

MINUTES

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government & International Studies
Regional School Board Regular Meeting & FY24 Budget Work Session
1000 N. Lombardy Street, Richmond, VA

Thursday, February 16, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Prior to the start of this meeting, the board enjoyed the work of a student string quartet playing in honor of school board appreciation month. Thank you and recognition goes to Ms. Allison Barnes and her students.

I. Call to Order

Kenneth Pritchett, Chair of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional Board, called the meeting to order.

II. Moment of Silence

The Chair called for a moment of silence.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

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

IV. Introductions

Each member is listed in alphabetical order by locality.

Present:

Ms. Martha Harris, *School Board*, Charles City Public Schools
Ms. Debbie Bailey, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Ms. Mary Benjamin, *School Board*, Dinwiddie Public Schools
Mr. John Wright, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. Bob May, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Ms. Michelle 'Micky' Ogburn, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools
Ms. Linda Hyslop, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools
Ms. Harwood Hall, *School Board*, King & Queen Public Schools
Ms. Sarah Grier Barber, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Ms. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Mr. Cecil Smith, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Mariah White, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools
Ms. Michelle Powell for Dr. Kari Weston, **Superintendent**, Dinwiddie Public Schools
Dr. Jeremy Raley, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Ms. Mandy Baker for Dr. Michael Gill, **Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools

Ms. Adrienne Cole-Johnson for Dr. Amy Cashwell, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Ms. Jessica Harris for Dr. Carol Carter, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools
Ms. Melanie Ficke for Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools
Mr. Jason Kamras, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools
Dr. Robert Lowerre, **Director**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School
Ms. Barbara Marshall, **Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Absent:

Mr. Steven Neece, **School Board**, Colonial Heights Public Schools
Dr. Dalphine Joppy, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. Merv Daugherty, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. William Sroufe, **Superintendent**, Colonial Heights Public Schools
Dr. Melody Hackney, **Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools
Dr. Brian Nichols, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Dr. Tamara Sterling, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Beth Teigen, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Also present:

Dr. Michael 'Max' Smith and Dr. Lisa Williams – MLWGS Administration
Wendy DeGroat, Lisa Hannah-Gordon, and David Bortz – MLWGS Staff
Ms. Lynn Plevich – Richmond Public Schools Gifted Coordinator

V.a Approval for Board Member(s) to Participate in this Meeting Remotely

Policy No. 1020 – Electronic Participation in Meetings from a Remote Location

I. Quorum Physically Assembled

- A. The Regional School Board may conduct any meeting wherein the public business is discussed or transacted through electronic communication means if 1) on or before the day of a meeting, a member of the Regional School Board notifies the chair that such member is unable to attend the meeting due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member's physical attendance or that such member is unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter and identifies with specificity the nature of the personal matter; and 2) **the Regional School Board approves the member's participation by a majority vote of the members present at the primary or central meeting location.**

No board members participated from a remote location for the meeting, so no action was required.

V.b Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Mariah White, seconded by John Wright, the agenda for this meeting was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

VI. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Martha Harris, the minutes of the reorganizational meeting of January 19, 2023, were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

VII. Recognitions

- ***Congratulations to the MLWGS 2023 We the People State Champions and their Teacher***

We the People competitions in Virginia are for middle and high school **We the People** teams. Participation in a qualifying, regional competition is required to compete at the state level. The top 9 scoring middle schools, and top 9 scoring high schools, in the regional finals, are invited to compete in the state competition. The winning high school will compete on the biggest stage for the [We the People National Finals](#) in the spring.

After taking the State Championship this past Saturday, January 28th, MLWGS will represent Virginia at the **36th Annual We the People National Finals at the National Conference Center**, April 22-24, 2023 sponsored by the Center for Civic Education. The We the People National Finals will return to its in-person format in 2023!

This is the school's 24th State Championship WTP title and will represent its upcoming 25th appearance at Nationals. MLWGS has won the national title four times in the We the People competition's 36-year history, the last time was in 2021, and a national top-10 team for most of the other years.

During the National Finals, students will participate in simulated congressional hearings. Students testify as constitutional experts before panels of judges acting as congressional committees scoring the groups through a performance-based assessment.

Team Sponsor and Teacher: Mr. Sam Ulmschneider

Anshul Chiranth (Henrico)	Abigail Montgomery (Chesterfield)
Alexia Creeden (Henrico)	Mattias Parandeh (Chesterfield)
Ella Forlin (Henrico)	Audrey Paulson (Richmond)
Summer Fraughnaugh (Charles City)	Mallory Phillips (Chesterfield)
Kaspars Golos (Richmond)	Nived Sanjay (Chesterfield)
Ellie Griffin (Chesterfield)	Greta Shope (Henrico)
Ethan Helms (Henrico)	Abigayle Simmons (New Kent)
Sophia Isaacs (Richmond)	Annabel Tang (Henrico)
Amelia Johnson (Henrico)	Cameron Unice (Richmond)
John Knorr (Chesterfield)	Daniela Wheeler (Richmond)
Jordyn Krajewski (Chesterfield)	Edward Williams (Goochland)
Ryan Marks (Chesterfield)	Bruce Yanovitch (Chesterfield)

- ***MW'S 2022 Russian Scholar Laureate***

Mason McKeague was recognized in absentia, however, the teacher Michael White, was available to share Mason's accomplishments with the board.

Every year, the **American Council of Teachers of Russian** accepts nominations for the Russian Scholar Laureate Award. Each high-school Russian program can put forward only one candidate, who is then considered to receive one of only 30 awards nationwide.

Please join us in congratulating Mason McKeague, a junior from Chesterfield, who has been named a 2022 Russian Scholar Laureate! Mason earned the nomination and award with two years of outstanding academic performance, blending a natural flair for languages with consistently diligent work.

