

MINUTES

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government & International Studies
Regional School Board Regular Meeting & FY26 Budget Public Hearing
1000 N. Lombardy Street, Richmond, VA

Thursday, February 27, 2025

9:02 a.m.

(This meeting was originally scheduled for February 20, 2025, postponed to February 27, 2025 due to inclement weather)

I. Call to Order

James Taylor, 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. Marchelle Hampton, *School Board*, Charles City Public Schools
Ms. Debbie Walwer, *School Board*, Colonial Heights Public Schools
Ms. Lisa Hudgins, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Dr. Elaine Pearson (**Remote Participation**) for Ms. Mary Benjamin, *School Board*,
Dinwiddie Public Schools
Ms. Meredith Moses, *School Board*, Goochland County Public Schools
Mr. Bob May, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools
Ms. Linda Hyslop, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools
Ms. Heather Donbrosky, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools
Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, *School Board*, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. James Taylor, *School Board*, Powhatan County Public Schools
Ms. Kathryn Ricard, *School Board*, Richmond Public Schools

Dr. Dalphine Joppy, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools
Dr. George Fohl for Dr. John Murray, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools
Mr. Travis Ridley for Ms. Haidee Napier, **Superintendent**, Colonial Heights Public Schools
Dr. Kari Weston, **Superintendent**, Dinwiddie Public Schools
Dr. Michael Cromartie, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, **Interim Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools
Ms. Jan Butterworth for Dr. Melody Hackney, **Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools

Dr. Brian Nichols, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools
Ms. Yolanda Brown, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools
Dr. Beth Teigen, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools
Ms. Melanie Ficke for Dr. Wayne Lyle, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools
Ms. Lynn Plevich for Mr. Jason Kamras, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools

Dr. Michael ‘Max’ Smith, Acting Director, Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School
Ms. Barbara Marshall, **Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School
Mr. Lucas Veale, **Deputy Clerk**, Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School

Also present:

Dr. Lisa Williams– **MLWGS Administration**
Wendy DeGroat, Aparna Harger, Deborah Snagg, Lisa Gordon, Erin Ortiz, and David Bortz –
MLWGS Staff
Ginger O’Neil – **GS Foundation**

Absent:

Ms. Alicia Atkins, **School Board**, Henrico County Public
Ms. Harwood Hall, **School Board**, King & Queen Public Schools
Ms. Jill Andrews, **School Board**, Prince George Public Schools

Dr. Amy Cashwell, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools
Dr. Carol Carter, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools

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.**

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Lisa Hudgins, Dr. Elaine Pearson from the Dinwiddie School Board sitting in for Mary Benjamin, was approved on a unanimous voice vote for electronic participation at this meeting using a phone conference call.

V.b Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Heather Donbrosky, seconded by Kathryn Ricard, the agenda for this meeting was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

VI. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Linda Hyslop, seconded by Bob May, the minutes of the January 16, 2025 reorganizational meeting were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

VII. Recognitions

- *Dr. Max Smith with Remarks about Robert Lowerre.*

Dr. Smith expressed our great sadness at the loss of Dr. Bob Lowerre, who passed on Sunday, February 23rd. We recognized that Bob made a great impact here at Maggie Walker, in Henrico, and in education.

Dr. Smith thanked our divisions who have sent us a generous level of support for our community.

- *MLWGS is proud to be a recipient of @College Board's AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award with Ryan Webb, Mathematics Teacher*

Exciting news! Maggie L Walker Governor's Sch Gov't Int'l Stds, has earned College Board's [AP[®] Computer Science Female Diversity Award](#) for expanding young women's access to AP Computer Science Principles (CSP). Through these diversity awards, the AP Program acknowledges 1,153 schools for their work toward improving female representation during the 2023-24 school year. Award contenders must either have reached 50% or higher female representation in one of the two AP computer science courses or have achieved a percentage of female computer science exam takers that meets or exceeds that of the school's female population.

"We're thrilled to congratulate our female AP computer science students and their teacher, **Mr. Ryan Webb**, on this step toward equal representation in computer science education," said Maggie Walker's Assistant Director, Dr. Lisa Williams. "We're honored that our school earned this distinction and look forward to seeing these young women and others pursue and achieve success in computer science education and careers."

MLWGS is one of only 847 schools to achieve this accomplishment for AP CSP. Overall, female students remain underrepresented in computer science classes. They account for just 34% of AP CSP participants and 26% of AP CSA participants. The schools that receive this year's AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award serve as inspiration and are models for all U.S. high schools.

Dr. Lisa provided a framed College Board Certificate of Achievement to Mr. Webb.

- *Lynn Foshee Reed chosen 2025 VCTM High School Mathematics Educator of the Year*

Our very own **Ms. Lynn Foshee Reed** was chosen as the 2025 Virginia Council of Teachers of Mathematics (VCTM) **High School Mathematics Educator of the Year** for her exceptional contributions to mathematics education. This prestigious award honors and acknowledges her passion, ingenuity, and dedication.

Mrs. Connie Hill, mathematics department chair, applauds Lynn, stating, “Lynn has received several honors/awards for her exceptional teaching and many of these have come with travel/educational experiences attached. She has used those experiences to enrich the education of our students at Maggie Walker and more widely to the educational community at large through conference presentations. Lynn has taught almost every class our school offers and has been instrumental in running our Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society and Math Club. She has a passion for math history, math in art, and after her work as an Einstein fellow, climate change and how math is and can be used to model and predict climate change.”

Dr. Lisa Williams read an additional part of Ms. Hill’s statement into the record. “Lynn is a model of how to bring the real world into the math classroom. She is always looking for ways to garner and grow enthusiasm for math, not only for students but also for adults and educators, and she possesses a passion unlike any math professional I have ever encountered. Lynn is an example of a true lifelong learner.”

Dr. Lisa Williams presented Ms. Reed with a bouquet in honor of this recognition.

- *MLWGS visual art students earn 82 total awards at the 2025 Scholastic Art Awards*

2025: 82 TOTAL AWARDS!

23 GOLD KEYS
 (3 GOLD KEY ART PORTFOLIOS, 1 GOLD KEY PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO, 13 ART GOLD KEYS, 6 PHOTOGRAPHY GOLD KEYS)

21 SILVER KEYS
 (1 SILVER KEY ART PORTFOLIO, 14 ART SILVER KEYS, 6 PHOTOGRAPHY SILVER KEYS)

38 HONORABLE MENTIONS
 (1 HM ART PORTFOLIO, 1 HM PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO, 27 ART HM, 9 PHOTOGRAPHY HM)

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards
 90 YEARS OF CREATIVITY

Mercedes Luna, *Dandy*, 2024
 Gold Key Portfolio Winner
 American Visions Nominee

maggie | walker | arts

Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair Jeff Hall presented the students to the board.

The MLWGS Visual Arts Department is thrilled to announce that our creative students were recently honored by having their work selected for awards in the regional 2025 Scholastic Art competition. This is a highly competitive annual art competition which had **2699 art entries** from around the region. MLWGS students had another great year with **82 total awards**, recognizing Maggie L. Walker Governor's School as one of the region's top schools for the Arts.

Summary: 82 total awards

23 Gold Keys awards including **4 Gold Key Portfolios:** (3 Gold Key Art portfolios, 1 Gold Key Photo Portfolio, 13 Art Gold Keys, 6 Photo Gold Keys)

21 Silver Keys awards including **1 Silver Key Portfolio:** (1 Silver Key Art portfolio, 14 Art Silver Keys, 6 Photo Silver Keys)

38 Honorable Mentions including **2 Honorable Mention Portfolios:** (1 HM Art Portfolio, 1 HM Photo Portfolio, 27 Art HM, 9 Photo HM)

Portfolio Awards

A portfolio award is *very* difficult to achieve as it requires a comprehensive body of work expressing a unique artistic voice. Please join me in congratulating the following SENIORS who received special recognition for their portfolios.

- Mercedes Luna- Gold Key Art Portfolio with additional awards of 2 Gold Keys in Mixed Media, and an American Visions Nominee (Best in Show)
- Skye Cummings- Gold Key Art Portfolio
- Molly Morrison- Gold Key Art Portfolio with additional awards of 1 Gold Key in Sculpture, 1 Silver Key in Sculpture, 1 HM in Sculpture
- Peize Wang- Gold Key Photography Portfolio with an additional award of 1 HM in Photography
- Matilda Franz- Silver Key Art Portfolio with an additional award of 1 Gold Key in Painting
- Sahmeah Jamison- Honorable Mention Photography Portfolio with an additional award of 1 Gold Key in Photography
- Samantha Schappert- Honorable Mention Art Portfolio with additional awards of 1 Silver Key in Painting and 1 HM in Mixed Media

Gold and Silver Key Awards

Gold and Silver Key winners will have their work displayed at the Visual Art Center of Richmond from Feb. 8- Feb. 23rd with a in-person reception on Feb. 22 at 2pm at Dogwood Middle School. All Gold Key works will advance to National Competition with winners to be exhibited in New York.

