- 2. Governance and Leadership:** MLWGS operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student and staff performance, school effectiveness, and mission accomplishment.
- 3. Teaching and Learning:** The MLWGS curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and learning experiences are progressive, rigorous, and aligned with the school’s mission.
- 4. Access to Teaching and Learning:** MLWGS provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.
- 5. Faculty and Support Staff:** Highly qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill the roles and responsibilities necessary to accomplish the MLWGS mission.
- 6. Culture and Partnerships:** MLWGS is a model public-private partnership that involves relevant public personnel and aligns relevant external stakeholders in common pursuit of mission accomplishment.
- 7. Operational Systems:** MLWGS maintains modern facilities, services, furnishings, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment that is aligned with the learning needs of its students.

## VISION

**Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies envisions a school that cultivates a community of independent thinkers who embrace civic responsibility, ethical leadership and diverse world views.**

## MISSION

**Our mission engages intellectually curious students in an inclusive environment that offers comprehensive, inter-disciplinary education enriched by local and global connectedness.**

## GOALS OF PLAN

**GOAL ONE: Maggie L. Walker Governor's School will create a welcoming and responsive environment that celebrates and reflects the diversity the school districts we serve and fosters a sense of belonging for all.**

**GOAL TWO: Maggie L. Walker Governor's School will engage students with innovative curricula and responsive instruction that focuses on student-centered experiential learning. Instruction will be interdisciplinary and enriched by local and global connectedness.**

**GOAL THREE: Maggie L. Walker Governor's School will be a safe school with effective management of resources.**

## BELIEFS

The mission of MLWGS is based on the beliefs that:

1. Our success is fueled by the unique geographic footprint of our students who share diverse ideas and perspectives from a wide range of Central Virginia School divisions.
2. Gifted students benefit from special academic programs designed to meet their unique educational needs.
3. By cultivating a family-like, nurturing community of students, supported by our staff of professional and dedicated teachers, our school is an effective, proven platform for limitless personal and academic development.
4. A rigorous, exciting education that is responsive to the emotional, social, physical and intellectual needs of each student prepares them to reach their goals for higher education, define their academic passions, and to cultivate their talents.
5. Our school's deep-rooted heritage of liberal arts curricula, infused with an emphasis on government and international studies, inspires our students to embrace the responsibility of citizenship, the value of effective government and the richness of diverse cultures.
6. The pursuit of excellence in interdisciplinary, collaborative, and experiential academic studies prepares students to contribute productively to society and to compete successfully in the workplace.
7. Because our students have a wide array of curricular, co- and extra-curricular interests, including history, sciences, arts, technology, music, literature, mathematics, athletics, and more, we inspire our students to find their own unique path.
8. Honor, integrity, character, and mutual respect are fundamental to our school's tradition of lifelong, remarkable friendships and our track record of nationally recognized academic excellence.

GOAL #1: Culture of MLWGS	OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES	OUTCOME MEASURES
<p><b>Maggie L. Walker’s Governor School will create a welcoming and responsive environment that celebrates and reflects the diversity of the school districts we serve and fosters a sense of belonging for all.</b></p>	<p>1.1 MLWGS will engage and educate our school districts about the opportunities available to them in our learning environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop strategic marketing plan for the school to tell the MLWGS story which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Print</li> <li>• Media Outreach</li> </ul> </li>   <li>2. Develop and enhance relationships with districts, schools, administrators, counselors, parents, and potential students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop elementary outreach program</li> <li>• Enhance middle school outreach program</li> <li>• Student-driven relationship building; mentoring, team coaching, community service (e.g. Carter ES)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	
	<p>1.2 MLWGS will create an environment that provides a sense of belonging and fosters student and family engagement.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Examine and eliminate structural barriers that prevent students from availing themselves of all the opportunities at MLWGS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Financial Aid</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Lunch</li> <li>• Fees (Student fees, clubs, activities)</li> <li>• Access to wraparound services (Identify and fill gaps in student mental health and wellness programs)</li> <li>• Review and reform policies and procedures that impede inclusion (e.g. mental health intake, bathroom policies, club and extra-curricular policies)</li> <li>• Enhance communications to make sure students have knowledge of and are able to seek resources</li> <li>• Facilitate student input and feedback</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	