- ***The MW Class of 2023 has (4) Presidential Scholar Candidates***

Senior Counselors Dr. Rachel Loving and Ms. Kim Forquer were on-hand for this recognition and to discuss the program.



Congratulations were extended to the following students for their consistent academic accomplishments:

Jennifer Chen (Henrico), Anmol Mital (Henrico), Shreyas Muthusamy (Henrico), and Allyson Phillips (Hanover)

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by the executive order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional

talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students.

- **2022-23 Scholastic Writing takes 24 Awards**

The following English teachers were on hand for this recognition to introduce students and discuss the program; Kerry Sheppard, Kara Love, and Peter Cashwell



The English department is honored to announce that Scholastics has recognized and awarded several of our talented writers. This year's regional competition included over 200 entries for writing in eight different categories. Gold Key winners will have their submissions sent to the next stage of the competition in New York. National Awards will be announced in March.

The Visual Arts Center of Richmond (1812 West Main Street) will display the names of winners and make their writing submission(s) available to read from February 3rd through February 20th. The entrance to the exhibit is free and open to the public.

Gold Key winners will have their submissions sent to the next stage of the competition in New York, and National Awards will be announced in March.

Scholastics is the nation's longest-running competitive recognition program for young artists and writers, and MLWGS is proud of every student who shared their love of writing and submitted their work for judgment. Also, a big "thank you" goes to the teachers who sponsored each of these students and to the parents and teachers who encouraged them to comp

Names of the Award Winners and Grade

Aditya	Badhrayan	10	Honorable Mention
Lauren	Blake	11	Silver Key
Sydney	Brewer	11	Gold Key, American Voices Nominee
Ananya	Gomatam	12	Honorable Mention

Ananya	Gomatam	12	Silver Key
Ananya	Gomatam	12	Honorable Mention
Chelsea	Hagan	11	Honorable Mention
CIva	Haverson	9	Honorable Mention
Emil	Josefiak	12	Honorable Mention
Emil	Josefiak	12	Gold Key
Emil	Josefiak	12	Silver Key
Emil	Josefiak	12	Honorable Mention
Xavier	Julien	9	Honorable Mention
Ala	Killen	12	Honorable Mention
Vien	Nguyen	12	Honorable Mention
Alexis	Paraschiv	10	Honorable Mention
Nishka	Patel	11	Silver Key
Sanika	Rewatkar	12	Silver Key
Annabel	Tang	12	Silver Key
Annabel	Tang	12	Silver Key
Annabel	Tang	12	Gold Key
Annabel	Tang	12	Silver Key
Olympia	Theofanos	12	Silver Key

- *2022-23 Scholastic Art Awards, MLWGS students earn 69 Keys and Honorable Mentions*

The following Art teachers were on hand for this recognition to introduce students and discuss the program; Jeff Hall and Georgianne Stinnett.

2023: 69 TOTAL AWARDS!

28 GOLD KEYS


(2 GOLD KEY ART PORTFOLIOS, 1 GOLD KEY PHOTO PORTFOLIO, 1 AMERICAN VISIONS NOMINEE, 16 ART GOLD KEYS, 8 PHOTO GOLD KEYS)

14 SILVER KEYS

(1 SILVER PHOTO PORTFOLIO, 1 SILVER ART PORTFOLIO, 9 ART SILVER KEYS, 3 PHOTO SILVER KEYS)


27 HONORABLE MENTIONS

(3 HM ART PORTFOLIOS, 1 HM PHOTO PORTFOLIO, 12 PHOTO HM, 1 ART HM)




**Scholastic
Art & Writing
Awards**

90 YEARS OF CREATIVITY



Reade Henley,
Gold Key Portfolio Winner



*THE MOST PORTFOLIO WINNERS
OF ANY SCHOOL IN THE REGION!

maggie | walker | arts

The MLWGS Visual Arts Department is very excited to announce that our talented students were recently honored by having their work selected in the regional 2023 Scholastic Art competition. This is a highly competitive annual art competition that had 1878 art entries from around the region.

MLWGS students had one of their best years ever with **69 total awards and the most portfolio winners from ANY school**, recognizing Maggie L. Walker Governor's School as one of the region's top schools for the Arts.

69 total awards:

28 Gold Keys awards including 3 Gold Key Portfolios and 1 American Visions Nominee

14 Silver Keys awards including 2 Silver Key Portfolios

27 Honorable Mentions including 4 Honorable Mention Portfolios

Two Maggie L. Walker Governor's School students received special recognition for their work in this show.

Senior, Kori Benjamin, received an American Visions Award nomination for her drawing, *Girls with Guns*. Additionally, senior, Gray Pershing's sculpture, *Stargirl*, was chosen for the VisArts Artistic Merit Award.

A portfolio award is very difficult to achieve as it requires a comprehensive body of work expressing a unique artistic voice. Maggie Walker Governor's School received the most portfolio awards of any school in the region.

Congratulations to the following students who were recognized with Portfolio awards for their work:

V Bryson - Gold Key Art Portfolio with additional awards of 1 Gold Key in Mixed Media and 1 Honorable Mention in Extended Projects

Reade Henley - Gold Key Art Portfolio with additional awards of 1 Silver Key and 1 Honorable Mention for Fashion

Julia Turner - Gold Key Photography Portfolio with additional awards of 1 Gold Key and 1 Silver Key for Photography

Ala Killen - Silver Key Photography Portfolio, Honorable Mention Art Portfolio, with additional awards of 2 Silver Keys for Painting, 1 Silver Key for Photography, and 3 Honorable Mentions for Photography

Ananya Sairaman - Silver Key Art Portfolio with additional awards of 4 Gold Keys for Drawing, Printmaking, and Painting

Kori Benjamin - Honorable Mention Art Portfolio, with an additional award of 1 Gold Key and American Visions Award Nominee in Drawing and 1 Gold Key in Painting

Cameron Golden - Honorable Mention Art Portfolio with an additional award of 1 Silver Key in Painting

Libbie Sydnor - Honorable Mention Photography Portfolio with an additional award of 1 Honorable Mention in Sculpture

Gold and Silver Key winners will have their work displayed at the Visual Art Center of Richmond from Feb. 3- Feb. 20th. Gold Key works will be juried in New York for consideration for National Awards.

