

## MINUTES

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

**Thursday, April 17, 2025**

**9:03 a.m.**

### **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 Executive School Board members and visitors stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **IV. Introductions**

Each member is listed in alphabetical order by locality.

#### **Present:**

Ms. Meredith Moses, *School Board*, Goochland County 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. Beth Teigen, **Superintendent**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Dr. 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, and Aparna Harger – MLWGS Staff

#### **Not in Attendance:**

Ms. Heather Donbrosky, *School Board*, New Kent Public Schools

**Not Required to be in Attendance:**

Ms. Marchelle Hampton, *School Board*, Charles City Public Schools  
Ms. Lisa Hudgins, *School Board*, Chesterfield County Public Schools  
Ms. Debbie Walwer, *School Board*, Colonial Heights Public Schools  
Ms. Mary Benjamin, *School Board*, Dinwiddie Public Schools  
Mr. Bob May, *School Board*, Hanover County Public Schools  
Ms. Alicia Atkins, *School Board*, Henrico County Public Schools  
Ms. Linda Hyslop, *School Board*, Hopewell Public Schools  
Ms. Harwood Hall, *School Board*, King & Queen Public  
Ms. Jill Andrews, *School Board*, Prince George Public Schools

Dr. Dalphine Joppy, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools  
Dr. John Murray, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools  
Ms. Haidee Napier, **Superintendent**, Colonial Heights Public Schools  
Dr. Kari Weston, **Superintendent**, Dinwiddie Public Schools  
Dr. Andrew Armstrong, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools  
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, **Interim Superintendent**, Hanover County Public Schools  
Dr. Amy Cashwell, **Superintendent**, Henrico County Public Schools  
Dr. Melody Hackney, **Superintendent**, Hopewell Public Schools  
Dr. Carol Carter, **Superintendent**, King & Queen Public Schools  
Dr. Brian Nichols, **Superintendent**, New Kent Public Schools  
Ms. Yolanda Brown, **Superintendent**, Petersburg Public Schools  
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools  
Mr. Jason Kamras, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools

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

**I. Quorum Physically Assembled**

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

No action was needed, and there were no requests for remote participation.

**V.b Approval of Agenda**

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Kenneth Pritchett, the agenda for this meeting was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

## VI. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Kathryn Ricard, seconded by Meredith Moses, the minutes of the regular meeting and FY2026 budget adoption of March 20, 2025, were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

## VII. Recognitions

*The following were slated for recognition but were unable to attend this meeting. Students will be rescheduled to the May meeting of the Executive Board.*

- **National Medal Winners in the Scholastic Art Awards**

On Wednesday we learned that several of our MLWGS students received awards in the national Scholastic Art Awards and that one of our photography students, **Peize Wang; '25-Henrico**, received the **highest honor, a National Gold Medal Portfolio**. To our knowledge, this is the first time a MLWGS student has received this honor.

Peize was one of only eight in the nation, and this award also comes with a \$12,500 prize. Peize and his teacher, Mrs. Stinnett, will be recognized at the National Awards Ceremony on June 11th at Carnegie Hall!

Additionally, several other students also received national medals and awards, with images of their work below.

- Elijah Chen ('26-Henrico) – Silver Medal in Painting
- Neha Jain ('27-Henrico) – Silver Medal in Photography
- Molly Morrison ('25-Chesterfield) – Silver Medal in Sculpture, Honorable Mention for Sculpture Portfolio
- Mitchell Shelton ('25-Colonial Heights) – Silver Medal in Photography
- Sophia Trinh ('26-Chesterfield) – Silver Medal in Photography

## VIII. Public Comments

The Public Information Period shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes to make his/her comments. Individuals representing groups will be allotted five (5) minutes.

*No comments were received via the online form or presented in person at this meeting.*

## IX. Consent Items

On a motion by Kenneth Pritchett to approve the consent items as a slate, seconded by Kathryn Ricard, the following items were unanimously approved on a voice vote: personnel actions (*no changes this month*), fiscal status reports of March 31, 2025, and the donations report of March 31, 2025.