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

- Anusha Algappan- Gold Key in Photography
- Maddie Bridges - Gold Key in Painting, Silver Key in Painting, and HM in Painting

- Danielle Chen - Gold Key in Drawing and Illustration, 2 Silver Keys in Painting
- Elijah Chen - Gold Key in Painting
- Winnie Chen - Gold Key in Drawing & Illustration, Silver Key in Mixed Media
- Sunjana Finn- Gold Key in Painting, HM in Painting
- Neha Jain - Gold Key in Photography
- Vier Julien - Gold Key in Mixed Media
- Elena Loy - Gold Key in Painting, Gold Key in Mixed Media, 2 HM in Mixed Media
- Chaitly Marapareddy - Gold Key in Photography
- Mitchell Shelton - Gold Key in Photography, HM in Photography
- Sophia Trinh - Gold Key in Photography
- Hiya Agrawal - Silver Key in Drawing & Illustration, HM in Drawing & Illustration
- Hillary Arriaza Rodas - Silver Key in Printmaking
- Kyra Chukin - Silver Key in Drawing & Illustration
- Ruby Freyer - Silver Key in Painting
- Aashna Gupta - Silver Key in Photography
- Soumya Khadye - Silver Key in Photography
- Will Knutson - Silver Key in Photography
- Grace Ku - Silver Key in Digital Art
- Benny Lefkowitz - Silver Key in Photography
- Abby Leshner - Silver Key in Mixed Media
- Emma Lindsey - Silver Key in Ceramics and Glass
- Demari Mitchell - Silver Key in Drawing & Illustration
- Davis Voelzke - Silver Key in Photography
- Grace Zheng - Silver Key in Painting, HM in Painting

- ***MLWGS students win (19) Scholastic Writing Awards in 2025***

English Department Chair Kerry Sheppard presented the students to the board.

The English department of Maggie L. Walker Governor's School is honored to announce that once again Scholastics has recognized and awarded several of our talented writers. This year's regional competition included over 500 entries in writing in ten different categories. Below is a list of winners:

First Name	Last Name	Category	Grade	Award
Winni	Chen	Poetry	9	Honorable Mention
Charvi	Deorah	Short Story	10	Honorable Mention
Maddy	Dunaway	Critical Essay	11	Honorable Mention

Liam	Johnston	Poetry	9	Honorable Mention
Vier	Julien	Poetry	10	Honorable Mention
Max	Keating	Short Story	12	Honorable Mention
Priya	Kumar	Critical Essay	9	Silver Key
Alina	Laraway	Poetry	11	Silver Key
Ally	Lichtman	Critical Essay	12	Silver Key
David	Lins	Humor	11	Gold Key
Howard	Luo	Short Story	9	Gold Key
Grace	McDonnell	Poetry	10	Honorable Mention
Loiu	Nzombola	Personal Essay & Memoir	9	Silver Key
Tanvi	Palavalas	Personal Essay & Memoir	12	Silver Key
Chris	Qian	Humor	10	Silver Key
Chris	Qian	Poetry	10	Honorable Mention
Missy	Stephenson	Novel Writing	11	Silver Key
Missy	Stephenson	Novel Writing	11	Silver Key
Rewa	Totey	Personal Essay & Memoir	11	Honorable Mention

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

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 compete!

- ***Regional School Board Appreciation***

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. The 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.

To show our appreciation, attached to the agenda was a long list of thank-you notes from the MLWGS community.

- ***School Board Clerk Appreciation***

A spontaneous recognition occurred for Ms. Barbara Marshall, school board clerk, for her many years of service to this board. Mr. Lucas Veale, deputy clerk, was also recognized.

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 online comments were received. The following remarks were presented in-person and most provided their notes for this record:

- **Mr. Adam Rotche**, Science Department. Opening with thank you, especially for your work on pay parity.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Adam Rotche, and I am a science teacher at MLWGS, a seminar instructor, and the quiz bowl team sponsor. I love my job!

I want to use three minutes of your time to advocate for the adoption of a paid parental leave policy for faculty at MLWGS. This is a policy that has already been adopted by RPS, Chesterfield, and Henrico.

I found out a few months ago that I will become a father in August. So excited, but also nervous about my ability to excel at both new fatherhood and teaching.

When I found out my wife was pregnant, one of the first things I did was to explore Maggie Walker's parental leave policy - only to discover that we do not have one.

Current options are to use sick days, FMLA, short term disability.

Using sick days is an inequitable solution because new teachers, or teachers who have been ill, don't have many. If you have two pregnancies within a few years, you don't get more time. Plus, what if you get sick or injured after having a child, or your child is sick, or you have lots of doctor's appointments?

FMLA is leave without pay, at a time when your expenses are ballooning as your family grows. Additionally, teachers on leave will likely have to write lesson plans and grade work, which is work without pay, not leave without pay. Since I teach a unique class, I will have to be involved in planning, grading, and instruction for it to proceed, so FMLA isn't really an option.

Short term disability is only an option for mothers who have given birth. This doesn't help fathers who want to be present in their family's lives, and it doesn't help parents who are adopting a child. It is also only 60% salary, so a financial strain.

Expense to the school is only the cost of 8 weeks for a substitute teacher. The sub rate is \$119/day, so for 8 weeks that is \$4,760. Slightly more for long term subs I believe? That expense would be incurred anyway because many teachers will use sick days, so really the cost is buying out sick days 25 years later. Is this cost worth losing experienced teachers? Strain to families and children?

Maggie Walker is experiencing a turnover of staff with many new hires in their 20s and 30s. The need to act is urgent, and will become more so.

Please consider adopting an 8 weeks of paid parental leave policy as has been compassionately done by RPS, Henrico, and Chesterfield. Thank you for your time

- **Ms. Erin Ortiz**, MLWGS Social Worker.

Good morning,

Thank you for your time and attention this morning. I know Dr. Lowerre would be proud of me for using my voice in advocacy, for standing up for what I believe in. In fact, I sent him an email over the summer last year about this very topic, and growing need. I wanted to know, how many people in this room have kids? Think for a moment what life was like when you went on maternity or paternity leave.

Adam approached me about a month ago and I shared my story of becoming a parent within the first handful of months of coming on staff here at Maggie Walker. I had my first daughter in October of 2022 - fortunately, I came here from one of our partner divisions, Henrico County, after a seven-year tenure. In that time, I accumulated nearly 500 hours of sick leave, all of which came with me when I arrived here in the fall of 2022. I was able to utilize that leave and save some "padding", if you will, for future needs. Lucky I did! In the winter of 2023, I found out I was pregnant with my second child, due August 2024.

Fast forward - November 2024. I am faced with the decision to cut my maternity leave short in order to keep hours in the bank to cover me when my two year old gets sick and so graciously shares her germs with me, my husband, and the baby. Yet, there is an important difference between my postpartum journey this time. Faced with signs and symptoms of postpartum depression, I reached out to my social network, my family, and my therapist because what kind of mental health professional would I be if I didn't do what I often recommend to my students here to do when they are challenged and struggling.

Here's the part where parental leave would have benefitted me - I firmly believe that with a policy where parental leave is offered to parents, like me, I would've added that eight weeks to my leave, which would have closed the gap to winter break. During that time, I can only wonder what impact I would have had on my mental health. Not only that, I would have more time now, which perhaps is equally important, to care for my children when they are sick or have doctor's appointments. When my toddler gets sick, I pray it's only for a day because eventually, my leave will run out...then what? Leave without pay is my only option.

Please understand, the person you see here today is not faking it til she makes it, I arrive here every day equipped with authenticity, an ability to hold space for our students, and deep care for my colleagues, but it takes more of a toll on new parents returning to work and because of the work that I do, the toll it takes can contribute to burn out and compassion fatigue. That doesn't mean I am not doing a good job and showing up, but there are long-term effects that I must keep in the forefront of my mind to ensure that my flame doesn't burn out. The issue I'm facing now is that I have one week of leave left to cover me for the rest of the school year; ultimately, this may cause an avalanche effect because as parents if you burn through all the leave, you come into next year with what is given (ten days of sick leave for a ten month employee).

I want to echo Mr. Rotche's request to the board to please consider adopting a parental leave policy, including 8 weeks of paid parental leave as has been compassionately done by our three biggest divisions, Richmond, Henrico, and Chesterfield counties. As a former student from the class of 2006 and current faculty member, I want to express my gratitude. Thank you, board members, for your time this morning and all you do to support our mission, students, faculty, and staff here at Maggie Walker.

- **Dr. Christine Anderson**, Social Studies Department.

Dear School Board:

Hello, I'm Dr. Christine Anderson and I have taught history here at Maggie Walker for the past 10 years. First, thank you for all your support for MLWGS and for the faculty, including the recent actions taken on pay parity.

Like my colleagues, I would also like to advocate for paid parental leave at MLWGS. Currently, faculty and staff only have the option of taking sick days, FMLA, or short-term disability. And yet, those options aren't available to everyone. Here is my story.

I transitioned to secondary education at Maggie Walker from academia where I was a full-time history professor. In my first year here, I was part-time. I became full-time in fall 2016 at the same time that I was needing to take leave to have my second child. I did not have any sick days saved up and short-term disability was not an option. My only option was FMLA, which was leave without pay for 3 months, which I took. My plan was to teach the first week of school with my substitute, but I was pre-eclamptic, had an emergency C-section, and my daughter came 2 weeks early. At that point, I only had lesson plans written and materials created for the 1st quarter. Before I went into hospital, it became clear that my long-term substitute did not have the content knowledge or teaching experience that I expected. **As a result, my leave without pay turned into labor without pay for the second nine weeks** as I continued to create lesson plans and class materials, while also trying to recover from health complications and care for my infant daughter, along with my 3-year-old daughter. This certainly caused a lot of stress but was the only way to

ensure that the students would be at the necessary point in the content when I returned. I was returning only a few weeks before they were to take midterm exams, which covered the content for the entire first-semester that I was on leave.

Even had I had sick days, it would not have been wise to use them. Upon the birth of my second daughter, both my children became sick so often that I used up the minimal sick days I had earned within 1 semester upon my return and even had to take leave without pay again.