Congratulations to the following students who were recognized with individual Gold Keys and/or Silver Keys:

Lucie Bouton - Gold Key in Photography and Silver Key in Sculpture
Tyler DeHaven - Gold Key in Digital Art
Hannah Fetter - Gold Key in Photography and Honorable Mention in Ceramics
Charlie Goodman - Gold Key in Photography
Emil Josefiak - Gold Key in Printmaking and Gold Key in Mixed Media
Izzy List - Gold Key in Painting
Mercedes Luna - Gold Key in Drawing and another Gold Key in Printmaking
Shorya Malani - Gold Key in Photography
Cecilia Oseguera - Gold Key and Honorable Mention in Painting
Gray Pershing - Two Gold Keys and an Honorable Mention in Sculpture
Allyson Phillips - Two Gold Keys and an Honorable Mention in Photography
Brielle Telfair - Gold Key in Mixed Media
Carson Wang - Gold Key and an Honorable Mention in Film and Animation
Ananthu Anish - Silver Key in Drawing
Ella Cable - Silver Key in Photography
Matilda Frantz - Silver Key in Drawing
Xavier Julien - Silver Key in Digital Art
Sadie McMahan - Silver Key in Design

Congratulations to the following students who were recognized with Honorable Mention awards for their work:

Colleen Blakeney - HM in Photography
Elizabeth Eckstein - HM in Photography
Sadie Hall - HM in Fashion
Muriel Lewis - HM in Design
Ryan Marks - HM in Photography
Owen McDonald - HM in Photography
Kaysen Mills - HM in Photography
Mattias Parandeh - HM in Photography
Lambrini Phillos - HM in Painting
Sibi Sundar - HM in Photography

Olympia Theofanos - HM in Photography

- ***The Regional School Board was recognized for its service to the MLWGS community.***

The month of February marks the annual observance of School Board Appreciation Month - a good time to salute the work of school board members and celebrate public education. Your board at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School speaks out for public schools by ensuring our students have the opportunity to benefit from a high-quality education. Their decisions and actions affect the present and future lives of our community's children.

This is also National School Board Clerks' Appreciation Week and Ms. Marshall was given a round of applause.

The board was presented with a large volume of 'thank-you' notes from MLWGS students along with a quartet that played chamber music for their enjoyment before the start of this meeting.

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.

No comments were submitted or presented at this meeting.

IX. Consent Items

On a motion by John Wright to approve consent items as a slate, seconded by Mariah White, the following items were unanimously approved on a voice vote: personnel actions, fiscal status reports of January 31, 2023, and the donations report of January 31, 2023.

X. Action Items

A. FY17 and FY18 Audit Report Approval (Second Read)

Cherry, Bekaert presented FY17 and FY18 audit reports to the Regional School Board that contained the auditor's responsibilities and opinions.

Dr. Lowerre noted that Mr. Kamras of RPS was on-hand to answer board questions regarding the audit process.

The director stated that FY18 represents a fund balance of \$1.2 million in cash held by our fiscal agent, RPS.

On a motion by Cecil Smith, seconded by Martha Harris, the FY17 and FY18 audit reports submitted by Cherry, Bekaert on the operating accounts of Maggie Walker Governor's School were unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

B. 2023 Wellness Committee Membership (Second Read)

Policy 1012.a ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

It is the duty of the Regional School Board to appoint advisory councils or committees of citizens of the school for consultation with reference to specific matters pertaining to Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School. These committees shall serve without compensation for one-year terms.

2023 Proposed Wellness Committee Members

2022 Membership	2023 Membership
Paige Hawkins, Activities Director	Paige Hawkins, Activities Director
Barbara Marshall, Board Clerk	Alisa Shapiro, School Nurse
Mike Brown, Health & PE Faculty	Mike Brown, Health & PE Faculty
Don Blanton, Health & PE Faculty	Don Blanton, Health & PE Faculty
Pam Jones, Food Service Provider	
Open, Student	
Open, Student	
Open, Parent	
Open, Parent	

On a motion by Mariah White, seconded by Sarah Barber, the partial membership of staff and faculty (students and parent volunteers TBD) for the 2023 Wellness Committee was unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

XI. Director’s Report

C. Verbal Updates

- **MLWGS STEM Day Outreach – Robotics Team 422, January 21, 2023**

On January 21 we hosted our annual STEM Day! Over 120 students from Central VA learned from STEM presenters in our community. A huge thank you to everyone that presented! Central Virginia Waste Management Authority CodeVA Henrico County Public Library.



- **College Kick-Off for Sophomores and Juniors on February 2nd.**

College Kick-Off took place on Thursday, February 2. Its goal is to generate more awareness of college admissions, support students through their college search and application process, and set them up for success!

Senior/college counselors Rachel Loving and Kim Forquer (the planners and moderators of this event) will be joined onstage by panelists from Georgetown University, University of California-Berkeley, University of Mary Washington, VCU, and more!

Parents of 10th graders* were invited to join their students in the MLWGS Auditorium on 2/2/23 from 10:15-11:30 AM.

Parents of 11th graders* were invited to join their students in the MLWGS Auditorium on 2/2/23 from 1:10-3:10 PM; college reps were available (for 11th-grade parents only) until 3:30 PM for additional Q&A.

- **Dragons and AI with Wendy DeGroat, Librarian**

Wendy DeGroat presented a brief intro to faculty on January 31st that included sample queries and output from ChatGPT. What came next was part of the session that excited me: “talking about AI @ MLWGS.” As you might expect, folks brought a wide range of perspectives to the table!

