

MINUTES

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

September 18, 2025

9:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

James Taylor, Chair of the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional Board, gaveled 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 stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Introductions

Each member present is listed in alphabetical order by locality:

Present:

Ms. Lisa Hudgins, **School Board**, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Ms. Debbie Walwer, **School Board**, Colonial Heights Public Schools

Ms. Meredith Moses, **School Board**, Goochland County Public Schools

Dr. William Sroufe, **School Board**, Hanover County Public Schools

Ms. Alicia Atkins, School Board, Henrico County Public Schools (*late arrival*)

Ms. Linda Hyslop, **School Board**, Hopewell Public Schools

Ms. Harwood Hall, **School Board**, King & Queen Public Schools

Ms. Heather Donbrosky, School Board, New Kent Public Schools (*Remote Participation*)

Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, **School Board**, Petersburg Public Schools

Dr. James Taylor, **School Board**, Powhatan County Public Schools

Ms. Jill Andrews, **School Board**, Prince George Public Schools

Ms. Kathryn Ricard, **School Board**, Richmond Public Schools

Dr. Katina Otey, **Superintendent**, Charles City Public Schools

Dr. George Fohl for Dr. John Murray, **Superintendent**, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Mr. Travis Ridley, **Superintendent**, Colonial Heights Public Schools

Dr. Kari Weston, **Superintendent**, Dinwiddie Public Schools

Dr. Andrew Armstrong, **Superintendent**, Goochland County Public Schools

Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, **Superintendent**, Hanover County 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. Lynn Pleveich for Mr. Jason Kamras, **Superintendent**, Richmond Public Schools

Ms Kristin Janssen, **Executive 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

Absent:

Ms. Marchelle Hampton, **School Board**, Charles City Public Schools
Ms. Mary Benjamin, **School Board**, Dinwiddie 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. Wayne Lyle, **Superintendent**, Prince George Public Schools

Also present:

Dr. Michael 'Max' Smith and Dr. Lisa Williams – MLWGS Administration
Wendy DeGroat, Sharon Meng, Jennifer Todd, Connie Hill, and David Bortz – MLWGS Staff
Ginger O'Neil – GS Foundation
Tracy Lowerre, Madison Lowerre – Invited Guests
Dr. Mark Levy – Roanoke Valley Governor's School Director
Ms. Amanda Nevetral – VDOE Coordinator for Gifted Programs in Virginia

V. a. Approval for Henrico Board Member to Participate 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.**

Ms. Heather Donbrosky requested to participate in this meeting remotely.

On a motion made by Meredith Moses to allow Ms. Donbrosky to participate remotely in this meeting, seconded by Lisa Hudgins, this request was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

V. b. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Linda Hyslop, 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 executive meeting of August 21, 2025, were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

VII. Recognitions

- **MLWGS Teacher Sharon Meng Awarded the 2025 Yale Educator Award**

Ms. Meng was on hand for this recognition.

The Yale Office of Undergraduate Admissions has the distinct pleasure of recognizing the following educators as recipients of the 2025 Yale Educator Award. The Yale Educator Recognition Program recognizes outstanding educators from around the world who have supported and inspired their students to achieve at high levels. Matriculating students are invited to nominate high school educators, and a committee composed of Yale admissions officers reviews the nominations individually and designates recipients. Of this year's 302 nominees, who represent 38 states and 22 countries, 61 teachers and 26 counselors were selected to receive the award. In September, the winners were sent engraved desk sets and congratulatory letters, and administrators of the high schools were notified of their achievement.

- **Robert C. Lowerre Award for Leadership in Advanced Learning Presentation**

Mrs. Tracy Lowerre, daughter Ms. Madison Lowerre, Dr. Mark Levy of the Roanoke Valley GS, Ms. Amanda Nevetral-VDOE, Dr. Lisa Williams, Dr. Max Smith, and Dr. Brian Nichols

The newly established Robert C. Lowerre Award for Leadership in Advanced Learning was presented to Mrs. Tracy Lowerre and daughter, Ms. Madison Lowerre. This award is established to honor the educational legacy of its namesake and will be presented to annually to a recipient.