## **X. Action Items**

### **a. Approval of the MLWGS Foundation Officers for 2025-2026 (*Second Read*)**

Approval of the 2025-2026 Governor's School Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors is required per Amended and Restated Bylaws, Article 1.

The following are proposed new directors:

- Olen Crane, Parent, Richmond
- Anne Hoffler, Parent, Richmond
- Lindsay Horning, Parent, Richmond

Directors rolling off the board:

- Cynthia Kostelecky, parent, Richmond
- Julie Seabury, parent, Richmond
- Beth Simms, parent, Richmond

Also, resigning at the end of one term due to a relocation is:

- Lakshmi Algappan, parent, Hanover

The following are proposed officer nominations:

- Chair–Veronica Chornodolsky
- Vice Chair–Anikka Moore
- Treasurer– Karen Setzer '99
- Secretary– Julie Seitz

Committee Chairs/Director Members

The following directors have agreed to serve as committee chairs/director members for Board committees in 2025-2026. They will officially begin their terms on July 1, 2025.

Alumni Steering

Current (2024-2025): Erin Ortiz '06

2025-2026: Erin Ortiz '06\*

2025-2026 Directors Serving the Committee: Erin Ortiz '06, Emily Stegmaier Winbigler '00, Adam Powers

Development

Current (2024-2025): Brian Baird

2025-2026: Julie Seitz

2025-2026 Directors Serving the Committee: Brian Baird, Monique Johnson, Anikka Moore, Julie Seitz

Events

Current (2024-2025): Veronica Chornodolsky

2025-2026: Co-chairs: Veronica Chornodolsky\*, Lindsay Horning (pending final approval of Lindsay as a Board member)

2025-2026 Directors Serving the Committee: Veronica Chornodolsky, Lindsay Horning and Anne Hoffler

#### Finance

Current (2024-2025): Adam Powers '10

2025-2026: Adam Powers '10\*

2025-2026 Directors Serving the Committee: Adam Powers '10, Tyler Gibson '10

#### Governance and Nominations

Current (2024-2025): Emily Stegmaier Winbigler '00

2025-2026: Olen Crane

2025-2026 Directors Appointed to the Committee: Emily Stegmaier Winbigler '00, Monique Johnson, Stinson Mundy, Olen Crane

Ms. Moses asked why all of the new members are Richmond residents. Dr. Smith stated that is because all of the parents rolling off are Richmond parents at this time, and they are trying to replace Richmond parents with Richmond parents. Regional representation on the board is very important to Ms. O'Neil.

On a motion from Meredith Moses, seconded by Kathryn Ricard, the MLWGS Foundation officers for 2025-2026, were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

#### **b. International Trip Proposal to England/France/Belgium and Germany, June 2026** (*Second Read*)

##### WW II and the Western Front

Sponsor: Dan Brown

Dates: June 20-July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

12th international trip that I have organized, but the first trip for this topic.

Students will be involved in an 11-day trip through a series of European countries learning about the origins, conflicts, challenges, and legacy of WW2. The trip will start in London, where students will visit the Imperial War Museum, visit the Churchill War Rooms, and take a guided tour of London. Students will then travel to Normandy, France where they will visit several sites of the D-Day landings, the D-Day Museum, and visit the American Cemetery in Colleville. Students will then move to a guided tour of Rouen and a walking tour of Paris. While in Paris, students will take a riverboat cruise on the Seine and visit the Palace of Versailles. After a day and a half in Paris, the group will head to Bastogne, Belgium to see a key site in the Battle of the Bulge. The closing of the trip includes a stop in Cologne to visit the Cathedral as well as the American Cemetery in this city. The last stop of the tour will be in Berlin where we will get an opportunity to visit numerous sites related to World War II and the Cold War. The trip is geared to those enrolled in the Military History Seminar in the 25-26 school year but will be open to students not enrolled in this course.