In case anyone else is curious about this topic, feel free to view the [intro slides](#) or peruse a [document](#) that includes AI tools (ChatGPT & GPTZero), articles, and sample ChatGPT queries and outputs – with a space at the end for faculty reflections.

The evolving power of AI is a complex issue that raises intriguing questions about how we define originality in the age of increasingly powerful AI and to what extent the use of AI should be disclosed by people who use it to generate content and/or in the formative stages of their work. Credit to Todd (*Raviotta*) for expanding my thinking about disclosures and where they may apply.

For teachers who’d like to leverage ChatGPT for lesson planning, classroom use, or other purposes, the main barriers to be aware of are the user agreement (users should be 18+) and the fact that its availability is unreliable because their servers are so frequently at capacity during the school day.

Some common teaching practices @ MLWGS that can mitigate the chances of students using AI to generate a solution include the following: assessing process rather than only outcomes, having students connect their reflection/analysis with personal experience or a recent event, and citing sources.



- ***Spring Sports***

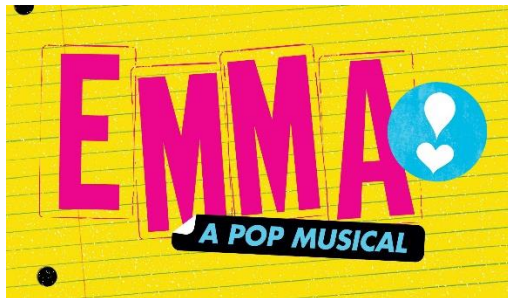
Spring sports begin on **Wednesday, February 22nd**.

- **Course Registration for Returning Students 2023-2024 on February 23rd**

Counselors will be meeting with *all students* about their schedules during February and will be providing students with copies of the necessary forms during this meeting. The Course Registration Form will require parent signatures and possibly teacher signatures for advanced courses. Rising juniors and seniors that plan to take one or more Dual Enrollment courses through Virginia Commonwealth University must complete the VCU Dual Enrollment packet which contains three forms, each requiring a student and parent signature. **Students must turn in their completed/signed forms (including VCU forms, if applicable, to register for classes in PowerSchool that day.**

- **MW Drama Presents Emma! A Pop Musical, February 23 – February 25, 2023, 7:00 pm.**

Based on Jane Austen's classic novel, this sparkling new musical features the hit songs of legendary girl groups and iconic female singers from The Supremes to Katy Perry. Girl power has never sounded so good!



- **MLWGS International Language Fair for Middle School Students, March 4, 2023.**

Similar to our previous International Language Fairs, the twelfth fair will have a welcome ceremony, a variety of workshops led and designed by Maggie Walker students before and after a lunch break, a closing ceremony, and an international dessert sampling. Students will choose one language of interest, which will be taken into consideration when assigning workshops and to expose students to all languages, other workshops will be assigned via lottery. Pizza will be provided for students during lunch. Workshops will incorporate the following languages: Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, German, Russian, American Sign Language, and Arabic.

- **Night of the Dragon Auction, Saturday, March 4th, Altria Theater, @ 6:30 pm**

Mark your calendar for the annual Night of the Dragon -on March 4, 2023! This special event is a whole lot of fun and provides invaluable support to our amazing Dragons. You don't want to miss it.

- **New Student Assessments Completed – Director’s Final Report.**

The make-up assessment day was February 14th. Regional Evaluations were conducted on February 15th. Invited students will be offered an opportunity to shadow at MLWGS from March 20-22, 2023. Testing data will be returned to the divisions by the middle of next week by our Admissions Coordinator, Karl Zweerink. The divisions will determine student selection for AY24 from the results provided.

- **Added: Director Speaks to January Public Comments**

Dr. Lowerre reminded the board of the major concern a grandparent brought to the board’s attention last month regarding an incident in a class where the teacher took a phone out of the student’s hand that made the student feel it was racial. The director wanted to be transparent with the board on what we are doing to address the concern.

After investigating the situation, we handled it appropriately within human resource guidelines with the teacher as well as with the student. The bigger issue is the training we are taking forward to prevent any of our students from ever feeling uncomfortable in any classroom and to address issues with our teachers, faculty, staff, and all of us, in terms of how we treat everybody with dignity, equity, and respect.

Over the past two years, we have embarked on a cultural competency journey taking groups of our staff into different communities in this area to tour cultural sites, we’ve brought in resources, had cultural competency development, and brought people in to talk with us. To be very honest, while it meets State requirements in this area, we can do more. To that end, the day after spring break we are bringing in Mr. Ed Cowell, Director of Strategic Engagement for St. Christopher’s, coming to do a full day of staff development with us that will center on real classroom scenarios if this happens, how do you address it? This work will move us forward making sure that when we are in the classroom, we do not allow anything to come out of us that will make a child uncomfortable.

The bottom line is we are about kids and any baggage we have must be set aside and we must recognize that every child is on a different journey that brought them here. It requires tough conversations and training and that is the level of detail we are working forward to. It is not easy work, it is challenging, but it is work that has to be done.

Ms. Barber asked if we are going to identify someone that this will be their job responsibility. Dr. Lowerre responded he was glad this question came up and is a position he has built into the AY24 budget development and will be covered later in the board’s work session.

Ms. White thanked Dr. Lowerre for his remarks adding she is aware the comment he is addressing is a Richmond constituent and thanked him for putting someone in place for engagement.

Ms. Harris noted that in years past, Charles City as a small division had an issue where a student committed to MLWGS and subsequently backed out. She asked if other divisions are having the same problem because once the division commits, they are obligated for the tuition. Dr. Lowerre responded that in the one situation involving CCPS, MLWGS did waive tuition as we are aware it was a hardship on that division. He continued, what is worse is the untrackable data of the students who do not apply.