GOAL #1: Culture of MLWGS	OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES	OUTCOME MEASURES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze and strengthen the student onboarding process to prepare accepted students for the MLWGS experience               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mentoring by upperclassmen</li> <li>○ Orientation for students</li> <li>○ Orientation for parents</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• Equip faculty with tools to foster an inclusive environment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implicit bias training (e.g. VA Center for Inclusive Communities)</li> <li>○ Trauma informed care (e.g. ChildSavers)</li> <li>○ Foster an open door-policy (all staff should be accessible to students)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<p>1.3 MLWGS will codevelop a plan with its districts to increase enrollment of historically underserved populations.</p>	<p>In compliance with FY 2021 Budget Item 145,C-27,I, the school will work with the partner districts to collect application and admission data to be used to support a plan to increase the percentage of historically underserved populations at MLWGS.</p>	
	<p>1.4 MLWGS will develop a strategy to increase the demographic diversity of our faculty and staff.</p>	<p>1. Examine barriers to hiring and retaining diverse faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Resources</li> </ul> <p>2, Strengthen professional development resources for faculty</p>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Showcase faculty and staff success to attract candidates to MLWGS as the “employer of choice”</li></ul> <p>3. Develop hiring strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Short-term (tools to ensure diverse pool of applicants)</li><li>○ Long-term (plan recruiting needs as faculty approach tenure/retirement)</li></ul> <p>4. Develop outreach program for recruiting teachers from multiple districts and education graduate schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Speaker series</li><li>○ Explore student-teaching and mentoring opportunities for MLWGS teachers to help train the next generation of gifted teachers.</li></ul>	
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GOAL #2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES	OUTCOME MEASURES
<p><b>Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School will engage students with innovative curricula and responsive instruction that focuses on student-centered experiential learning. Instruction will be interdisciplinary and enriched by local and global connectedness.</b></p>	<p>2.1 Students will engage in exciting distinctive courses that are designed to deepen student interest.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage a collaborative environment for ongoing innovation of all course offerings.</li> <li>2. Expand dual enrollment course offerings and include courses through additional university partners.</li> <li>3. Investigate offering courses with comparatively smaller student enrollment.</li> <li>4. Expand the menu of teacher-created courses that center on experiential learning, interdisciplinary and global awareness.</li> <li>5. Expand student enrollment in SGC’s and teacher-developed courses.</li> <li>6. Augment opportunities for student travel and beyond-the-classroom experiences.</li> <li>7. Develop a reimagined FIRC course to equip freshmen to succeed at MLWGS</li> </ol>	
	<p>2.2 Teachers will provide engaging, student-centered instruction.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage teachers to enhance student engagement, embed community engagement, and integrate instructional technology within their curricula.</li> <li>2. Provide opportunities for teachers to participate in training and collegial discussions about enhancing student engagement, embedding community engagement, and integrating instructional technology within their curricula.</li> <li>3. Incentivize teachers to enhance student engagement, embed community engagement, and integrate instructional technology within their curricula.</li> </ol>	

GOAL #3: SAFETY & RESOURCES	OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES	OUTCOME MEASURES
<b>Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School will be a safe school with effective management of resources.</b>	3.1 Create and fund a ten-year capital improvement plan.	1. Conduct a needs assessment of future needs for the facility and technology. 2. Forecast ten-year costs. 3. Implement a funding mechanism separate from the operating budget’	
	3.2 Create a better experience for students, teachers, and parents through available software solutions.	1. Purchase of online teacher receipting program. 2. Implement field trip request and tracking software. 3. Integrate field trip software with student information system. 4. Reduce student fees. 5. Incentivize the use of current online payment systems.	
	3.3 Enhance our safe school environment.	1. Implement an annual climate survey. 2. Complete a full revision of the safety/crisis plan. 3. Further develop relations with local fire, police, and EMS in order to incorporate best practices, and facilitate external audits. 4. Train faculty on cyber security and teaching digital literacy.	
	3.4 Transition the fiscal operations of MLWGS to a new fiscal agent.	1. Research options for future fiscal processing. 2. Secure board approval for a new fiscal agent. 3. Create a transition plan.	