Students Attending: Anticipated 12 Maximum

##### Chaperones:

Dan Brown and Matthew Ruskan

Unofficial Chaperone: Margaret Corcoran

An EF Tour Guide will be with us throughout the entirety of the trip

Price of the Tour:

The cost of the trip includes coverage of travel and accommodations, transportation within the various cities visited, Breakfast and dinner each day, and activities. Ef Tours will provide logistical support throughout the entirety of the trip.

Cost: Student-4,864 dollars Parents-5,869 dollars

Several fundraising opportunities will be made available to students on this trip as well as a limited request for funds from the Foundation.

On a motion from Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Meredith Moses, the WWII and the Western Front June 2026 trip proposal was approved on a unanimous voice vote.

## **XI. Director's Report**

### ***A. Verbal Updates***

- **Draft Timeline for Enforcement of Current Phone Usage Policy Community Review**

Phone Usage (p.14 in Student Handbook)

Students may use personal phones before school, between classes, during study halls, at lunch, and after the school day. Personal phones must be turned off and put away during assemblies and in classrooms, unless expressly permitted by the teacher. Students not in compliance will have their personal phone confiscated. On the first offense, the cell phone will be released to students after school. On the second offense, the cell phone will be released only to a parent/guardian. Repeat offenders will be disciplined. Personal phones are not to be accessed in restrooms or locker rooms at any time due to privacy issues. Parents are discouraged from requesting the school deliver messages to students during the day unless it is an emergency.

Amended for April-June 2025

Students may use personal phones before school, between classes, during study halls, at lunch, and after the school day. Personal phones must be turned off and put away in a backpack during assemblies and in classrooms, unless expressly permitted by the teacher. A first offense will result in a verbal warning. Students not in compliance will have their personal phone confiscated. On the second offense, the cell phone will be released to students after school. On the third offense, the cell phone will be released only to a parent/guardian. Repeat offenders will be disciplined. Personal phones are not to be accessed in restrooms or locker rooms at any time due to privacy issues. Parents are discouraged from requesting the school deliver messages to students during the day unless it is an emergency.

Week of April 8 – Communication & Preparation

- The enforcement plan will be announced to staff, students, and parents via email, the school website, and morning announcements.
- Teachers review expectations with students in class. Phones must be in a backpack and turned off, not in pockets, and not powered on. This includes Smartwatches.
- Signage around the school reinforces the policy, especially near restrooms, locker rooms, and classrooms.
- Office and support staff are briefed on enforcement procedures, including phone confiscation and retrieval protocols.

#### Week of April 15 – Initial Implementation & Warnings

- Staff begin monitoring and addressing phone usage violations.
- Offenders will receive a verbal warning to reinforce expectations.
- Teachers and staff log violations to track repeat offenders.

#### Week of April 22 – Full Enforcement Begins

- First offense: Teacher warns student to put the phone in a backpack and powered off.
- Second offense: The phone is confiscated and turned into Security. Picked up by student after school.
- Third offense: The phone is confiscated and turned into Security. A parent or guardian must pick it up.
- Further offenses: Students face escalating disciplinary consequences.
- The administration continues monitoring trends, and effectiveness. Any necessary adjustments are made.

Exemptions: Medical plan, School-based plan, 504 or IEP; explicit permission from teacher for a valid educational purpose; must be returned to backpack and powered off when not in use.

Expectation for Teachers/Staff: Teachers are encouraged to be role models regarding cell phone usage and enforce the student cell phone policy within their classroom.

#### Ongoing Enforcement & Review (April & Beyond)

- Regular check-ins with staff to address challenges and refine enforcement strategies.
- Continued communication with parents and students as needed.
- Policy effectiveness will be reviewed in May to determine any necessary adjustments and plan a timeline for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Assess if eliminating use in hallways, commons, and cafeteria as of August 2025 is needed under the law.

Dr. Smith briefly highlighted how the no cell phone usage is a big cultural change for the MW community.