A. Coming Events

February 16, 2023, through March 16, 2023

Thursday, February 16 th	Regular School Board Meeting followed by Budget Work Session, 9:00 am, Room 153
	Mindfulness Month Movie, Sponsored by the Honor Council, 11:35 am, Forum
Friday, February 17 th	Black History Movie (Drumline), 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Black Box
Saturday, February 18 th	Rehearsal with Guest Clinician for the Intermediate Band, Advanced Band, and Percussion Ensemble, 10 am, Gymnasium
Monday, February 20 th	Holiday – Closed
Tuesday, February 21 st	Schedule Change – Closed for Special Election
Wednesday, February 22 nd	Black History Month Themes Discussion, 11:35 am, Library
	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
	First Day for Spring Sports
Thursday, February 23 rd	AY24 Online Course Registration for Freshmen-Juniors During 2 nd Period
Thursday, February 23 rd – Saturday, February 25 th	Spring Drama Production: Emma! A Pop Musical, 7 pm Nightly, Auditorium
Saturday, February 25 th	Battle of the Brains on CBS6 at 10 am, MLWGS vs Commonwealth Governor’s School at River Bend
Thursday, February 23 rd – Sunday, February 26 th	Board Approved Class Field Trip to Montgomery, AL, and Atlanta, GA
Tuesday, February 28 th	Cultural Competency Training for Staff, 3:30 pm
Wednesday, March 1 st	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, March 2 nd	Virtual Finance Committee Meeting, 8:30 am
	Youth Art & Music Month Celebration, 6-8 pm, MLWGS
Friday, March 3 rd – Sunday March 5 th	Robotics District Competition at Blacksburg HS
Saturday, March 4 th	International Language Fair for Middle School Students at MLWGS, 8 am – 2 pm
	Annual Night of the Dragon Auction at 6:30 pm, Altria Theater
Monday, March 6 th – Friday, March 10 th	10 TH Grade SOL Testing
Tuesday, March 7 th	Faculty Meeting, 3:30 pm, Forum
Wednesday, March 8 th	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Tuesday, March 14 th	Math League Competition, 12:15 pm, Auditorium

Wednesday, March 15 th	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, March 16 th	Regular School Board Meeting & Budget Public Hearing, 9:00 am, Room 153

D. Public Comments from the December Budget Town Hall

Your name:	What is your connection to MLWGS?	What do you think we are doing now that we should consider continuing?	My spending idea relates to...	What is a new or expanding program or other issue you would like us to consider?	My cost-saving idea principally relates to...	What is your cost-saving idea?
Heather Mendicino	Parent and/or family member	The band/orchestra program is amazing and well-run. It's becoming increasingly popular.	Teaching and learning	I'm wondering if you've ever considered adding a harp program at MW. There is currently one going at some Richmond public elementary and middle schools and it is really amazing and would be such an asset to MW.		
Fred Plaisted	Parent and/or family member	Theater		Teacher availability for challenging homework trouble	Extracurricular Activities or Fundraising	promote Amazon smile usage for additional fundraising

Mariah White left the meeting.

E. Walker Model UN Conference XXIII, March 17-18, 2023, a presentation by Max Smith, Faculty Sponsor, Annabel Tang ('23-Henrico) – Secretary-General, Carolyn Zhuang ('23-Henrico) - Undersecretary General of External Communication, and Bruce Yanovitch ('23—Chesterfield) - Undersecretary General of Charitable Giving.

"Each year, GSMUN hosts over 500 delegates from around the nation, providing students with an unparalleled opportunity to debate and learn about the world's opportunities and challenges, both past and present. This year, we are excited to offer a *completely in-person conference*, featuring 17 committees with a diverse selection of topics and time periods, ranging from the reign of Pinochet to the downfall of Theranos. I am also thrilled to announce that GSMUN will integrate a new approach to our crisis system, offering a Joint Crisis Committee, the Turkish War for Independence, and the Ad Hoc Committee of the Secretary-General, where delegates are not aware of the committee topic beforehand and must act on their feet. Our secretariat and team of chairs and staffers are dedicated to bringing you the best version of our conference that we can next March.

Additionally, one of the most important aspects of our conference each year is our charity work. Our partner organization this year is Communities In Schools (CIS), which is dedicated to guiding students around the nation toward achieving their educational goals and surrounding students with a community of support. CIS is a tremendous organization whose mission represents the important work that we seek to accomplish. I sincerely hope that you will consider supporting us in our goal to raise \$10,000 for CIS.

In the coming months, this website will be updated with background guides, dossiers, and registration information, with early registration for GSMUN XXV beginning November 1. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns; I will be happy to address them.

Lastly, I would like to take a moment to recognize the significance of this year's conference, which will mark the twenty-fifth iteration of GSMUN. This year's theme is *Empower Future Leaders*, a sentiment representative of what we hope our delegates take away each year in March: the ability to lead and effect positive change in their own communities. These past two years have been some of the most difficult in our lives; it is our responsibility now to lead and create a better future.

I first attended GSMUN as a delegate four years ago—since then, this community took me in, taught me how to speak up for myself, and made me a better leader. I hope that we will do the same for you." Annabel Tang-Secretary General

The chair thanked the GSMUN officers for today's presentation.

F. Mr. Jason Kamras, Superintendent, Richmond Public Schools to address questions regarding outstanding audit reports.

With Richmond serving as the school's fiscal agent, Mr. Kamras is here today to speak to the board on the audit process and its challenges and where we are with it.

Mr. Kamras began by stating he appreciated the recent conversation had with Dr. Lowerre, adding he had just become aware of our issues last week and has done a fair amount of work to understand where things are.