While paid parental leave is no longer a relevant issue for me and my family, I ask that you please seriously consider providing it as it disproportionately affects female faculty and staff and younger staff both male and female. To stay competitive with surrounding school districts not only in salary, but also in benefits, having an 8-week paid parental leave policy like those adopted by RPC, Henrico, and Chesterfield would greatly aid in retaining excellent and high-performing faculty and staff by sending the message that **paid parental leave is considered a right at Maggie Walker and not a privilege.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

- **Mr. Jeff Hall**, Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair. Notes were not provided by Mr. Hall but a summary of his remarks on advocacy of the one-to-one initiative follows:
 - Mr. Hall thanked the board for their work on bringing pay equity to MLWGS.
 - He urged the board to adopt the 1-1 initiative that includes Windows-based laptops as they would be best for the students of MLWGS.
 - Mr. Hall has worked in education for 31 years, 18 at MLWGS, and was one of the teacher liaisons at Henrico in 2000 when they were among the first in the nation to bring a 1-1 initiative.
 - For the past decade, MLWGS has operated on BYOD (bring your own device) which proved to be positive for our project-based learning.
 - Chromebooks would be a significant step backwards for MLWGS.
 - From our prior 1-1 pilot program using Macs, PC laptops, and Chromebooks, the Chromebooks were consistently rated last by students and teachers.
 - The types of projects we do at MLWGS require a computer that can run an operating system and allow for industry standard programs to be installed on it.
 - Our cloud file sizes are huge.
 - In closing, Mr. Hall advocates for the Windows-based laptops and asks the board to consider this choice in their decision.

- **Mr. Mark Sailer**, Science Department. Notes were not provided by Mr. Sailer but a summary of his remarks on advocacy of the one-to-one initiative follows:
 - Mr. Sailer is a physics teacher, FIRC instructor, Robotics sponsor, and technology integrator, giving him a unique insight.
 - He stressed the importance of having a single platform and operating system for students to give them the skillset they need for success.
 - It's challenging when students present with 6-8 different platforms and operating systems.

- He stated his belief that the Windows-based 1-1 initiative provides an equitable situation for all freshmen.
- Mr. Sailer's current students that do not have access to computers rely on their friends to share.
- In closing, Mr. Sailer stressed his observation that the Windows based machine is imperative to support our students and will provide for equitable instruction.

- **Mr. Matthew Ruskan, Social Studies Department.**

Good Morning, members of the School board. My name is Matthew Ruskan, and I am a social studies teacher here as well as a Maggie Walker graduate (class of 2013). I also am a proud product of Henrico County Public Schools, attending Tuckahoe Elementary and Tuckahoe Middle School before Maggie Walker.

One of the best parts about coming to Maggie Walker for me was the advanced curriculum that allowed me and my fellow classmates to not just learn, but pursue our passions. Teachers specifically designed assignments that allowed us to pursue our interests and get creative. I had friends who taught themselves how to code, made digital art, and more on devices they used during the school day. As we look towards one-to-one devices, I strongly believe that the devices that our students should have are Windows. Part of the advantage of Maggie Walker is the freedom to be creative, and Windows devices would encourage all of our students to explore their passions in a way that other devices would not. Our students and teachers need the flexibility to create assignments that allow students to, say, create a parody of U Can't Touch this about a dictator not allowing reform...Dr. Smith, I truly apologize for my vocal skills that day. As we continue to strive to challenge some of central Virginia's best students, give us the flexibility to go out of the box when asking our students to embrace learning.

- **Mr. David Bortz, Chief Technology Officer at MLWGS.**

Good morning, members of our regional school board. My name is David Bortz, and I am the Chief Technology Officer at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School.

I speak today to underline my recommendation for a 1:1 Windows school-managed student device initiative. As presented at last month's meeting, I believe that this is the best-fit for our school's academic programs and student technology engagement.

You have heard today from passionate teachers who lead courses in an advanced curriculum which often requires an advanced device capable of full-version software and specialized programs to support student learning and exploration.

In my role as procurement, operations support and educational technology integration lead, I strongly believe we can successfully launch and sustain a student device program that will exceed expectations.

In our follow up from the January 16 presentation, we addressed and clarified questions regarding funding for the program in the proposed FY26 operating budget, through FY29 when the school would be fully 1:1. Again, our projected funding increase for FY26 would add \$60 per student.

I request that action be taken today to move the proposed 1:1 device initiative forward, so that our team can notify incoming accepted students early next month, develop policies and plans this Spring, and facilitate the immediate procurements. I greatly appreciate my colleagues' support of this initiative, both those that submitted written testimonials and those that spoke in person today.

Additionally, I greatly appreciate your engagement and support of our students' academic success both here at Maggie Walker and in their future scholarly achievements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

- **Ms. Wendy DeGroat**, MLWGS Librarian. Good morning, Dr. Taylor, and members of the board.

My name is Wendy DeGroat, and I'm the librarian at Maggie Walker. I previously worked in Chesterfield and Henrico, and this is my 18th year here. Today, I'm speaking as an individual.

I'd like to thank you and your predecessors for the support you provided to Dr. Bob Lowerre during the serious health challenges he faced. At the memorial service last month for Drew Austen, who taught physics and coached our Quiz Bowl team, several students shared that when they faced setbacks, Mr. Austen encouraged them and gave them the time they needed to catch up. Dr. Lowerre extended this same compassion to faculty and staff. Whether dealing with the sudden loss of a dear friend or a loved one's cancer treatments, I knew that among the myriad worries I had, I did NOT need to worry about Dr. Lowerre viewing me unfavorably when I requested the leave I needed. Many colleagues could share similar stories. You, in turn, extended compassion to Dr. Lowerre by approving his medical leave and his plan to work from home while his immune system recovered. I'm grateful to be part of such a caring community. Such caring happens through intention, not by accident.

Like many members of our community, I'm reeling from Dr. Lowerre's death. If he had lived, this June would have marked the conclusion of his eighth year at the helm of this ship. His transparent, approachable, fun, get-things-done leadership style provided welcome stability after a revolving door of five directors during my first ten years. His door was open, and I could bring my whole self into his office, speaking directly about what was on my mind. I appreciated his unfiltered directness too - which is good, because Bob didn't come in a filtered edition. We could disagree and still get along and respect each other. Still laugh. I miss him.

At this vulnerable time, I also have an ask.

Please do not send us an interim director.

Since Dr. Lowerre went on leave, Dr. Smith and Dr. Williams have steered our ship through many unexpected obstacles. I trust them. They know our students and parents. They know our staff. Together, our community can finish this school year without an interim. We had already learned that Dr. Lowerre was unlikely to resume his Director post until after graduation. As a result, two new administrative aides are now helping shoulder responsibilities like bus duty and overseeing school events. Having an interim this spring would create disruption and increase our workload. Most importantly, it would be unsettling for students at a time when they need to maintain focus,

finish the year strong, and for seniors, receive their diploma from someone they already know. Even if an interim assignment is standard protocol, this has been anything but a standard year.

For 2025-2026, please restore our administrative team to three leaders, letting the next official captain of this ship begin their term on July 1.

In the meantime, let us stay the course.

- **Dr. Lisa Williams**, MLWGS Assistant Director.

“What Would Bob Do?”
by Dr. Lisa Williams

When someone influential passes away, they leave a legacy. Part of their legacy is their lasting impression. Bob was a big personality, a big boss, and a tremendous leader. So I have decided to honor his legacy by asking myself, “What would Bob do?” I hope this catches on. If it does, we will call it WWBD.

For example, Bob was a bottom-line kind of thinker. When faced with a situation that involved dollars and cents, he was no nonsense. In my mind, I can hear Bob’s voice. He would say, “Make the practical choice.”

When advising someone who was torn between professional obligations and taking care of home, this is how Bob was known: He would say, “Family first. Work second.” This was a powerful lesson. Working for someone with those priorities has truly been a blessing.

When a situation was tedious or proved to be too serious, Bob was known to clown around. “He’s a funny guy,” people would say. He would often add a laugh and a human touch. This is one thing about Bob that I will miss so much.

When the opportunity presented itself to sit quietly or have the floor...well, let’s just say that Bob was the master storyteller, the stand-up comedian..and so much more. When he had your ear, you never knew what was in store. He would tell jokes that had you chuckling or even laughing until there were tears. But he also had a way of building your confidence and making you forget your fears. He was known for being authentic, down to earth, and keeping it real.

When faced with a gamble, I must state that Bob was quite the poker player. He studied his cards and placed his bet. And in playing his hand, he did not falter or fret.

In making choices, if I asked myself, “What would Bob do?” I can hear him say, “Weigh it out and do what’s right for you.”

When I think of challenges, obstacles, and decisions, I will move forward by asking myself WWBD...what would Bob do?

I believe he would say, “To thine own self be true. Find humor because a good laugh will see you through. Be strong and confident in what you say and do. And when you think of me, do not cry, even if we did not get a chance to say goodbye. Understand that I am flying high in the sky. I am

now an angel with my heavenly wings. But do keep me in spirit as you go about your business and earthly things.”

The chair thanked all of our speakers for their input.

IX. Consent Items

On a motion by Meredith Moses to approve consent items as a slate, seconded by Bob May, the following items were unanimously approved on a voice vote: February personnel actions, fiscal status reports of January 31, 2025, and the donations report of January 31, 2025.

Dr. Smith noted that the school received a \$1,000 donation from Dominion Energy for a student’s work in the writing contest for Black History Month. He mentioned the student won a MacBook.

X. Action Items

A. Amended Policy Proposals (Second Read)

The Policy Steering Committee offers the following for Regional School Board consideration.

The policies listed were adopted in the early years of the school but never finalized into a policy format and directory. They either resided in an old policy binder or the student or admissions handbooks.