Dr. Williams started, "Driving in today I couldn't help but continue to think about Bob. This is a celebration and an acknowledgement of his life and legacy. So, I'm going to put on that face and do just that. Max and I are standing here because, as partners, we were part of the trio, and certainly we miss Bob dearly, but he left an impact on us, and we definitely try to emulate some of his leadership each day. We are so happy to have Kristin join us, and we're now part of another trio. But today I was certainly pondering Bob and his impact. With all of that said, I'm going to introduce two very important people in education who are going to acknowledge another important person in education whom we miss very dearly. I don't want to be a slayer, Dr. Taylor, of this name, but I'm going to try. Amanda Nevertral is the VDOE coordinator for gifted programs. I looked up a quote from you if you don't mind, 'she works to ensure that our programs continue to thrive in excellence and innovation and has stated that she is happiest when supporting teachers.' Mark Levy is the director of Roanoke Valley Governor's School and serves co-chair of the Academic Year Governor's School directors." Dr. Williams continued, "Mark states that his goal as a leader is to develop a school culture centered on rigor, critical thinking, and personal growth. Mark and Amanda, we appreciate your leadership, and we appreciate you being here today. I chose those qualities because I feel like those quotes represent Bob and his philosophy, so thank you."

Dr. Smith added, "Good morning, members of the board. I wanted to share that the beginning of this year for us has been bittersweet in the sense of renewal and a beginning of a new chapter for the school. Both of us really appreciate and enjoy working with Mrs. Janssen, and we really look forward to what the future holds for the school. It has been an exciting opening to the year, but in many places and spaces, I still see Dr. Lowerre. He was not only a mentor, a supervisor, but also a good personal friend. His loss was felt deeply here, and we are excited to be able to use this as a

moment in order to recognize his contributions both to the school as well as to the State. The two representatives we have here in order to deliver this award we are very excited about. We have Mrs. Lowerre as well as Madison Lowerre here to accept on behalf of the family. Please join us in welcoming Mark Levy and Amanda Nevetral.”

Ms. Nevetral began. “Thank you. Good morning, Dr. Taylor, board members, superintendents, administrators, and leadership. Mark and I thank you for giving us an opportunity to visit Maggie Walker today and share in honoring Dr. Lowerre's memory and introducing a new award for leaders in advanced learning in our Commonwealth. I worked with Bob in several different capacities over the years, through my time in Henrico supporting applicants and students at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School, and later supporting all Academic Year Governor Schools in my role at VDOE. This group is well aware of his professional accolades, which are highly notable. However, I want to take a different approach and speak a minute about his kindness. I've had the fortune to visit Maggie Walker twice in the past two years during my time at VDOE, once for a friendly introductory visit, and the other time was part of the full site evaluation process. Each time, I was impressed by his kind and respectful disposition when speaking to students and staff. It was clear they admired him as a leader, and in turn, he admired them for the talent they brought to the table to make the school great.”

“When I first started at VDOE, Bob and Mark offered to answer questions or help with anything else that might be needed. My last conversation with Bob was about a question I had; he always made time to listen and would patiently give an explanation. Since his passing, I've often reflected on that last conversation and the benevolence that he showed others in his personal and professional life. I truly feel so grateful to have known him and been a recipient of his kindness over the years.”

Dr. Levy arose. “Good morning. Bob started at Maggie Walker the year after I began my tenure with Roanoke Valley Governor's Schools. And in many ways, we developed as directors and leaders in parallel and developed leadership roles within the State for the Academic Year Governor's School. So in addition, we served as co-chairs during a tumultuous time for Academic Year Governor's Schools, with funding and admission policies in question with the legislature, as well as executive administrations. And Bob demonstrated excellent leadership and collaboration as we negotiated these challenges. I was certainly very happy to have a partner like him to be able to navigate those challenges. One thing that I deeply respected was that he could simultaneously prioritize the needs of his school here, while also thinking about the needs of the various nineteen Academic Year Governor's School programs around the state, and balance both of those priorities. As a partner in leadership and as a colleague, I found Bob to be sharp, incisive, and ready to take action. Very action-oriented whenever we were working on things together. The community of the directors certainly feels his loss. In brainstorming a way to try to create a lasting memorial to Bob's leadership for the Academic Year Governor's Schools, the Governor's Schools directors developed an idea for establishing an award for Leadership in Advanced Learning in his name. The new award, named the Robert C. Lowerre Award for Leadership in Advanced Learning, will be given each year to one leader in Academic Year Governor's Schools and one leader in gifted education or other advanced learning programs. It's my great honor to announce that the inaugural winner will recognize Bob Lowerre. I present this plaque to Tracy Lowerre and her daughter, Madison Lowerre.”