"To the best of my knowledge, it appears that there were some significant challenges getting the audits done from the external auditor, Cherry, Bekaert as far back as 2013. As I understand

it the audits for FY13, FY14, FY15, FY16*, FY17, and FY18 were all just completed in January of this year [2023]. Going forward, obviously, there is FY19, FY20, FY21, FY22, and ultimately FY23, and we have requested that the auditor expedite those and complete anything that is outstanding. My understanding is the auditing firm has indicated they lack the capacity to do so. My further understanding is back in 2018 because of the lag since 2013 we stopped payment with the auditor because of the lack of performance. We are happy to restart payment assuming that we receive the necessary activities from the auditor and have requested all of that. I do want to note on a global level RPS has been trying to get out of the business of being fiscal agents for programs that are not RPS programs, not because we don't love them, but because we have plenty of our own work to do. And so, [inaudible] support the move as I understand it, for Henrico to take over as fiscal agent. I do want to note that Henrico has the exact same auditor, and so I would counsel the board to keep that in mind and to have the necessary conversations ultimately with this auditing firm. With that, I am happy to take any questions and answer anything I possibly can, and if I can't, I will get you the information and bring it back."

*FY13-FY16 was previously submitted, and the board approved them on September 20, 2018.

The chair thanked Mr. Kamras and asked if there were questions. Ms. Ogburn began by stating she is aware they [Henrico] use the same auditor, adding, "we do not have an issue with getting reports" and offered to check into the hang-up. She added that Henrico utilizes an audit committee system that meets regularly and follows up doggedly. She asked if Maggie Walker has an audit committee to which the director responded no. With that, she suggested this [strategy] might be the difference maker as their reports are completed annually by the deadline. Dr. Lowerre assured everyone he has been very dogged in chasing Cherry, Bekaert reports. Ms. Ogburn acknowledged the director's efforts but again added she would check into what the difference might be and let the board know.

Mr. Kamras stated the Cherry, Bekaert firm also does the RPS audits, and to his knowledge, there has never been an issue and they are completed on time. He added there appears to be a lack of capacity or desire, as it pertains to this separate Maggie Walker audit. All he knows is they did reach out again this week expressing the need for all these reports to get done and was told we don't have the capacity to do so. He noted this is a relayed conversation, not one Mr. Kamras had directly with the auditor. He added that perhaps Dr. Lowerre and/or the board chair have this conversation directly with the auditor to understand how we move forward. Mr. Kamras would be happy to join in that conversation.

Ms. Bailey stated Chesterfield also relies on the work of a finance advisory committee that includes board members, the finance team, and community members, and they do not have any trouble getting their audits. She added, "I would guess this is a communication breakdown, and that's usually where the source of all problems are."

Mr. May asked who pays for the audit, Richmond or Maggie Walker. Dr. Lowerre answered Richmond as they are the fiscal agent and the division that holds our fund balance with the interest earned from that holding, per the original MOU written, is their payment, we don't pay additionally beyond that. Mr. May clarified, he meant the audit firm, whom are they beholdng to? Mr. Kamras added that RPS has a contract with the audit firm as they conduct the RPS audit, but they additionally do the Maggie Walker audit and that is the challenge getting them to the finish line. Still not understanding, Mr. May stated he is trying to follow the

paperwork...if there is a contract and Cherry, Bekaert has an obligation to do it and they can't, then why can't we find another audit firm for the work. He continued, but if we go to Henrico and it's the same firm ...he added he is having a hard time understanding with money involved why we can't get this done. Mr. Kamras reminded the board that payment was stopped back in 2018 because precisely they weren't producing the reports.

Dr. Lowerre asked who the fiscal agent for Appomattox Regional Governor's School and Ms. Bailey responded to him its Chesterfield. He then asked, "are their audits done the same as Maggie Walker's?" Ms. Bailey did not know the answer but would follow up with their committee to see if it's a similar relationship. Ms. Ogburn added that Henrico serves as the fiscal agent for CodeRVA and they've had no problems with their audits. Mr. May suggested that stopping payment probably slowed them down regarding Maggie Walker's reports.

Mr. May asked Mr. Kamras what is the solution or if there is a recommendation going forward. Mr. Kamras answered that he cannot make another human being do certain things, but he is happy to have the three of us [*Board Chair, Dr. Lowerre, and Mr. Kamras*] reach out to the firm and express the need to move forward, or if it is the board's desire, to sever the relationship and hire a different auditor is also acceptable.

Dr. Lowerre was asked if Maggie Walker is changing fiscal agents, and he responded that this is a topic the board has expressed an interest in for the last two years specifically because of this issue. He was next asked if that happens, can we change agents and then complete these audits? Dr. Lowerre responded the districts are reluctant to accept this responsibility without an updated, current audit so they know what they are getting into. We could tell you what we think the numbers are, but they would be unaudited.

Mr. Kamras stated all three of us [*Board Chair, Dr. Lowerre, and Mr. Kamras*] will have this conversation so everyone has the same information and then the board can make whatever decision it would like to make going forward.

Mr. Wright joined the conversation by adding he's been leading the charge on this matter for a long time, noting he is a professional CPA. During the last submission of reports received [2018] we found there was a difference in the fund balance of approximately +\$100,000, which means we could have done more for our students if we'd known. He stated, I know Dr. Lowerre has been dogged on working on this issue and he also knows Mr. Rob Churchman [*auditor*] and has been in communication with him as he also does audits for Goochland, but he's never indicated a lack of capacity as the problem. Mr. Wright said he has witnessed trying to get 17 and 18 closed, with 18 and 19 in the same boat, it's a matter of getting representation letters back from the fiscal agent that has been holding this up, I've watched it for months. There is something the auditor gives them, and they sit on it for months, and then eventually after a few teases and a lot of wrangling we get them to sign a piece of paper, so this is our issue that relates to the audit, but I also know it's an issue that relates to bill payments for MW. We get calls that things aren't getting paid on time and it causes disruptions. If Richmond doesn't want the fiscal agent responsibility, they need to muscle through and get this done so we can pass the responsibility on because no one will touch it until they do. It is nuclear! He continued, it's hard for member divisions to believe in what we are doing if what we have here...looking through our budget I noted right away there is nothing to pay for an auditor so someone else is paying. We are moving on from an approved budget to another budget we are going to be talking about shortly, and we can't honestly know if what we have here is good

information to act on. While everybody is going to live within the means given to them, if we can't get through this in a way that is meaningful to know that our history is good, we can't expect to do well in planning for our future and that is problematic. Concluding, Mr. Wright said he recognizes that Mr. Kamras isn't signing these things and that there are a lot of people involved, but whatever influence he can use to help us get this done would help his organization.