FINAL	RL	NAME	NEW/AMENDED	DESCRIPTION
		School Board Governance		
1034	1034	Change of Residency	Amended	Adopted 1997 and found only in binder; however this is the practice that has been followed. The final version includes a date change as requested in January for bullet #2 to February 26 from March 1
1045	1045	National Board Certification	Amended	Adopted 2008 and found only in binder
		Instruction		
3003.0	3003.0	Diploma Requirements	Amended	Adopted by the VBOE 2010 and listed in the student handbook
		Human Resources		
5099	5099	National Board Certification	New	Listed in the HR category as cross-reference for Pol 1045. Policies are identical.

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Lisa Hudgins, the amended policies 1034, 1045, 3003.0, and 5099 were unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

B. New Course Proposal for AY2026 (Waive First Read Requested)

This proposal was vetted by the Planning Committee at their January meeting. Approval is needed from the Regional School Board at this meeting to include in the upcoming course catalog.

DEPARTMENT: WORLD LANGUAGES

- **COURSE TITLE: Spanish for Heritage Speakers**

Prerequisite(s): Counselor/Teacher Recommendation & Placement Test at Level 4

Credit: (yearlong) 1 credit

Is this course: (1) New: X

Course Description:

This course is designed for students within the Target Population (listed above), to address the specific linguistic needs that L2 Spanish and Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Students often have learning English that cannot adequately be addressed in any current Spanish classes, through advanced and culturally specialized grammar content. It will also broaden the horizons of L1 Spanish students through a reflective understanding of the diverse nature of Hispanic identities both locally in the United States and globally through comparisons and connections with literature and historically salient cultural media forms. Through this process, they will acquire college-level Spanish vocabulary related to business and economics, science and technology, health and wellbeing, international communication, and the fine arts. This course will culminate with a community engagement final project and presentation to empower students as young adult leaders and bilingual speakers in each of their communities.

Ms. Moses asked if there was an estimate for the number of students who might be interested in taking this course and if we had a teacher available for the course. Dr. Smith stated the best estimate we have is somewhere between 30-50 students, and yes, we have a current teacher with the capability of teaching this course who has an extensive background, even utilized a Fulbright for work in Peru.

A motion to waive first read of the Spanish for Heritage Speakers course for AY2026 to take action today was made by Bob May, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, and unanimously approved on a voice vote.

On a motion by Kathryn Ricard, seconded by Heather Donbrosky, the new course proposal Spanish for Heritage Speakers for AY2026, was unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

C. AY25 Operating Calendar Change (Waive First Read was Requested)

To stay within our State required 990 hours for the academic year 2024-2025 of instruction, the acting director requests the following calendar changes:

#1-Monday, March 10–Change from Teacher Workday to Instructional Day to accommodate the previous snow closing (1-22-2025).

As Virginia law mandates, we must recoup instructional time for days missed due to inclement weather. The administration has sought input from the leadership team to address this matter. We received a collective vote to change March 10, currently a teacher workday, to an instructional day.

#2-Friday, April 18– Change from Teacher Professional Development to Instructional Day to accommodate the previous snow closing (2-11-2025).

Ms. Moses asked if either change would impact spring break. Dr. Smith stated it would not.

A motion to waive first read for the AY2025 operating calendar change was made by Bob May, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, and unanimously approved on a voice vote.

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Linda Hyslop, changing March 10, 2025, and April 18, 2025, from student holidays to instructional days was unanimously adopted on a voice vote.

D. FY2026 One-to-one Initiative (Waive First Read was Requested)

The Acting Director respectfully requests that the board support the proposed 1:1 school-managed student device initiative. Board approval will allow adequate time for planning, procurement, and policy development to be ready to launch the program in August 2025. Specifically, approval will provide time to notify incoming students in early March of our new student device program. The program will add one grade level of devices each year until MLWGS is fully 1:1 in August 2028.

Mr. May mentioned that he was unable to attend the January meeting where Mr. Bortz presented his proposal and needed clarification on the costs associated with it. He asked, “Does the \$714.00 tuition increase include the initiative devices?” Dr. Smith confirmed that it does, specifying that the amount includes \$60 for laptops and a 4% increase for salaries.

Mr. May expressed his concerns, stating that he is troubled by the fact that Maggie Walker GS is requiring the divisions to purchase equipment they typically wouldn't buy. He feels it seems as though the divisions are being compelled to acquire specific items solely for Maggie Walker GS. Additionally, he noted that Hanover does not endorse Microsoft products. He concluded by expressing his apprehension about obtaining approval from the Hanover board, stating that he generally cannot support the proposal in its current form.

Dr. Pennycuff expressed her concerns about the cost, stating, “If each student pays \$60 over four classes, that totals \$240 per freshman student. How is it possible to finance a \$1,000 laptop with that?” Dr. Smith clarified, “The \$60 fee applies to each student—from freshmen to seniors—spread across four years for these incoming freshmen, resulting in a total of \$240 contributed annually. We are proposing a four-year lease for the laptops. Over four years, the total comes to around \$1,000 per device. However, it's important to note that we are leasing the laptops, not purchasing them.”

Dr. Pennycuff followed up by asking about academic year (AY2027) and whether another freshman class would require a new round of \$1,000 each. Dr. Smith confirmed that the school would need an additional \$60 per student for the lease of equipment for the new freshmen, a cost that would continue until those students reach their fourth year, at which point the fees will

stabilize. This pattern will repeat for each new class that enrolls. Mr. May expressed that he was still trying to understand a four-year leasing contract for a \$1,000 computer, with a replacement cycle costing \$60 per year, which is a good deal that his division was not receiving.

Dr. Smith acknowledged the concerns but emphasized that 10 out of the 14 school divisions participating at Maggie Walker use Chromebooks, while the other 4 divisions use Windows equipment. He added that both faculty and students strongly believe in this initiative.

Mr. May expressed confusion about where the remaining funds would come from, referring to the discrepancy between the cost of \$240 and the \$60 request per student. Dr. Pennycuff added that at \$60 per student for the first year, there is still a shortfall for the lease, questioning where this additional funding would come from, given that \$60 multiplied by 796 students equals \$47,760. Dr. Smith clarified that the plan is to use some of the current funds from AY2025 to cover the shortfall for the first year. He emphasized the need to place the order this year to ensure readiness for fall 2025. He noted that the \$60 request represents only 0.06% of the school's operating budget. Both Mr. May and Dr. Pennycuff agreed that this explanation had not been clear to them before this discussion and now helps them better understand the funding formula. Additionally, Mr. May pointed out a benefit for Hanover: they would be able to reduce the number of Chromebooks they need to purchase by the number of students they send to Maggie Walker. Dr. Pennycuff added, now that we understand you are also pulling monies from somewhere else, the math makes sense and thanked Dr. Smith and Bortz for their reviews.

Another board member asked if the school will always be pulling monies from someplace else to make each yearly lease payment whole? Mr. Bortz stated that by FY2029 we will be fully 1-1 for all students and the divisions will be at \$240/for each student and will continue, outside of market changes.

Ms. Moses asked if we assume the tuition doesn't go up next year, we will still be adding another \$60? Dr. Smith answered that was correct, but it would be part of any percentage increase we would ask for.

Mr. May asked if the parental leave that was requested in public comments was in the budget proposal? Dr. Smith said no, that has not been discussed as a policy yet. Specifically, Mr. May asked if any monies in the \$714 proposed tuition increase include a parental leave benefit. Again, Dr. Smith said no, it has not been addressed by the policy committee yet. Mr. May shared his concern that this is an expensive benefit and we only have finite dollars.

Dr. Pennycuff asked what the difference between the laptop and the Chromebook was. Dr. Smith told her the Chromebook was \$40/student versus the laptop at \$60/student or \$160/total versus \$240/total.

Mr. May requested a detailed breakdown of the \$714. Dr. Smith explained that the amount primarily covers three areas: 1) most of the funds are allocated for the pay equity movement, 2) \$60 is designated for the 1-1 initiative, and 3) funds are also earmarked for the HVAC system and other incremental changes due to rising costs. He noted that the budget proposal for FY2027 may reflect a lower increase than the proposed 7%, for FY2026, which is less than the 9.25% increase from FY2025. Lastly, regarding the pay equity aspect, if regional partners implement a 4% increase or less increase, we might be able to close the gap in two years rather than the planned

three years. However, this will depend on our partners; for example, Henrico recently announced a 6% increase.

Ms. Hudgins stated that Chesterfield has already committed to our seat numbers for AY2026, and now the tuition increase has been announced. She added that we are currently in budget season, and the situation is very tight; with a 3% raise, we are struggling. She asked Dr. Fohl [*superintendent designee*] for his input, and he mentioned that the timing of the request places us in a difficult position. Dr. Smith acknowledged that this has been a problematic issue, as our process lags behind our divisions, but we are following the process established years ago by the board.

Ms. Walwer contributed by sharing that her background is in educational technology (EdTech), and she has implemented the Chromebook program in her division. She believes that opting for Windows machines would provide better value for the investment. Her division is currently purchasing laptops to maintain a cart for advanced student work. She feels that the board should proceed with the implementation of Windows devices and wishes it could be done for all students, not just the freshmen, and is frankly just a little shocked the school is still BYOD.

Dr. Taylor said in Powhatan they had already built the 1-1 into their budget but he understands the concerns presented today. He added, I'm struggling with how to proceed on this matter except for to call for a motion and see where it lands.

Dr. Smith suggested we table action on this item until we have the full budget presentation later within this meeting.

Dr. Pennycuff mentioned that she understands her finance staff collaborates with us on budget development and they would have built it into our budget development, but their major concern was understanding the money behind this proposal, noting that it's not that they did not support the one-to-one initiative. She suggested that board members discuss any questions they have with their finance personnel. Dr. Smith reiterated that the finance committee was made aware of these tuition rates by the end of 2024.