- **Italian Students Compete at National Italian Contest**

Maggie L. Walker Governor's School is the only high school in the Commonwealth of Virginia that offers Italian as a course of study. We compete with all high schools in the States across the USA when taking the National Italian Contest. It is with great pride that I salute the following students in Italian II Honors and Italian I Honors for having scored in the 96% or better in either the reading or listening (or both) sections of this test. The '\*' students scored a perfect on both sections. Medals and monetary awards will be given after April 10.

<b>Italian II Honors</b>	<b>Italian I Honors</b>
Grace Blakely	Claire Adcock
Helena Damer * ('26-Richmond)	Isabella Arcaro
Hadley Driscoll	Isabella Baldini
Elise Eason	Jake Bryner * ('26-Henrico)
Luna Fortuna	Ayden Christian
Henry Hanna	Evelyn Hayter
Carson Holbert	Eli Konikoff

Ella Kristensen * ('26-Chesterfield)	David Lins * ('26-Chesterfield)
Willian Leyva Gamez	Jade Moses
Isabella Whelan * ('27-Henrico)	Ethan Roerink * ('26-Hanover)
	Callan Vellozzi * ('28-Chesterfield)
	Alessandro Wheatley Diaz

Tanti Complimenti!! Congratulations to the students and teacher, Susan Hefty.

- **Night of the Dragon 2025 – Recap**

Photos folder--individual pics were taken by Ginger O'Neil, photos in the sub-folder courtesy of Leo Luo (parent '29)

- 23rd Annual Night of the Dragon--Sneaker Ball--was a huge success! 190 attendees and remote bidders **raised \$80,000** (with \$62K gross) for our Dragons.
- More than 50 parents and 25 student volunteers made the magic happen.
- More than 150 Live and Silent auction items were won.
- The Maggie Steppers got the crowd hyped with an amazing performance.
- Acting Director Max Smith welcomed guests with remarks about the vital role played by the Foundation and its amazing supporters
- Alum parents Charie Seabury (Alex '20, Amelia '22) and Brad Ewald (Claire '20, Caroline '23) served as auctioneers and kept the crowd laughing and giving.
- Huge thanks to our incredible sponsors:
  - Fund the Dragon MLWGS hat sponsor-- Crystal Ice Co. (MLWGS alum parent-owned)
  - Beer/Cider sponsor--Hardywood (MLWGS parent-owned and operated)
  - Dessert sponsor--Corazón Cake Co. (MLWGS alum-owned)
  - \* Venue sponsor--Faison Center
  - \* Photo Booth sponsor--Tania Del Carmen Photography (MLWGS parent)

- **The We the People: The Citizen and Constitution National Competition and Finals, April 9-11, 2025**

WTP is an academic competition that allows students to display their civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively participate in our constitutional democratic republic through simulated congressional hearings. Approximately one thousand students from forty-eight classes will participate in 648 half-hour hearings during the National Finals, **April 9-11, 2025**. This year marks MW's 27th appearance at nationals.

- **5 Dragons to perform at the All-Virginia Band and Orchestra, April 26<sup>th</sup>**

We had three students selected for All-Virginia Band:

- Audrey Tang ('26-Chesterfield)
- Michael "Trip" Taylor III ('25-Chesterfield)
- Peize Wang ('25-Henrico)

We had two students selected for All-Virginia Orchestra:

- Fielding Teague ('26-Chesterfield)



- Peter Yanovitch ('26-Chesterfield)

These ensembles are the most prestigious student ensembles in Virginia. It is a great achievement for students to be accepted. The concert is open to the public on Saturday, April 26th, starting at 1:15 PM at the Richmond Convention Center. The event concludes at 4:30 PM.

- **Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

Maggie L. Walker Governor's School will host its annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, April 24th at 5:30 pm in the 'Commons', celebrating the efforts of our volunteers this past year at countless events and activities benefiting the students and school. The selfless efforts of our volunteers breathe life into many of the programs offered at MLWGS.