“I cannot thank all of you enough for inviting us here today,” said Tracy Lowerre. “Trying to channel Bob, I would have something funny to say. Many of you probably don't know that he started with some very humble beginnings. He started in the basement of Highland Springs High

school as their in-school suspension teacher. You can imagine between being there at Highland Springs as a coach and a teacher and then entering leadership. He spent ten years at Virginia Randolph-exceptional education and a very different way, then went to Tucker, which for a long time was the dreamland because he got to have sports again as he was also a coach and mentor, and he loved that. And then he came home one day and said, 'Did I tell you that I put in an application for Maggie Walker?' (*laughter*) I said No, have you lost your mind! (*more laughter*) Those were my exact words... it was a very different thing. So, when Bob came here, he came home. He was an exceptional student as a child and he would always joke and say I'm the dumbest person in the building, but I have wisdom, and I can guide them. I will tell you his advocacy for children, the faculty and the staff here, just helped him be the leader that they needed him to be. So, my challenge to all of you through these tumultuous political times, financial times, he always kept children at the center. No decision was a bad decision when you made it for the child. That's my challenge to all of you today as you influence education across the state and across our regions, please keep the children first, as well as your faculty and staff, and you will not make the wrong decisions, and you will be able to lead us into the next phase of education. I will leave you with a Bob quote many of you already know he would say, 'make it a good day or not, the choice is yours.' Thank you again."

Dr. Levy next stated, "With this award being given to two recipients each year moving forward, we wanted to have a centralized way to recognize future honorees. To that end, we have acquired a perpetual plaque that will be housed here at Maggie Walker to display the winners of the award. We also have a duplicate copy of the award plaque that we just presented to the Lowerre family to also be displayed here at Maggie Walker in deference to Dr. Lowerre. I'd like to invite Dr. Nichols to share a few words and accept these plaques."

Dr. Nichols began, "Good morning, everyone. I was going through planned remarks, and I realized the only name I have to say is Bob, so I think I'm good. In the true spirit of Bob, I have prepared remarks which I will not use (*laughter*), and I say that because I worked with Bob for six years in education, and we did a lot of hard things here. He did it his way. We would always coach before we came into this room, and I would sit there and just watch - that is not anything we talked about (*laughter*). And it worked! So, Bob made it work, and I don't think anybody else could in those circumstances. He was really more than an administrator; he was an exceptional leader. He just knew that education is about people; grown people, young people. He led with vision and humility and a healthy dose of humor and sarcasm, kind of mixed in there. We had this running banter because I'd come to some meetings and Bob had lost his hair, and then I'd come to other meetings, and he had grown his hair. He just thought; How funny is that, that he could do that when I just show up bald every time (*laughter*). So, I stopped getting here early (*laughter*). What really separated him was his warmth and ability to see the potential in everyone. Everyone in this room... his kindness was mentioned. In the last school board election, all my school board members were replaced/changed. And I called him, and I was like, Bob, what do I do? We have all these regional programs. Maggie Walker is a very... he said, bring them, and I said what day? He goes Monday through Friday, whenever you're out, because we do this every day. But that was just his way, like every day was a great day here. The care he took for anybody, I'm just really proud of the time that we spent together. His legacy lives on in every student that has ever walked this hallway, every board member that has spent time in this room, and every superintendent that has had the privilege of working with him. I want to leave you with this, when you (*inaudible words*) stuff out of your speech because people take it. So, as we remember Bob today, let's commit to moving forward with his spirit of service. It was always about service for him, his dedication to students, and his belief in the power of the community. We've got a beautiful award that will live on, but I think his impact on Maggie Walker will live on in all of us.

I know it's transformed our work in New Kent and in your respective school divisions. It was an honor and a privilege, and I love that his legacy lives on. Thank you.”

A formal presentation of the school plaque was made with Dr. Taylor accepting on behalf of Maggie Walker Governors School. As he made his way to the podium, Dr. Smith mentioned that later in the month or early in October, through a gift of the senior class, both of the outside benches by the bus loop will be replaced by much more permanent benches that will have the quote by Dr. Lowerre that Mrs. Lowerre gave us printed on them, along with his name. It was his favorite spot on campus, so we thought it was a fitting tribute.

Dr. Taylor accepted the award, “Thank you, this is well deserved, I can't think of a better person to receive this reward than Dr. Lowerre and this school, so thank you so much for that.”

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 or presented.

IX. Consent

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Harwood Hall, the following consent items were unanimously approved as a slate on a voice vote: September 2025 personnel actions, fiscal status reports of August 31, 2025, and the donations report of August 31, 2025.

X. Action Items

a. Policy and Regulation from Spring 2025 - Second Read

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

New policies include:

2027	Opioid Antagonists, plus regulation
4092	Student-Athlete Extreme Heat Safety and Protection, plus regulations
6035	Notification of School-Connected Student Overdose
8003.1	Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance

Final	RL		New/Amended	Actions
		Foundations		
<u>0004</u>	<u>0004</u>	Educational Facilities Specifications	Amended	Legal references added. Director title edits added along with minor editorial changes.
		School Board Governance		
<u>1009</u>	<u>1009</u>	Rules of Order	Amended	Reviewed by VSBA but not revised.

<u>1020</u>	<u>1020</u>	Electronic Participation in Meetings from Remote Locations	Reviewed	Requires Annual Review
<u>1020.1</u>	<u>1020.1</u>	Electronic Participation in Committee Meetings from Remote Locations	Amended	Requires Annual Review. Director title edits added.
		Administration		
<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response Plan	Amended	The title is revised. 5 updates: School audit committee may meet annually to discuss school safety, audit to include review of school's comprehensive plan for closures during public health crisis, develop and implement a cardiac emergency response plan or athletic emergency action plan, develop and implement bleeding control program, and written procedures related to opioid antagonist storage and replacement.
<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	Safety Drills	Amended	Sudden cardiac arrest drills to be performed annually added. Also adding bleeding control kits. Legal references added.
<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	Emergency First Aid, CPR and AED Certified Personnel	Amended	Legal references updated. Develop and maintain an athletic emergency action plan and cardiac emergency response plan with appropriate training. At least one employee can access the opioid antagonist supply.
<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	Threat Assessment Teams	Amended	Director title edits. Legal and cross-reference added. ExDir to provide materials on recognition and strategies for responding to violence or self-harm communication to parents.
<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	Weapons in School	Amended	Director title edits. Legal and cross-referenced added. Minor revisions for clarity to match language in VA Code. Committee review Section II on firearms and expulsion.
<u>2027</u>	<u>2027</u>	Opioid Antagonists	NEW	Requires regulations for opioid storage and replacement, see below.

<u>2027-R</u>	<u>2027-R</u>	Regulation on Safe Storage and Replacement Protocols for Opioid Antagonists	NEW	Committee review for agency names
<u>2065</u>	<u>2065</u>	Acceptable Computer System Use	Amended	Updated legal and cross-references. Director title edits.
		Instruction		
<u>3000.1</u>	<u>3000.1</u>	National Motto	Amended	Reviewed by VSBA but not revised
<u>3013</u>	<u>3013</u>	Driver Education	Amended	No policy change. Language added to footnote that could be added in policy.
<u>3020</u>	<u>3020</u>	Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	Amended	Provides a program of instruction on opioid overdose prevention and reversal.
<u>3030</u>	<u>3030</u>	Home Instruction	Amended	Legislative and VSBA changes to this policy do not apply to MW, as this policy is targeted to students who receive instruction from their parents at home.
<u>3031</u>	<u>3031</u>	Virtual Courses	Amended	Director title edits. Update includes the definition of Virtual Courses.
		Student Services		
<u>4010</u>	<u>4010</u>	Substance Abuse – Student Assistance Program	Amended	Cross-references added.
<u>4019</u>	<u>4019</u>	Student Health Services	Amended	Committee discussion...adds optional telehealth services including mental health. Do not include this language if not adopted. Cross-references and legal references added.
<u>4045</u>	<u>4045</u>	Student Records	Amended	Director title edits. Adds language related to the address of confidentiality program and requirement to redact the address of a foster parent.
<u>4071</u>	<u>4071</u>	School Service Providers' Use of Student Personal Information	Amended	Includes and identifies school-issued devices and school technology provider. Previous contract provisions also apply. Added requirement to safeguard personal info when transferring devices. Limits the ability to use devices for monitoring activities.

<u>4092</u>	<u>4092</u>	Student-Athlete Extreme Heat Safety and Protection	NEW	Policy setting forth restrictions and guidelines for modifying and cancelling sporting events. Some of the text is from the coaches' handbook. ExDir to establish additional procedures around canceling events.
<u>4092-R</u>	<u>4092-R</u>	Regulation: Heat-Related Illness Prevention Guidelines	NEW	'Borrowed' from Henrico: P6-20-008-R.
<u>4092-P</u>	<u>4092-P</u>	Procedures for Athletic Practice and Games	NEW	AI generated.
<u>4092-P1</u>	<u>4092-P1</u>	Procedures for Cancelling Athletic Practice or Games Due to Extreme Heat or Weather	NEW	AI generated.
<u>4093</u>	<u>4093</u>	Student-Athletes Cold Weather Policy for Practice and Games	NEW	Taken from the coaches' handbook. Seems logical to have a cold weather policy if there is an extreme heat policy.
<u>4095</u>	<u>4095</u>	Administering Medicines to Students	Amended	Optional language regarding seizure rescue medications. Permits a student to self-possess seizure rescue medications with a submitted mgt action plan.
		Human Resources		
<u>5005</u>	<u>5005</u>	Professional Staff Probationary Term and Continuing Contract	Amended	Director title edits; otherwise, policy updated for clarity.
<u>5012.F</u>	<u>5012.F</u>	Report of Discrimination	Amended	Reviewed by VSBA but not revised
<u>5015</u>	<u>5015</u>	Professional Staff Contracts	Amended	Director title edits. Policy updated to remove duplication with another policy. 5100-Substitute Teachers
<u>5020</u>	<u>5020</u>	Professional Staff Discipline	Amended	Limitations on liability/disciplinary action for any employee who in good faith administers an opioid antagonist.
<u>5025</u>	<u>5025</u>	Access to Employee Social Media Accounts	Amended	Reviewed by VSBA but not revised
<u>5030</u>	<u>5030</u>	Professional Staff Development	Amended	Effective dates clarified for professional training required to be implemented no later than 27-28 AY. PD in communicating with students w/autism spectrum disorder

				may be provided each year for employees in regular contact.
<u>5074</u>	<u>5074</u>	Effect of Criminal Conviction or Founded Complaint of Child Abuse or Neglect	Amended	Exceptions to hiring a person convicted of a violent felony or crime of moral turpitude when certain conditions are met.
<u>5089</u>	<u>5089</u>	Staff Weapons in School	Amended	Director title edits. Policy updated for clarity – updated cross-reference.
<u>5100</u>	<u>5100</u>	Substitute Teacher	Amended	Long-term substitute teacher provisions more than 90 days, but no longer than 180 days. Policy and legal references are updated.
		Community Relations		
<u>6000</u>	<u>6000</u>	Requests for Public Records	Amended	MAY AND JULY VSBA COMBINED. FOIA officer training updated to include online training by the FOIA Council. July update adds a missing paragraph from May on penalties.
<u>6000-R</u>	<u>6000-R</u>	Requests for Public Records Regulation	Amended	Not VSBA. Amended title of Max Smith and corrected form numbering.
<u>6000-F1</u>	<u>6000-F1</u>	Form: Requests for Public Records	Amended	Correction to misspelled requestor and replacing former “Blank” with school name. Errors found while reviewing policy for titling updates (director > ex director)
<u>6035</u>	<u>6035</u>	Notification of School-Connected Student Overdose	NEW	
		Finance & Operations		
<u>7013</u>	<u>7013</u>	Commercial, Promotional and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships	Amended	MAY AND JULY VSBA COMBINED. Requirement that any person convicted of a violent felony or crime of moral turpitude who may have contact with students is not employed or contracted, unless specific conditions are met.
<u>7014.1</u>	<u>7014.1</u>	Purchasing Procedures	Amended	MAY AND JULY VSBA COMBINED. Exceptions to awarding a contract to a person convicted of a violent felony or crime when conditions are met. Prohibited use of forced and indentured child labor