Mr. May has reviewed the budget proposal funding and is now confident that he can present it to his board in Hanover. He expressed his support for the initiative but voiced concerns about the potential effects of adding a leave policy in the budget. He was unsure if the financial implications of such a policy had already been considered in the proposal. Dr. Smith noted that the policy committee convenes over the summer for work on new and amended policies. As parental leave has not yet been reviewed by them, any potential policy wouldn't be presented to the board until the fall of 2025, with implementation until the following year.

The chair agreed to table this item until after the budget presentation within this meeting, as this is one piece of the budget.

See Section XIII.b for action on this item.

Dr. Elaine Pearson left the meeting.

XI. Director's Report

A. *Verbal Updates*

- **School Closing: Wednesday, January 22, 2025, due to inclement weather. (#6).
Tuesday, February 11, 2025 (#7).**

- **Snow Day Recovery Time (Also in Board Action X.c)**

#6-Dear Parents,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to inform you that March 10, originally scheduled as a teacher workday, will now be an instructional day (odd blocks). As we strive to maximize learning opportunities for our students, it's important that we make up any lost instructional time. Due to the number of snow days we've had this winter, we need to adjust our schedule to stay in compliance with Virginia Code requirements for instructional hours.

We appreciate your understanding and flexibility as we make this adjustment. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

#7-April 18 will become a regular school day to account for this learning time.

- **Good News! MLWGS 'We the People' Teams wins 2025 State Championship**

***Coming* to the board for their March meeting.**

- **More good news! Walker Junior Congressional Contest Winner**

On Jan. 21, 2025, Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan (VA-04) announced the winners of the 2024-2025 Congressional App Challenge for Virginia's Fourth Congressional District: **Saket Sambaraju ('26-Henrico)** and Abhinav Gitta. Saket and Abhinav designed MelanomAI, an application that scans images for melanoma skin cancer with a 92.28% testing accuracy.

- **AP Testing Totals: 2024 and 2025**

2024

Student Registrations		Exam Registrations			
Students	Enrollments	Taking	Not Taking	Undecided	Unused
539	1,643	1,465	105	0	89

Note: 89 students canceled exams last year, typically because they were admitted to a selective college that capped the number of transfer credits allowed.

2025 (Projected)

Student Registrations		Exam Registrations		
Students	Enrollments	Taking	Not Taking	Undecided
565	1,689	1,630	59	0

Projected numbers for May 2025 (our number of students enrolled has increased).

- **2025 School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, February 17-21, 2025**

The VSBA Board of Directors has designated the third week in February (February 17-21, 2025) as VSBA School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, with a goal of building awareness of the role school board clerks play in assisting school board members, superintendents, and our local schools. Please plan now to show your local clerks you appreciate their work.

- **MLWGS Advocacy Team Fully Engaged with the 2025 General Assembly!**

The MLWGS Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and Student Council Association (SCA) sent our Advocacy Team to the Virginia General Assembly on January 23rd for PTA Advocacy Day. The team included 15 Dragon students, parents, and Foundation Director Ginger O’Neil. We met individually with 13 Delegates and 7 Senators to discuss increasing school funding across Virginia, prioritizing gifted education resources, and supporting free school breakfast and lunch. [Click HERE to See our Advocacy Team in Action!](#)

MLWGS students also sent over 70 personalized emails to their state representatives, including 12 Delegates and 8 Senators (i.e., 12% of State Delegates and 20% of State Senators). The Virginia General Assembly is in session until February 22nd, so you still have an opportunity to have your voice heard.

- **National School Counselors Week, Feb 3-7, 2025**

Sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), took place from February 3rd to February 7th, 2025. The theme is: School Counseling: Helping Students Thrive. National School Counselors Week aims to draw public attention to the unique role of school counselors in the US education system and to showcase how students benefit from their services.



- **MLWGS Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Thursday, February 6**



- Mr. Clyde 'aka Clydie-The Glide' Austin – MWHS Class of 1976 – Basketball
- Mr. Peter Goergen – MLWGS Class of 2004, Basketball
- Rev. Dr. Ayanna Jones – MLWGS Class of 2001 – Track
- Mr. Robert 'Bob' Jones II – MWHS Class of 1970 – Football and Track
- Dr. Brittany L. Jones – MLWGS Class of 2007 – Basketball

- ~~MLWGS Valentine's Dance, February 14th~~ **CANCELLED**

~~The Valentine's Dance was held on February 14th from 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm. All Maggie Walker students were invited to attend.~~

- **MLWGS welcomes visiting students from Shimane University in Japan on February 14th**



On Friday, February 14th, seven students from Shimane University, Japan, visited us to observe Ms. Yoko Eshita's Japanese classes at Maggie Walker Governor's School. These university students are in Richmond as part of an exchange program through VCU. "Many students are majoring in Education and are pursuing becoming teachers in Japan," said Ms. Eshita.

Besides participating in the Japanese classes, these university students will be paired with a Maggie Walker student and will shadow them throughout the day experiencing what it is like to be a high school student in the United States.

- **Spring Sports**

Spring sports begin on **Monday, February 24th**.

- **Virtual Course Registration for Returning Students for 2025-2026 on Thursday, February 27th**

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 who 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.**

- **MLWGS Drama presents *Means Girls*, February 27 – March 1, 2025, 7:00 pm nightly.**

Mean Girls is a rock musical with a book by Tina Fey, lyrics by Nell Benjamin, and music by Jeff Richmond.

It is based on the 2004 film by Mark Waters, which was also written by Fey and was in turn inspired by Rosalind Wiseman's 2002 book *Queen Bees and Wannabes*. The musical focuses on Cady Heron, a teenage girl who transfers to a public high school after being homeschooled her whole life in Africa. At school, she befriends outsiders Janis Sarkasian and Damian Hubbard who persuade her to infiltrate the "Plastics", a clique consisting of wealthy but insecure Gretchen Wieners, sweet but dimwitted Karen Smith, and "queen bee" Regina George. **Credit: Wikipedia**

- **Exchange: Welcome to our special visitors from Chiben Gakuen, Japan, March 1-15, 2025**



MLWGS students and families will be hosting 12 Japanese exchange students and one teacher from Chiben Gakuen from March 1 to 15. Chiben Gakuen, is in Wakayama, Japan, which is about 2 hours and 30 minutes south of Kyoto via train.

In addition to visiting Maggie Walker, the Japanese students will be participating in a number of field trips, including to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA), Carytown, the Science Museum, and Surge RVA. They will also go on an overnight trip to Washington, D.C. as well. It is sure to be an amazing time.

Special recognition and gratitude to Ms. Yoko Eshita for her work and efforts coordinating the details that made this exchange possible.

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

This year, the school received 1,174 applicants for the Class of 2029 with most assessments administered on January 25th and February 1st. The make-up assessment day was conducted on February 4th. Regional Evaluations were conducted at the J. Sargeant Reynolds- Goochland campus on February 6th.

Per our testing coordinator, these are the rough number of applicants per division:

- Henrico - 500
- Richmond and Chesterfield about 250 each
- Hanover - about 100
- New Kent, Goochland, Powhatan, Hopewell, Petersburg - roughly a dozen each

- Colonial Heights, Charles City, Dinwiddie, King and Queen, Prince George - roughly half a dozen each.
- **Visitation Days for Accepted New Students of the Class of 2029, Tuesday, March 11th – Friday, March 14th**

Tuesday – Hanover plus all smaller divisions

Wednesday – Chesterfield

Thursday – Henrico

Friday – Richmond

- **Night of the Dragon Auction, Saturday, March 22nd, The Faison Center, @ 6:30 pm**

Mark your calendar for the annual Night of the Dragon on March 22, 2025! This special event is a whole lot of fun and provides invaluable support to our amazing Dragons. You don't want to miss it.

- **The 2025 Patricia E. Taylor Teaching Award Recipient**



Christine Anderson, Social Studies teacher at MLWGS, will use the International Travel Experience to travel around France to deepen her understanding of:

- The portrayal of women and their national contributions from 19th century first-wave feminism, after World War I, and after World War II;
- The tension between French republicanism, first-wave feminism, and women's contributions to the First and Second World Wars;
- Why it took longer in France to give women the vote and equal rights when compared to other Western European countries;
- How women are being remembered within French history and its national identity today; and
- The added intersection of ethnicity and religion in the politics of the veil resulting from Muslim immigration to France in the 21st century.

Christine designed her travel experience to deepen her understanding of these complex concepts she shares with her students so she can underscore for them “why identity matters and why it needs to be a lens used to study history and politics.”

- **Sent to all faculty and parents on 1/31/25: Immigration Policies: Safety & Support Protocols**

Dear Maggie Walker Families:

We recognize that the recent changes to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) internal policy allowing for expanded enforcement actions in previously protected “sensitive locations” such as schools, daycare centers, and places of worship, have caused significant concern within our community. Here at Maggie Walker, we deeply value the trust you place in us to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students, regardless of immigration status.

To address these concerns, we want to reassure you that our mission is to foster a safe, supportive, and inclusive community for each student in our care. Should law enforcement ever visit our building, our school has a protocol in place. This protocol includes verifying agent credentials and authority. Our school administrators and staff are receiving training to handle this and other scenarios, and we will always take a team-based approach that involves the leadership of our divisions and their legal counsel.

We also encourage families to take proactive steps during this time:

- Make sure your child’s contact information and emergency contacts are up-to-date. You can check with our School Registrar, Lucas Veale, to update this information.
- Develop a family preparedness plan in case of separation due to ICE enforcement activities.
- Ensure you know your legal rights, including as a bystander or observer.
- Talk to your children about their feelings and concerns, and remind them that our school counselors and other support staff are available to help them process any fears and worries.

Resources are available via the Richmond Public Schools’ Immigration Resources

Hub: <https://www.rvaschools.net/students-families/immigration-resource-hub>

The following Frequently Asked Questions serve to clarify our obligations under the law.