Mr. Kamras stated he will take care of this problem and reiterated that the very first time he was made aware by anybody; MW or RPS, this board, the RPS board, his team, the audit team, or anybody, that this was a problem was last week. Mr. May injected a little humor by stating... 'and that wasn't enough time to fix it,' followed by laughter.

Ms. Bailey suggested this matter is a communication breakdown within RPS that the superintendent was not informed. She added I get it that you found out last week and that is a shame, but there is a communication issue somewhere on your finance team. Mr. Kamras requested that in the future, major issues or concerns at this level be communicated directly to him to correct. Ms. Barber stated this issue has been discussed at our board meetings for years and representation from your board or your predecessors should have been in those meetings, but Mr. Kamras stated he couldn't speak to board representation but again asked to communicate issues directly with him going forward.

Ms. Ogburn added that as this is on his radar now, anything Mr. Kamras can do to help us through this...Henrico has been in talks with Dr. Raley and Dr. Lowerre and Mr. Pritchett, about possibly becoming the fiscal agent, our issue is we are already the fiscal agent for others, and our staff was concerned about taking on this situation in the condition that it is in and the liability and responsibility that goes with it. So, if we can clear up some of this, it will help get a clearer path forward if someone else does become the fiscal agent and will help us get to the end of the road. We appreciate you staying on this.

Ms. Ayers shared her memory that this issue is one the board has dealt with for many years, and now that everyone knows it's an issue it seems the expectation is that the problem will be dealt with rapidly. We can't move forward without these reports, and she expects this to be resolved quickly.

Mr. Pritchett stated in Petersburg the superintendent and board chair sign letters of agreement annually for their audits and asked Mr. Kamras if he was familiar with this, and whether he ever received an agreement to complete the Maggie Walker audit. Mr. Kamras said he did not recall and would have to look into it. Mr. Pritchett followed up stating Petersburg does their audit agreement annually and the board approves it annually. Mr. Kamras said Cherry, Bakeart presents to his board on the RPS audit annually, but again until last week, it's the first time he'd become aware of this issue and he's dealing with it now. Mr. Pritchett asked if the board uses agenda placeholders where board members get updates from their committees. Mr. Kamras said they do but he does not want to speak for the board.

Mr. Wright concluded by asking Mr. Kamras to forward to this board the communication he has received from Cherry, Bakeart where they mention they do not have capacity so we can see what's going on and perhaps we can ask Mr. Churchman to come and address us in person. In past audit presentations in Goochland, the auditor has been on-hand to present and explain

their report. In this instance, everybody is playing the telephone game, so let's hear from Mr. Churchman directly. Mr. Kamras said the statement occurred during a phone call yesterday.

Mr. May again asked 'who is the responsible party, Maggie Walker or RPS.' Mr. Kamras said he will take the lead on this. Mr. May thanked Mr. Kamras and thinks the auditor will be responsive to RPS.

The chair thanked Mr. Kamras for attending today. Mr. Kamras left the meeting.

XII. Unfinished Business

No update was provided at this meeting for the Strategic Plan Implementation.

XIII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

A. *International Trip Proposal – Panama 2024 (First Read)*

Sponsor: David Barnes

March 30, 2024, through April 7, 2024

Students will spend 9 days exploring the history, engineering, ecology, conservation, culture, and language of Panama. In Panama City, students will take a bike tour of the city and visit the historic sites of Panama Viejo and Casco Viejo, and they will take an in-depth look at the Panama Canal. Students will travel to the Chiriqui Region where they will visit a honey farm and a butterfly sanctuary and learn about wildlife and botany while enjoying hanging bridges and zip lines. Students next travel to Chitre to take part in a la junta de embarre, a traditional mud hut building ceremony. Students will learn more about Panama's flora and fauna at the Isla Iguana Wildlife Refuge. We will finish the adventure with a folklore evening filled with traditional food, song, and dance.

It is with great enthusiasm that we hope the Regional Board will review the experiential learning opportunity for students.

Students: 18

Chaperones:

David Barnes

Ruth Bradner

Working with EF Tours

The projected cost per person of the trip: is \$3, 739.00. Additional Costs: \$70.00 for tips (\$7/day)

Sources of Revenue for this trip, including the amount to be paid by the individual students, clubs, fund-raising, and/or other sources: each student will be responsible for his/her costs.

Approval for this new trip will be requested at the board's March 2023 meeting.

B. Amended Regulation 4030-R-Student Club Approval Amended (First Read)

The Policy Steering Committee offers the following regulation for Regional School Board consideration, #4030-R which modifies the Student Club Approval process. The director detailed some of the proposed changes requested to streamline and tighten creating new clubs.

Approval for Amended Regulation 4030-R will be requested at the board's March 2023 meeting.