Our volunteers make us proud and remind us that community spirit, optimism, and a can-do attitude is a model for all.

- **Grandparents Day, Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**

Sponsored by the GS Foundation, this is an afternoon event where we invite current students' grandparents (or other special family members and friends) to learn a little about our school, take a brief tour, and have a reception with their grandchildren.

- **Dare to Be a Dragon Day, April 19, 2025**

Up to 200 fifth graders from all 14 partnering divisions are invited to our school to attend 6 exciting workshops on coding, math, languages, art, drama, creative writing, and more! Note: Gifted coordinators from our partnering divisions agreed to a specific number of invitations based on their current number of seats.

- **AP Testing May 5 – 16, 2025**

Students will take all exams in a paper-and-pencil, in-person format.

<b>Day – Date</b>	<b>Tests Administered</b>
Monday, May 5	Biology, Latin, European History, and Microeconomics
Tuesday, May 6	Chemistry, Human Geography, and US Government & Politics
Wednesday, May 7	English Literature & Composition, Comparative Government & Politics, and Computer Science A
Thursday, May 8	Statistics
Friday, May 9	United States History, Chinese Literature and Culture, and Macroeconomics
Monday, May 12	Calculus AB and Calculus BC, and Music Theory
Tuesday, May 13	French Language & Culture, Environmental Science, and Physics 2: Algebra-Based

Wednesday, May 14	English Language & Composition, German Language & Culture, and Physics C – Mechanics
Thursday, May 15	Spanish Language & Culture, Computer Science Principles, and Physics C – Electricity and Magnetism
Friday, May 16	Physics 1: Algebra-Based, Spanish Literature & Culture, and Psychology

- **Teacher Appreciation Week, May 5 -9, 2025**

Teacher Appreciation Week is from May 5th through May 9th, 2025, when teachers get the extra credit they deserve. Teaching is known to be a time-consuming and challenging profession, so this week is our chance to say thank you to those who play or have played such a huge role in our lives.

- **MLWG Prom, May 17, 2025 @ 7 pm at The Hippodrome Theater.**

The Junior/Senior Prom will be held on Saturday, May 17, from 7:00- 10:00 p.m. at the Hippodrome Theater, located at 528 N 2nd St., Richmond, VA 23219.

- **Senior Art Exhibition at Artworks Gallery, opens May 9<sup>th</sup>, running through May 17<sup>th</sup>**

The gala opening of the 2025 MLWGS Senior Art Exhibition, titled "Mosaic," will take place at Artworks Gallery on Friday, May 9, from 6 to 8 PM. This exhibition serves as the capstone event for our visual arts program and will showcase the collected works of 13 seniors from Maggie Walker.

Meet these amazing young artists and mingle with other Maggie Walker art lovers. Artworks Gallery is located at 320 Hull Street, RVA 23224 in the Manchester area of downtown Richmond. The show will continue through May 17<sup>th</sup>.

- **NCAA Athletic Signing Day for Seniors, May 19<sup>th</sup>**

Maggie Walker will recognize all students participating in varsity athletics at their selected college on Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Recognition includes all students who have committed to play on a college team (whether Division I, II, or III).

## ***B. Coming Events***

April 15, 2025, through May 15, 2025

Thursday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Executive School Board Meeting, 9:00 am, Room 153</b>
	Last Day for Visiting German Exchange Students at MLWGS
Through Monday, April 21 <sup>st</sup>	MLWGS Robotics Team at FIRST Championship in Houston, TX
Saturday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	Dare to Be a Dragon Day, 8:30 am–noon, MLWGS
Thursday, April 24 <sup>th</sup>	Multiple International Language Honor Societies Induction Ceremony, 11:30 am, Auditorium

	Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, 5:30 pm, Cafeteria/Commons
Thursday, April 24 <sup>th</sup> – Saturday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	One-Acts Performance Festival, 7:00 pm, Black Box
Friday, April 25 <sup>th</sup>	Red Cross Blood Drive, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm, Rooms 104 & 105
	Grandparents Day at MLWGS, 2:30 pm, Auditorium
Saturday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	VCU Student Dance Performance, All Day, Auditorium
	Moore Street Baptist Church Easter Egg Hunt, 10:00 am, Athletic Field
Week of April 28 <sup>th</sup>	SOL Testing
Wednesday, April 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Spring Band and Chorus Concert at MLWGS, 7:00 pm, Auditorium</b>
Thursday, May 1 <sup>st</sup>	National School Principal's Day Recognition
Friday, May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Spring Orchestra Concert, 7:00 pm, Auditorium</b>
Saturday, May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	VBODA Solo and Ensemble Assessments, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, Multiple locations within MLWGS
Monday, May 5 <sup>th</sup> – Friday, May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher Appreciation Week
Monday, May 5 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing - AM= Biology and Latin. PM= European History and Microeconomics
Tuesday, May 6 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing – AM= Chemistry and Human Geography. PM= US Government and Politics
	Faculty Meeting, 3:30 pm, Forum
Wednesday, May 7 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing - AM= English Lit & Comp. PM= Comparative Gov & Politics and Computer Science A
Thursday, May 8 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing - AM= Statistics. PM=No Testing
	Senior Awards Assembly, 1:00 pm, Auditorium
	Junior Book Awards Assembly, 2:00 pm, Auditorium
Friday, May 9 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing - AM= US History. PM= Chinese Language & Culture and Macroeconomic
	Senior Art Exhibition at Artworks Gallery, 6 pm-8 pm
Saturday, May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Central VA Jazz Assessment, 8:00 am, Off Campus
Monday, May 12 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing - AM= Calculus AB and BC. PM= Music Theory
Tuesday, May 13 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing – AM=French Lang & Culture. PM=Environmental Science and Physics 2- Algebra Based
Wednesday, May 14 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing – AM= English Lang & Composition and German Lang & Culture. PM= Physics C-Mechanics
Thursday, May 15 <sup>th</sup>	AP Testing – AM= Spanish Lang & Culture. PM= Computer Science Principles and Physics C-Magnetism
	<b>Executive School Board Meeting, 9:00 am, Room 153</b>

During the coming events, Dr. Smith provided a verbal highlight on Team 422, Robotics' Mech Tech Dragons, and their activities at Nationals this week in Houston, TX.

## **XII. Unfinished Business**

### ***A. Strategic Plan Implementation Report***

*The Strategic Plan matrix update is located at the end of these minutes.*

Changes to report per Dr. Smith:

1.1.2 Our 3rd annual Dare to Be a Dragon Day is scheduled for April 19, with 150-200 fifth-grade students expected to attend.

1.2.4 The PTSA is planning a session with the VA First Lady to support teenage mental health. The target audience are current MW parents. Expected attendance 100-150. The target date is April 23.

1.4.1 Our coordinator of strategic engagement is establishing a presence on Handshake.org. This will help us in conveying job postings to colleges/universities throughout the commonwealth. Dr. Williams added that the administrative and leadership team is exploring hosting a job fair at MLWGS next year, with the possibility of traveling to other fairs within the State. Dr. Taylor suggested that next year we should build the costs associated with this endeavor into the budget.

### **XIII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion**

#### **a. None**

While no items are presented at this meeting, Dr. Smith gave an early preview of an RFP for a Security Partition Installation that will be brought to the board in May.

### **XIV. Information Items**

- Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, April 10, 2025
- We the People at Nationals, April 9-11
- The MLWGS Baseball Seminar Travels to Cooperstown, NY
- Robotics/Mech Tech Dragons Win at District Championship - Advance to Nationals
- Dare to be a Dragon Day, April 2025
- German Exchange, April 7-17
- MLWGS Speech Team at State Tournament
- MLWGS Debate Stands Out at Super-Regionals Tournament
- Scholar-Athlete of the Week, April 7, Martina Ribera-'25-Chesterfield, Tennis
- Social Studies Teacher, Allison Anthony, April EconHero of the Month

Ms. Ricard noted the discussion about free and reduced lunches described in the Finance Committee minutes, stating this was a matter she was unaware of. Because MW is not in a federally sponsored program, how does that work for their students [RPS] who cannot afford their lunch? Dr. Smith asked Dr. Williams to describe that information for the board, as she supervises food services.

Dr. Williams stated that when she first took over this process, she recalled we got some criticism from the VBOE, learning we couldn't ask for specific SNAP information, which would be the criteria that other divisions use, leaving MW with no criteria and we had to approve all applications. The numbers grew exponentially and became a budget line item... how do we absorb this increase, and how can we get support from our partners to assist? Dr.

Williams believes we are nearing the point of getting assistance while complying with VBOE guidelines or policy on how we accept and approve applications.

Dr. Smith said 2020 was a big year of change, as you started to see districts provide wholesale for their students and the rise of CEP programs. Our families thought that those benefits would then flow through once they arrived here, but those benefits did not flow through here. Once the DOE asked us to stop asking for information for qualification for the program, the districts no longer gave us reimbursement for those lunches, so that has been a budget hole for the last five years. We've been looking at ways of gatekeeping in order to bring down the numbers because when I was doing oversight in 2019, we had perhaps twelve students on free and reduced lunch, we have sixty-plus now.

What was suggested at a previous superintendent steering committee meeting was using the federal forms, but not processing them here being that we are not a federal program, but sending them to the districts to be processed, so that we could at least be reimbursed at the federal level. Even though we have a third-party vendor who provides our food, and given the smallness of our operation there are very few vendors that are interested, the costs for a third-party vendor are much higher. The suggested solution was to do the federal form and send them back to the home district, and at least get a partial reimbursement at the federal level.

Dr. Teigen said one of the concerns we [*superintendents committee*] have, and I have someone following up on this but she's had an immediate family member pass away and hasn't finished looking into it, but one of the concerns was that if the vendor doesn't meet the federal requirements on the food being served, then it's not going to be reimbursable to us. There are very strict sodium, fat, and grain levels.

Dr. Smith added another potential solution was that a district in the area, such as Richmond, might be interested in taking over our food services program as suggested by Dr. Nichols, and might be a venture that could be, if not budget neutral, then profitable for a district to take over our food services in the way that Henrico, for instance, brings in all the food for CodeRVA. Dr. Smith added that we are open to the idea, and Richmond was suggested because of its proximity. Dr. Williams added we would appreciate Ms. Ricard looking into the suggestion.

Ms. Ricard stated she didn't know about the free and reduced lunch and appreciated the education.

In conclusion, Dr. Smith captured again the two proposed solutions on the table 1) being the possibility of getting a partial reimbursement by using the federal form but we need an education on what we would need to get our kitchen certified, because it sounds like the requirements of the federal program require that, or 2) having a district that is willing to provide food services and be able to take the funds for that so that it's at least budget neutral for them. Dr. Teigen believes that is what CodeRVA does and that Henrico supports it in that they prepare the food at a nearby school, and they're bringing it in because CodeRVA doesn't have kitchen facilities, but because they're preparing it in an appropriate space, that's how they work around that problem.

Dr. Taylor asked if that would be the case here [*no facilities*], but Dr. Smith said MW has a full kitchen facility. Ms. Ricard mentioned in her opinion, there are schools nearby where food could be prepared before Dr. Teigan explained that with the CodeRVA space, it wasn't

conducive to having a kitchen at all, so that was why it was set up that way to begin with. Dr. Taylor added, I guess if your kitchen is not up to code federally, and have it be an option, it would have to be retrofitted. All agreed.

We are open to either solution, said Dr. Smith, and we appreciate the support of the board in coming up with a solution because this has been an open issue since the loss of the ability to ask for qualifiers for our program. Dr. Taylor asked if the school has the money on hand to do some sort of renovation in the kitchen. The response from Dr. Smith was potentially, if that's what it took to be able to create a long-term solution

Dr. Williams added that she thinks our kitchen is in pretty good shape because they prepare meals every day and have all the equipment to do that work. Dr. Teigen said she is aware there are requirements and inspections, and certain criteria for the equipment and upkeep, as well as the content of the food. She added, I would question whether, if you had money to put into it, would it be for that or would it be in the roof?

Mrs. Marshall offered a memory. "I've been here twenty-five years, including when we moved into this building. I believe in that the first year, Chesterfield ran the kitchen, and it was not budget neutral, so they pulled out and we went to a private contractor from then on." Dr. Smith said, "Thank you for the institutional memory on that."

## **XVI. New Business**

Profile of the Ideal Director Candidate Survey Results.

Dr. Teigen detailed the profile that was created from community input and used to create the job description for the position. She added that we are on target with the deadlines set and the timeline that was established. From the job description, we have created a rubric to score the applications that have come in along with interview protocols. Dr. Teigen said that by splitting up responsibilities, it has made this task doable, along with giving all a sense of ownership of the process.

There followed a discussion about locating a venue for the preliminary interview process, along with possible associated costs. A location has not yet been decided upon.

## **XIX. Announcements/Additional Discussion**

None.

## **XX. Adjournment of Regular Meeting**

On a motion to adjourn by Meredith Moses, seconded by Kathryn Ricard, this meeting was adjourned at 9:58 am.

**Next Meeting**

May 15, 2025, at 9:00 am for the Executive School Board at 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 2020-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS/OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

DATE: April 17, 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.			2020	
1.1.2	Develop and enhance relationships with districts, schools, administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and potential students.	Administration, Counseling, Faculty	Our 3rd annual Dare to Be a Dragon Day is scheduled for April 19 with 150-200 fifth grade students expected to attend.		
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 PTSA is planning a session with the VA First Lady to support teenage mental health. The target audience are current MW		



			parents. Expected attendance 100-150. Target date is April 23.		
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,I, the school will work with the partner districts to collect application and admission data to be used to support a plan to increase the percentage of historically underserved populations at MLWGS.	Dr. Lowerre	We have been working with districts to improve access for underserved minorities. 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	Our coordinator of strategic engagement is establishing a presence on Handshake.org. This will help us in conveying job postings to colleges/universities		

			throughout the commonwealth.		
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.		
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>MAGGIE L. WALKER GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL WILL ENGAGE STUDENTS WITH INNOVATIVE CURRICULA AND RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION THAT FOCUSES ON STUDENT-CENTERED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. INSTRUCTION WILL BE INTERDISCIPLINARY AND ENRICHED BY LOCAL AND GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Year to begin Implementation</b>	<b>Cost to Budget</b>
				<b>2020-2021</b>	
<b>OBJ 2.1</b>	<b>Students will engage in exciting distinctive courses that are designed to deepen students interest.</b>				
2.1.1	Encourage a collaborative environment for ongoing innovation of all course offerings.	Admin, School Counseling	New classes have been offered and 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.		
<b>OBJ 2.2</b>	<b>Teachers will provide engaging, student-centered instruction.</b>				
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			
<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>MAGGIE L. WALER GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL WILL BE A SAFE SCHOOL WITH EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Measure-Ment</b>	<b>Year to begin Implemen-tation</b>	<b>Cost to Budget</b>
<b>OBJ 3.1</b>	<b>Create and fund a ten-year capital improvement plan.</b>			<b>2023</b>	
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			
<b>OBJ 3.2</b>	<b>Create a better experience for students, teachers, and parents through available software solutions.</b>			<b>2021</b>	

3.1.3	Implemental 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.		
<b>OBJ 3.3</b>	<b>Enhance our safe school environment.</b>			<b>2020</b>	
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.		
<b>OBJ 3.4</b>	<b>Transition the fiscal expectations of MLWGS to a new fiscal agent.</b>			<b>2022</b>	
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			