Q: What impact does undocumented immigration status have on my child’s education?

A: None. All children have a constitutional right to equal access to education regardless of their immigration status or their parents’ status as decided in the 1982 Supreme Court case Plyler v. Doe.

Q: Does Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School ask for a child’s immigration status when they enroll?

A: No. Public schools and programs like ours must enroll students regardless of their immigration status without discrimination based on national origin.

Q: Would the school district ever share a student’s immigration status with federal immigration officials?

A: As mentioned above, we do not ask for students' immigration status when they enroll. However, if we become aware of a student's immigration status, we do not share that information with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If we get a request for student information, the school system will follow FERPA regulations and only release information with parent/guardian permission or a valid court order.

Q: Will there be any immigration enforcement actions on school grounds?

A: Historically, schools were considered "sensitive locations" where immigration enforcement actions are discouraged. While this has been challenged under the new administration, we will do everything we are legally able to do for students to feel safe at school.

Q: What should I do if I want to understand my immigration rights?

A: Only immigration attorneys can provide accurate advice about immigration status and how you can pursue any legal rights you might have. If you have a special status such as DACA, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), or humanitarian parole, consider establishing a relationship with a lawyer to stay aware of possible policy changes. For your protection, please do not seek the advice of notaries or non-licensed immigration attorneys. A list of available resources can be found on [the RPS Immigration Hub website](#).

Q: What does Maggie L. Walker Governor's School do to ensure that no student or family is discriminated against or harassed because of their race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin?

A: We believe deeply in ensuring equity as one of our core values. We have policies that mandate no discrimination or harassment for our students, families, or employees based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, or other protected classes.

Q: What should I do if I feel like my student or I have been the victim of discrimination or harassment?

A: Please report discriminatory behavior immediately to an Assistant Director, the Coordinator of Strategic Engagement, or via our [Anonymous Alerts](#) platform. We take these complaints very seriously to ensure our school remains a safe space.

We understand the anxiety and uncertainty these policy changes may bring and are here to support our families in every way possible. If you have questions or additional concerns not answered here, please do not hesitate to contact our Assistant Directors, Dr. Max Smith and Dr. Lisa Williams, or Aparna Bansal Harger, Coordinator of Strategic Engagement.

We will continue to share updates as we learn more about these policy changes and their potential impact. Thank you for your continued partnership in ensuring the well-being of every student in our school.

Sincerely,
Dr. Max Smith, Acting Director

B. Coming Events

February 20, 2025, through March 20, 2025

Thursday, February 20 th	Regular School Board Meeting and AY26 Budget Public Hearing, 9:00 am, Room 153
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Friday, February 21 st	Guest Speaker: Dr. Laura Taalman – JMU for Mu Alpha Theta, 3:30 pm, Forum
Saturday, February 22 nd	International Language Fair for Middle Schoolers, 8 am – 1 pm, MLWGS
Monday, February 24 th	Spring Sports Begin
Wednesday, February 26 th	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, February 27 th	AY26 Course Registration Day
Thursday, February 27 th – Saturday, March 1 st	Spring Drama: Mean Girls, 7 pm nightly, Auditorium
Saturday, March 1 st – Saturday, March 15 th	Japan Exchange with MLWGS, visiting students on campus
Monday, March 3 rd	Community Book Discussion for Carol Dweck’s Mindset, 6 pm – 7:30 pm, Room 204
Monday, March 3 rd – Thursday, March 6 th	English SOL Testing
Tuesday, March 4 th	Monthly Faculty Meeting, 3:30 pm, Forum
Wednesday, March 5 th	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, March 6 th	Finance Committee Meeting, 9 pm, Virtual
	Youth Art and Music Month Opening Event, 6 pm, MLWGS
Friday, March 7 th	End of Q3
Saturday, March 8 th	Quiz Bowl Academic Tournament at MLWGS, 8 am – 5 pm
Tuesday, March 11 th	Visitation Day for Small Division Accepted Students, Class of 2029
	VML Math Contest, 11:40 am, Auditorium
Wednesday, March 12 th	Visitation Day for Chesterfield Accepted Students, Class of 2029
	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, March 13 th	Visitation Day for Hanover and Henrico Accepted Students, Class of 2029
Thursday, March 13 th – Sunday, March 16 th	AA History and Culture Class Field Trip to Tulsa and OK City (RSB approved)
Friday, March 14 th	Visitation Day for Richmond Accepted Students, Class of 2029
Friday, March 14 th – Saturday, March 15 th	Model UN GSMUN, 8:00 am on Saturday, MLWGS
Tuesday, March 18 th	Q3 Report Cards
Wednesday, March 19 th	Newtowne Tutoring, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm, Room 104
Thursday, March 20 th	Regular School Board Meeting and Projected AY26 Budget Approval, 9:00 am, Room 153
	Multicultural Assembly Performance for Parents, 6 pm, Auditorium

C. **GSMUN Model UN Conference XXVII, March 14-15, 2025**, a presentation by Kyle Rogers, Faculty Sponsor, with Sonia A. Chornodolsky ('25-Chesterfield), Secretary-General, Sriyutha Morishetty ('25-Henrico), Director-General, and Luna Forlano ('25-Richmond), Director of Charitable Giving.

It is my distinct honor to welcome you to the 27th iteration of the Governor’s School Model United Nations conference, which will be held March 14-15, 2025 at the Maggie Walker Governor’s School for Government and International Studies in Richmond, Virginia.

Over the last 27 years, GSMUN has grown to host over 500 delegates from across the nation. Each delegation supplies unique viewpoints and valuable contributions. From the beginning, GSMUN has prided itself on presenting delegates with an unparalleled experience of debate, diplomacy, and engagement. We strive to accommodate novice and veteran delegates alike and are cognizant of their specific needs.

This year, GSMUN will be composed of 19 committees spanning a wide variety of topics, from the rise of the Second Mexican Empire to the fall of colonial Algeria. In addition to that, we are continuing the legacy of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Secretary-General, where delegates are tasked with devising solutions without any prior information on the committee, topics, or their positions.

All of our committee encapsulate this year's theme—Empowering Diplomacy through Dialogue. In a world where polarization has reached an all-time high, we strive to remember the founding goal of the United Nations: global cooperation. At GSMUN, we empower delegates to grow into effective and compassionate leaders, who, through collaboration, will be catalysts for positive change in their communities.

Furthermore, a key feature of our conference every year is our charity. I am happy to announce that GSMUN XXVII's charity is the Blue Sky Fund. A local charity in Richmond, the Blue Sky Fund is dedicated to providing transformational experiences for Richmond area youth through outdoor education. The Blue Sky Fund is a truly exceptional organization making a direct and consistent impact on our local Richmond community. I sincerely hope that you can help us reach our goal of raising \$10,000 for the Blue Sky Fund.

Lastly, I would like to formally invite you to register for GSMUN XXVII. In the coming months, this website will be updated with background guides, dossiers, and further registration information. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments.

GSMUN is an organization that I cherish deeply. I have grown with GSMUN throughout my high school career and pride myself in the expansive impact that GSMUN has on our greater Richmond community.

On behalf of the Secretariat and all staff, I want to thank you all. Your participation and support drive this conference to success and continuity. Here's to another 27 years of GSMUN together.

Sincerely,

Sonia A. Chornodolsky, Secretary-General, GSMUN XXVII

The keynote speaker for the 2025 conference is Rachel Bowen Pittman, Executive Director of UNA-USA. Her expertise and far-ranging experiences in politics and international affairs will undeniably provide delegates with insight and inspiration.

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

XII. Unfinished Business

- A. The minutes shall contain a report on the Strategic Plan, which report can be found at the end of this document.

The acting director focused on items 1.2.6 and 1.2.7, which highlight our improvements in freshman readiness, orientation, and advisory programs. Additionally, we have redesigned a freshman class, renamed from FIRC to MLWGS101. As a result of these changes, we have observed higher retention rates, particularly during Dr. Smith's tenure over the past decade.

We are currently studying sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 to develop a teaching staff that reflects the diversity of our students at Maggie Walker. Our goal is to enhance professional development, recruitment, and retention. As we approach the recruitment season, we are actively working on these areas.

Finally, section 3.2.3 is a collaboration between Dr. Smith and Mr. Bortz to explore software solutions for form approvals and workflows. The goal is to establish electronic methods that enhance record keeping and efficiency.

At this time, Dr. Smith mentioned that he had spoken with the board chair about his plan to request a one-year extension for the development and implementation of the new 5-year strategic plan. Normally, we would be working on assembling the new plan at this stage, but due to the passing of Dr. Lowerre, we should wait until a new director is in place to ensure they can have a significant role in its development.

Mr. May made a motion to grant a one-year extension of the current strategic plan, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, the motion to grant a one-year extension of the current strategic plan was unanimously approved on a voice vote. (*Action replaces Item XIII.g on the agenda*).

XIII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

- A. *International Trip Proposal, Belize, March 2026 (First Read)*

David Barnes, Science Department and trip sponsor, was on-hand to present this proposal to the board.

Students will spend seven days exploring the ecology, history, and culture of Belize. In the Cayo region students will explore the rainforest from the ground, from the water on a canoe, and from the treetops on a zipline. Here students will begin to learn about Mayan culture by touring Xunantunich ruins and participating in a pottery and cooking class. Students will also tour a hot sauce factory and work a hand-cranked ferry. Students will then head to the Southern Coast where they will explore St. Herman's Blue Hole by floating through the caves in tubes. Students will also tour a chocolate factory and the Garifuna Museum. They will also eat Mayan food and learn to drum with the Garifuna. Students will also snorkel on the Meso-American reef. We will also visit local farms to learn about Belize's major exports.