XIV. Information Items

- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, February 2, 2023
- Black History Month Activities at MLWGS
- MLWGS Band Ensemble Performs at the Altria Theater
- Record Number of MW Students Accepted to District Band
- Girls Swim Team Takes 1st Place at VHSL 3B Regionals
- MW Quiz Bowl Team Wins 1st Place at VHSL 3B Regionals
- MLWGS Engineering Club/Class Qualifies as Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Finalist
- 2023 Pat Taylor Teaching Award Recipient is Dan Brown
- MW Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, January 31, 2023
- Dr. Brian Nichols was named Superintendent to Watch by the National School Public Relations Association

XV. Superintendent's Steering Committee Report

Dr. Raley represented the Superintendent's Steering Committee today as many of our superintendents are in San Antonio for the National Superintendents Convention. We talked about several items on the board agenda today, particularly referencing budget items and some issues coming that the entire group will need to think about related to salary scales and retaining current employees as well as attracting future new employees. This is work that will need to be done.

We had a good conversation about capital improvement and as you look at the budget today you will notice there really is no designated fund for true capital expenses; there is a maintenance line and a repair line, but nothing for the true needs looking forward. The school is now 20+ years old and we need to start thinking about a true capital replacement plan. The audit relates to that because if there is a lot of money sitting in the fund balance we have options to use that fund to leverage a capital improvement plan.

XVI. New Business

None.

XVII. Closed Meeting

None.

XVIII. Certification of Closed Meeting

None.

XIX. Announcements/Additional Discussion

None.

XX. Adjournment of Regular Meeting

On a motion to adjourn by Micky Ogburn, seconded by John Wright, this meeting was adjourned at 10:52 am and with a brief break the board moved into the FY24 Budget Work Session.

Next Meeting and Budget Public Hearing

March 16, 2023, at 9:00 am. MLWGS, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 153, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190.

Kenneth Pritchett, Chair

Robert Lowerre, Ph.D., Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk

**FY24 BUDGET WORK SESSION MINUTES
REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD**

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

Thursday, February 16, 2023

11:00 a.m.

Present:

Ms. Martha Harris, *School Board*, Charles City Public Schools
Ms. Debbie Bailey, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Ms. Mary Benjamin, *School Board*, Dinwiddie Public Schools
Mr. John Wright, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. Bob May, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Ms. Michelle ‘Micky’ Ogburn, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools
Ms. Linda Hyslop, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools
Ms. Harwood Hall, *School Board*, King & Queen Public Schools
Ms. Sarah Grier Barber, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Ms. Valarie Ayers, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Mr. Cecil Smith, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools
Dr. Robert Lowerre, **Director**, Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School
Ms. Barbara Marshall, **Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School

Dr. Lowerre began with a review of the documents included in the board packet. He indicated the amount/totals presented today are reflective of what the State has indicated at this time.

PowerPoint Executive Summary on the FY24 Proposal Highlights

FY24 will be the second year of the State biennium budget and revenue numbers are reflective of the current funding level provided by the DOE. The proposal is presented with a 5% increase in compensation for teachers and staff listed in the SoQs. We can support this increase for all faculty and staff.

We are proposing a modest budget increase to address the needs of the school and to continue to fund capital projects.

Revenue

\$10,589,799 Total Increase = \$901,543 (+9.2%)

Revenue Detail:

- Tuition = \$9,309 (5.0%/student increase), 783 Students
- Total Local Contribution = \$7,288,957
- Building Rental = \$7,000
- Salary Supplement Incentive = \$12,500
- Dual Enrollment = \$30,000
- Technology Initiative = \$26,000

- Building Reserve Carryover = \$200,000
- State Contribution = \$3,052,352

Total Expense

\$10,589,799

Expense Detail:

Increases \$901,543 *(includes incremental increases for inflation in certain areas)*

- Administrative Fees (Altria and Convenience Fee for Online Payments) + \$25,000
- Salary /Benefits Increase + \$634,927 (Provides 5% raise and an additional 2.0 FTE)*
- Utilities + \$24,000
- Maintenance and Repair +\$148,000
- Service Contracts +\$22,620
- Health Insurance + \$85,000

**Includes .5 Coordinator of Strategic Engagement to develop training opportunities for faculty on how to recognize, accommodate, and appreciate cultural differences and provide suggestions, resources, and training on DEI-related topics.*

Major Expense Detail Reductions \$252,452 (most reductions were due to re-classifying some of the accounts as well as reducing the need to pay for non-MLWGS instructors)

- Non-Contractual Leave Payout -\$68, 177
- Textbooks -\$25,000
- Building Contingencies -\$35,000
- Umbrella Insurance Policy -\$15,000
- Part-Time Staff -\$90,874
- Postage -\$2,000

Conclusions

- Funding Outlook for FY25
- Need to de-compress salary scale
- Need to fund capital improvement separately from the general operating budget
- Little prospect for additional funding from the Commonwealth in the form of direct aid

Next Steps

- March 16, 2023, Budget Public Hearing
- April 20, 2023, Request for Budget Approval

Mr. May asked if Maggie Walker received ESSER funds. Dr. Lowerre replied no, those funds went to the districts who were tasked to funnel funds to Maggie Walker but no one did, the same as with COVID relief funding except for Richmond which was the only division to share COVID

relief funds with Maggie Walker. One of the challenges we face is we have your children [district], their test scores go back to you [district], the ADM goes back to you [district] for funding, which is one of the challenges we have with the General Assembly because when we go to them to ask for add-ons they say we give money to your districts they should be giving you funding for this. The funding mechanism particularly for capital is something we need to talk about.

Mr. May added it would be interesting to learn who is the keeper of the ESSER dollars, are they at a State level, is there a way for us to reach out and grab some of those because he is aware there are some districts that are struggling to spend their funds and this could be helpful on major projects such as HVAC replacement. Ms. Ogburn said there is a bill before the GA now that will require school districts to spend ESSER funds before a certain deadline, but she doesn't recall it ever being put to us this exact way, adding, this is a different way of looking at this and beholds us to take this back to our districts. Dr. Lowerre offered to craft a letter for the board if it would help to explain Maggie Walker and ESSER funds.

The work session was adjourned at 11:15 am.

Kenneth Pritchett, Chair

Robert Lowerre, Ph.D., Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk