

Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies School Advisory Council

Minutes from SAC meeting on October 12, 2021

The virtual meeting was called to order (via Zoom) at 7:20 a.m. by Chair, Michael Larkin

Members Present: Michael Larkin, Karen Townsend, Lisa Williams, Rachel Loving, Rachel Gable, Leigh Anne Ratliff, Virginia Warren, Madison Kang, Karen Smith-Will, Sean Fang, Kyleen Terana, Julie Solomon, Jill Blondin, Audrey Paulson, and Joy Cobb.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- The agenda for today's meeting was approved.
- Minutes from the June meeting were approved.

Old Business

SAC elections and membership - Michael Larkin talked about membership makeup for this year. He noted one change from last year is that Dr. Lisa Williams will be taking Max Smith's place as the administration appointee. Dr. Williams introduced herself and said she is excited about working on strategic plan alignment, as she saw overlap between what SAC and the Strategic Planning Team had worked on over the past year.

As background for new SAC members, Michael reviewed how SAC's advisory role to the regional school board and school administration is tied to the school's mission and vision which was revised last year. He summarized the work of standing and special ad-hoc committees from the previous school year. Karen T. asked about reinstating Policy and Curriculum as a standing committee. Dr. Williams stated that the administration is open for comments and ideas about curriculum.

New Business

2021-22 committees and sign-ups – Michael presented a spreadsheet proposing the following standing and special committees for this school year:

- **School Calendar** – This standing committee can be inactive this year due to advance work on an (early-start) calendar through 2022/23 that has already been completed.
- **Nominations and By-laws** – Main task of this committee is to solicit nominations for parent positions, interview and fill student positions, and ensure that other faculty positions are refilled as members roll off. The bulk of this work takes place during the Spring semester. By-law reviews are done as needed. Karen Townsend is willing to continue chairing.

- **Curriculum and Policies** – This is a standing committee which has been inactive in recent years. Dr. Loving pointed out that during last year’s transcript study, some larger issues such as course weighting were brought up and would fit well into this group’s role.
- **“Stronger Together” (Campus Life & Culture)** – This special committee is essentially a continuation of last year’s “Campus Life During COVID” effort, which had very effective student leadership with Gabriella Watson. Rachel Gable is willing to continue serving, but recommended it be chaired by a student representative.
- **MLWGS Strategic Marketing Plan** – A special committee started last year and carrying over. Goal for this year to specifically pin down what messaging should be in the marketplace and what types of channels should be used. Last year’s committee focused both on marketing MLWGS to middle school students and also on marketing MLWGS to colleges.
- **Prospective Students Early Engagement** – Objective of this ongoing special committee is to start outreach to prospective students at an early age, particularly at those schools which are underrepresented at MLWGS.
- **Removing Structural Barriers to Student Engagement** -Dr. Loving led this special committee last year through a racial climate survey and report. She is unsure if it needs to continue, unless perhaps to study additional school groups such as the LGBTQ+ or subgroups that have issues engaging and could benefit from study and the school being more inclusive. Some barriers are logistical (i.e., transportation) and others are cultural. Karen Smith-Will suggested simplifying the title to “Removing Barriers to Student Engagement”
- **SAC Marketing and Communications Plan** – This is a behind-the-scenes effort for the executive team, but others can participate if they wish. Goal is to create infrastructure for SAC to have better transparency and awareness with the Regional School Board.
- **Strategic Planning Team interaction with SAC** – Michael explained that this is a special group generally spun up in the school’s process of developing a new strategic plan every 5 years. The latest plan was adopted in 2019/20. Dr. Lowerre has since maintained an “Implementation” group as an ongoing presence within the School Board and has asked that they be joined into SAC, at least for this school year. Ed Coleman has been appointed as liaison between the Strategic Planning Team and the Regional School Board. Dr. Williams and Joy Cobb are also members of both. Dr. Williams stated that it makes sense for the three of them to continue in this role and to share out their work with other SAC committees so that their work is aligned.

Michael stated that following the meeting, a link will be sent for members to sign up for committees. Leadership (or co-leadership) is welcome from anyone interested. He emphasized that students played key leadership roles last year and are encouraged to do so again this year.

Announcements and Closure

Transcript study follow-up - Prior to closing the meeting, Michael brought up this skipped agenda item. Dr. Loving confirmed that the issue is now resolved, with numerical grades no longer appearing on transcripts being issued this Fall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 a.m.