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

Students: 24 maximum

Chaperones:

David Barnes

Other : TBD

Working with EF Tours

Price of this tour

The tour program price covers a wide range of services that ensure students have an incredible travel experience. It includes all the planning and preparation that leads up to departure, travel and accommodations, and logistical support once the group reaches their destination.

Valid Today	
STUDENTS	ADULTS
\$4,499	\$5,229
<i>or \$315/Month</i>	<i>or \$367/Month</i>
TOUR INCLUDES:	
Program Price	\$4,239
Global Travel Protection [US Fire]	\$190
Canoeing in the Cayo Region	\$70

Sources of revenue for the trip other than individual student fees (Ex. Foundation, sponsors, clubs, and fundraising):

This tour is being provided by EF Tours. Each student will have the opportunity to fundraise if they wish. The student’s EF account has a fundraising feature.

Approval for Mr. Barnes' trip proposal to Belize in March 2026 will be requested at the board’s March 2025 meeting.

B. FY2026 Budget Proposal Presentation and Public Hearing (First Read)

Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School Administration, in conjunction with the Superintendent’s Steering Committee and the Finance Steering Committee (comprised of the Chief Financial Officers from Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan, and Richmond) have worked to finalize an operating budget proposal for FY2026.

A draft proposal was presented to the Regional School Board for review and discussion at their budget work session on January 16, 2025.

Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School presents this public hearing on its 2025-2026 budget.

Dr. Smith referred to the packet link that includes the line-item budget, noting that a significant portion of the proposal highlights the 1-to-1 device initiative that has already been discussed. We are proposing a 7% tuition increase, which translates to an additional \$714 per student. The majority of this increase will be allocated to the second year of salary decompression in order to make our salaries competitive and promote pay equity with neighboring divisions. A small portion of the increase will support the 1-to-1 initiative. The remaining enhancements are related to the cost of doing business and necessary repairs to our aging HVAC system.

Approval for FY2026 operating budget proposal will be requested at the board's March 2025 meeting.

The chair inquired about the board's action on the 1-1 initiative, as the vote was tabled until after the budget presentation.

Mr. May stated that as Hanover was deep into their budget season, the proposed increase aligns with their estimates and he can support this initiative. He believes MLWGS is being a good steward of their finances.

Mr. May motioned to waive the first reading of the 1:1 laptop initiative, allowing the board to take action. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Pritchett. The board then unanimously approved the motion to waive the first reading on a voice vote.

Mr. Pritchett moved to adopt the 1-to-1 laptop initiative proposal, which was seconded by Mr. May. The board unanimously approved the adoption of the 1-to-1 laptop initiative proposal for the academic year 2026.

C. AY2026 Operating Calendar Proposal (First Read)

The 2025-2026 calendar is presented to the regional school board for the first read.

No major changes were made to the 2025-26 calendar as compared to the 2024-25 calendar. Minor changes include placing the Q1 Teacher Workday on Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day rather than another day in October. Also, it was noted that March 27, the Friday before Spring Break, will become a School Holiday if fewer than 5 instructional days are lost due to inclement weather, etc. This will alleviate the Regional School Board from having to approve such a change during the 2025-26 school year. Major holidays for our diverse student body continue to be observed. Our first day, winter break, spring break, and last day align with our major participating divisions on a two-week early start calendar.

Unless otherwise modified, approval for the proposed FY2026 school operating calendar will be requested at the board's March 2025 meeting.

D. Item Removed from Agenda

No item of business was presented here.

E. AY2026 Textbook Adoption (First Read)

The MLWGS textbook adoption process for implementation in 2025-2026 is following proper protocol. Recommendations are pending public comment.

- The following for **Social Studies** was posted to mlwgs.com on January 28, 2025, in News:

Prospective textbooks for the 2025-2026 academic year AP US History and AP African American Studies will be placed in the library for community review. These will be in the library for community members to evaluate starting on Monday, January 27th, up through February 27th.

TITLE: APUSH: The American Pageant, 18th edition, AP edition.

AP African-American Studies:

- 1. From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African-Americans by John Hope Franklin-textbook**
- 2. Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War by Vincent Brown, supplemental.**

Rationale for AP US History Textbook, The American Pageant, 18th Edition: The reason for the decision to purchase a new textbook is that we are currently out of compliance with College Board guidelines regarding publication dates of textbooks used for AP classes as well as needing a textbook that is fully aligned with the current curriculum. The current textbooks were purchased in 2014 and College Board guidelines mandate that textbooks used for the course should be no more than 10 years old. In addition, starting in 2016 The College Board made significant revisions to the exam and further minor revisions were implemented in both 2018 and 2024. Although the existing Brinkley textbook served the department very well, instructors found that they often had to work around the existing textbook in order to meet these changes. Our selection of the American Pageant, 18th edition, copyright 2025, is that the textbook not only covers the current curriculum, but the quality of primary documents and images far exceeded that of other textbooks that we examined. Perhaps most important, the vocabulary and narrative were deemed by reviewers to be most appropriate for our student population. The cost of the textbook is 169.00 dollars per copy which is commensurate with, or better than, the other two texts that were previewed. The overall cost, including shipping and handling, would be roughly 29,315.00 dollars (155 copies minimum to account for the potential of 7 sections of the course). I do note that publishers mentioned that the cost could change by the time this order is placed (However, this has been said with every purchase, and I have not seen the cost increase on any previous order). The possibility of using an online textbook was also considered. However, these were orders that had to be placed on either a 6-month or 1-year basis. Utilizing these online sources over a ten-year period would have, in the end, cost substantially more than just purchasing a hardcopy textbook that we would use over this time frame.

- The following for **Spanish** was posted to mlwgs.com on February 6, 2025, in News:

Prospective textbooks and workbooks for Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Spanish 3, and Spanish 4 have been placed in the library for community review. These will be in the library for members of the community to evaluate from Wednesday, February 5 to March 5.

Spanish textbook information will be available for the board's March meeting.

Ms. Ricard asked if the cost of these new books was incorporated into the AY26 budget proposal? Dr. Smith responded, yes, adding that as this would be a large purchase the school will also utilize some of the dollars remaining in the AY25 budget.

Approval for new textbooks for AY2026 will be requested at the board's March 2025 meeting.

F. AY2026 Student Fee Schedule (First Read)

The proposed student fee schedule has been updated from FY2025 with current projected costs for all subject areas.

The attached 2025-2026 student fee schedule is presented to the regional school board for the first read. Changes to highlight include the integration of additional technologies in English and new courses in Science and Senior Seminars. Cost increases for individual workbooks and specific lab fees in Science, Fine Arts, and International Languages reflect recent trends in inflation on all educational resources. Increases in Dual-Enrollment course fees reflect an increase in the VCU tuition. Overall lab and workbook fees remain near static.

Approval for the AY2026 student fee schedule will be requested at the board's March 2025 meeting.

G. Request to Delay Development of Replacement Strategic Plan (First Read)

Action for this item is recorded in Section XII.

XIV. Information Items

- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes February 6, 2025
- January Department Highlight: Mathematics
- February Department Highlight: Social Studies
- MLWGS Scholar-Athlete of the Week, January 27: Chance Howell - '25-Richmond, Wrestling
- MLWGS Scholar-Athlete of the Week, January 21: Caroline Walton - '26-Henrico, Swim
- MLWGS Scholar-Athlete of the Week, January 13: Tyler DeHaven - '26-Hanover, Basketball
- New Student Assessment News, January 25
- College Kick-Off for Sophomores & Juniors and Parents, January 29-30
- New Student Assessment News, February 1
- (9) MLWGS Students Compete at the Young Physicists Tournament
- RSB Election of Officers 2025 News_

XV. Superintendent's Steering Committee Report

Dr. Teigen presented this report. At their morning meeting, the committee discussed many of the agenda items that have already been discussed. One item we have not discussed is the free and reduced lunch program at MWLGS, which each will explore options over the next month. We also discussed the additional leadership workload for Dr. Smith and Dr. Williams and if there was an additional stipend that could be awarded similar to what would occur in our division.

XVI. New Business

None.

XVII. Closed Meeting

The Chair read the following statement:

Do I have a motion to enter closed session in accordance with Section (§) 2.2-3711 and/or 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and specifically under Subsection No. 1. - Discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of the School Board.

Bob May moved to enter into a closed meeting at 11:15 a.m., seconded by Meredith Moses. The motion was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

The chair stated the motion had carried and the board is now in closed session. The recorder was turned off, and anyone who was not a board member left the meeting.

Return to Open Session

The chair called for a motion to return to an open meeting.

Heather Donbrosky made a motion to enter into an open meeting at 11:55 am that was seconded by Kathryn Ricard and unanimously approved on a voice vote. The chair stated; The board is now back in open session.

XVIII. Certification of Closed Meeting

The Chair read the following statement:

Mr. May read the following statement: “Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Regional School Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member’s knowledge, (i-**one**) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements, and (ii-**two**) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting. Any member of the Regional School Board or committee who believes that there was a departure from these requirements shall so state prior to the vote, indicating the substance of the departure that, in his or her judgment, has taken place.” After this reading, Mr. May made a motion to certify the closed session, seconded by Meredith Moses and unanimously approved.

The chair asked if any board members believed there was a departure from these requirements? No board members indicated they believed there was a departure from the stated requirements.

The chair called for the clerk to record a roll call vote for the closed meeting certification.

Marchelle Hampton	Aye
Lisa Hudgins	Aye
Debbie Walwer	Aye
Elaine Pearson	Absent
Meredith Moses	Aye
Robert May	Aye
Alicia Atkins	Absent
Linda Hyslop	Aye
Harwood Hall	Absent
Heather Donbrosky	Aye
Kenneth Pritchett	Aye
James Taylor	Aye
Jill Andrews	Absent
Kathryn Ricard	Aye

The clerk stated: “The motion carries. The meeting has been certified.”

Closed Session Action

The chair called for a motion to certify the action the board took during the closed meeting.

Meredith Moses moved that Dr. Michael Smith be paid a stipend of \$20,000 and Dr. Lisa Williams a stipend of \$10,000 for their excellent extra duty leadership roles retroactive to December 2024 through June 30, 2025, seconded by Bob May, the motion for extra stipends for Dr. Smith and Dr. Williams was unanimously approved.

XIX. Announcements/Additional Discussion

Congratulations to Dr. Dalphine Joppy, Charles City Superintendent, Region I Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Taylor read a statement the board received from an MLWGS employee complimenting Dr. Michael Smith for how he has dealt with all of the unusual circumstances the school has experienced this year.

XX. Adjournment of Regular Meeting

On a motion to adjourn by Bob May, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, this meeting was adjourned at 12:13 pm.

March 20, 2025, at 9:00 am. MLWGS, 1000 N. Lombardy St., Room 153, Richmond, VA 23220. 804-354-6800 x2190.

Dr. James Taylor, Chair

Michael Smith, Ed.D., Acting Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk

MLWGS 2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS/OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

DATE: February 15, 2025

Blue Text = Updates

Green = Completed

GOAL 1	MAGGIE L. WALKER GOVERNOR'S 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.	Responsible Party	Measurement	Year to begin Implementation	Cost to Budget
OBJ 1.1	MLWGS will engage and educate our school districts about the opportunities available to them in our learning environment.				
1.1.2	Develop and enhance relationships with districts, schools, administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and potential students.	Administration, Counseling, Faculty	We are establishing relationships with local administrators through outreach. A middle school counselor day occurred in September 2022 and is scheduled again for 2025. Dare to be a Dragon Day took place for 5th-grade students in April 2023. This remains an annual event. We have hired a Coordinator for Strategic Engagement who will assist in implementing strategies for increased community outreach. While this goal is ongoing, the framework has been completed.		
OBJ 1.2	MLWGS will create an environment that provides a sense of belonging and fosters student and family engagement.				
1.2.1	Examine and eliminate structural barriers that prevent students from availing themselves of all the opportunities at MLWGS.	Planning Committee, Administration, Foundation	The Fall Festival begins before the school day ends to eliminate the transportation barrier. Also, during the Fall Festival, SAC conducted a student survey to determine ways to eliminate the obstacles to accessing and participating in activities.		

1.2.2	Access to wraparound services (Identify and fill gaps in student mental health and wellness programs)	School Counseling	A Full-time School Social Worker was hired. In 2023-2025 Prof. Devel. will focus on wellness and mindfulness.		
1.2.3	Review and reform policies and procedures that impede inclusion (e.g. mental health intake, bathroom policies, club and extra-curricular policies)	Counseling, Administration, AD, School Board	Bathroom policies have been addressed.		
1.2.4	Enhance communications to make sure students have knowledge of and are able to seek resources	Counseling	The Counseling Department has sent out multiple messages regarding mental health resources as well as holding parent training sessions. A book group of faculty and parents on growth mindset is scheduled for March 2024.		
1.2.5	Facilitate student input and feedback	Administration, Counseling	Surveys completed by SAC and VSCS. The coordinator of Strategic Engagement will facilitate new surveys.		
1.2.6	Analyze and strengthen the student onboarding process to prepare accepted students for the MLWGS experience	Counseling	Freshman Orientation is now two days to incorporate social-emotional learning and making connections. The Walker Way Welcome Day was implemented in August 2022. In November 2023, I visited TJST to observe their freshman onboarding program, which resulted in the creation of the Dragon Advisory program.		
1.2.7	Equip faculty with tools to foster an inclusive environment	Administration, External Trainers	Two years of cultural competency training have been completed. Year Three had resources and activities on equity and inclusion. We are nearly finished two years of training on mindfulness and mental health.		
OBJ 1.3	MLWGS will codevelop a plan with its districts to increase enrollment of historically underserved populations.				
1.3.1	In compliance with FY 2021 Budget Item 145, C-27,1, the school will work with the partner districts to collect application	Dr. Lowerre	We have been working with districts to improve access for underserved minorities.		

	and admission data to be used to support a plan to increase the percentage of historically underserved populations at MLWGS.		Significant improvement has been made with our core divisions. RSB approved removing the Achievement Test from the admissions process.		
OBJ. 1.4	MLWGS will develop a strategy to increase the demographic diversity of our faculty and staff.				
1.4.1	Examine barriers to hiring and retaining diverse faculty.	Admin	A recruitment subcommittee has been created. A focused effort has been made to recruit highly qualified and diverse faculty and staff that mirror the diversity of our population.		
1.4.2	Strengthen professional development resources for faculty.	Admin	Comprehensive PD has begun with positive feedback from staff. Focus areas have included cultural competency, equity, inclusion, mindfulness, and mental health.		
1.4.3	Develop hiring strategy.	Leadership Team	A hiring workshop is scheduled for March 2025 with the Leadership team. A recruitment subcommittee continues to meet regularly.		
1.4.4	Develop outreach program for recruiting teachers from multiple districts and education graduate schools.	Dr. Lowerre	We have actively targeted HBCUs and other colleges with information about employment openings.		
GOAL 2	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.	Responsible Party	Measurement	Year to begin Implementation	Cost to Budget
				2020-2021	
OBJ 2.1	Students will engage in exciting distinctive courses that are designed to deepen students interest.				
2.1.1	Encourage a collaborative environment for ongoing	Admin, School Counseling	New classes have been offered and		

	innovation of all course offerings.		recommended for future years		
2.1.2	Expand dual enrollment course offerings and include courses through additional university partners.	Dr. Lowerre	Meetings with VCU are ongoing and we have established a strong dual enrollment program.		
2.1.3	Investigate offering courses with comparatively smaller student enrollment.	Admin and School counseling	We allowed classes to “make” this year with lower enrollments.		
2.1.4	Expand the menu of teacher-created courses that center on experiential learning, interdisciplinary and global awareness.	Leadership Team	New Seminar courses are being offered, including ones that target undertaught areas. Several new courses have been added to the Course Catalog.		
2.1.5	Expand student enrollment in SGC's and teacher-developed courses.	Dr. Lowerre	New Courses have been taken to the Planning Committee and the RSB.		
2.1.6	Augment opportunities for student travel and beyond-the-classroom experiences.	Leadership Team	Partnerships with French, German, and Japanese schools have been established. We have also entered exchange programs with schools in all three countries.		
2.1.7	Develop a reimagined FIRC course to equip freshmen to succeed at MLWGS	MLWGS101 Sub-Committee	A new model was presented to the RSB in Spring 2024. FIRC is now MLWGS 101 and reflects the needs of the 21st-century learner.		
OBJ 2.2	Teachers will provide engaging, student-centered instruction.				
2.2.1	Encourage teachers to enhance student engagement, embed community engagement, and integrate instructional technology within their curricula.	Leadership Team, Tech Integrators	Following the COVID pandemic, a renewed effort to assess and implement student-centered learning strategies has been taking place.		
2.2.2	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.	Admin	Departments have been reaching out to the community to bring in alumni and others to enhance instruction and learning. A trip to TJ SciTech was completed in November 2023.		
2.2.3	Incentivize teachers to enhance student engagement, embed community engagement, and integrate instructional technology within their curricula.	Admin			

GOAL 3	MAGGIE L. WALER GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL WILL BE A SAFE SCHOOL WITH EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES.	Responsible Party	Measure- Ment	Year to begin Implemen- tation	Cost to Budget
OBJ 3.1	Create and fund a ten-year capital improvement plan.			2023	
3.1.1	Conduct a needs assessment of future needs for the facility and technology.	Facilities and Technology	Project is underway		
3.1.2	Forecast ten-year costs.	Facilities and Technology			
OBJ 3.2	Create a better experience for students, teachers, and parents through available software solutions.			2021	
3.1.3	Implement a funding mechanism separate from the operating budget.	Dr. Smith	The RSB has discussed the issue. We will continue the discussion in 2025.		
3.2.1	Purchase of on-line teacher receipting program.	Ms. Hoover; Ms. Charity	A web-based fee payment program has been implemented.		
3.2.2	Implement field trip request and tracking software.	Dr. Smith	An online system has been put in place with appropriate policy changes.		
3.2.3	Integrate field trip software with student information system.	Dr. Smith & Mr. Bortz	Meeting with vendors regarding form automation options.		
3.2.4	Reduce student fees.	Leadership Team	We have reduced fees where we could, but many of the fees are simply pass-through accounts.		
3.2.5	Incentivize the use of current on-line payment systems.	Dr. Lowerre	Budgeted and Completed.		
OBJ 3.3	Enhance our safe school environment.			2020	
3.3.1	Implement an annual climate survey.	Dr. Lowerre	Participation in the Virginia School Climate Survey. Jan 2022		
3.3.2	Complete a full revision of the safety/crisis plan.	Dr. Smith	Completed Fall 2021		
3.3.3	Further develop relations with local fire, police, and EMS in order to incorporate best practices and facilitate external audits.	Mr. Jordan	Completed Fall 2021		
3.3.4	Train faculty on cyber security and teaching digital literacy.	Library and Technology	New training regarding AI and ChatGPT has been offered.		
OBJ 3.4	Transition the fiscal expectations of MLWGS to a new fiscal agent.			2022	
3.4.1	Research options for future fiscal processing.	Dr. Smith	Discussions have taken place with the superintendents.		

3.4.2	Secure board approval for a new fiscal agent.	Dr. Lowerre	Discussions have begun		
3.4.3	Create a transition plan.	Ms. Hoover			