				provisions required to be in contracts. State law terms for IAT goods and services contracts. (When in conflict with VA law = invalid, Choice of law = VA).
		Student Conduct		
<u>8001.F</u>	<u>8001.F</u>	Report of Discrimination	Amended	Reviewed by VSBA but not revised
<u>8002</u>	<u>8002</u>	Student Conduct	Amended	MAY AND JULY VSBA COMBINED. Director title edits. 2-Year Review. Minor revisions to policy and added cross-references. July included updates to reflect VA Code with cyberbullying language included.
<u>8003.1</u>	<u>8003.1</u>	Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance	NEW to MLWGS	VSBA made minor changes for clarity.
<u>8033</u>	<u>8033</u>	Weapons in School	Amended	Minor revisions to policy for clarity and to match language in VA Code. Cross-references added.

On a motion by Meredith Moses, seconded by Kathryn Ricard, policy and regulation updates from the spring/summer of 2025, submitted for first read at the August meeting, were unanimously approved by the Regional School Board on a voice vote.

b. New International Trip Proposal, Iceland and Denmark, Spring Break 2026 - Second Read

SPONSOR: KERRY SHEPPARD

ICELAND, DENMARK- MARCH 26, 2026, through APRIL 3, 2026

Traveling to Copenhagen, Roskilde, and Reykjavik offers a focused, immersive experience that brings the Viking world- raiders, traders, and settlers-vividly to life. In Copenhagen and nearby Roskilde, students can explore the Viking Ship Museum, where original longships and reconstructed vessels highlight the Vikings' seafaring prowess, trade routes, and raiding expeditions. In Reykjavik, the Viking legacy is preserved through the Settlement Exhibition and the influence of Norse culture seen in Icelandic sagas and democratic traditions like the Althing.

By exploring authentic sites and artifacts, students will gain a deeper understanding of the Vikings as raiders, traders, and settlers. The trip encourages critical thinking as students analyze historical evidence, evaluate modern portrayals, and explore how Viking heritage continues to shape Danish and Icelandic identity. Through museum visits, cultural experiences, and reflective activities, students will connect classroom learning to real-world contexts, fostering a richer and more nuanced understanding of Viking civilization.

On a motion by Lisa Hudgins, seconded by Debbie Walwer, the international trip proposal to Iceland and Denmark over spring break in 2026 with Kerry Sheppard, was unanimously approved by the Regional School Board on a voice vote.

c. Food Service Contract 2025-2026 That Was Tabled at the August Meeting (*Second Read*)

An RFP for **Food Service Contract 2025-2026** #2025-FS was advertised on mlwgs.com for sealed bids on July 1, 2025. A legal notice was also placed in the Richmond Times-Dispatch on July 23, 2025, and also ran through their online service. Vending operations are not part of this RFP.

On a motion by Lisa Hudgins, seconded by Harwood Hall, the 2025-2026 Food Service Provider, Serve1, was unanimously approved by the Regional School Board on a voice vote.

d. 2025-2026 Student Handbook That Was Tabled at the August Meeting (*Second Read*)

Tabled at the August meeting with a request provided to the Executive Director to run proposed changes to the cell phone policy to verify MLWGS would be in compliance with the State.

Over the summer, updates to the student handbook took place. Mrs. Janssen, Dr. Smith, and Dr. Williams, conducted a comprehensive review. The Counseling Department, School Social Worker, and Leadership Team were asked for input. Below is a summary of the substantive changes.

Significant Revisions/Additions:

- Page 8: Inclusion of the Assessment Guidelines given to teachers along with the student work request ticket
- Page 11 & Page 17: Inclusion of a reminder that all documentation to excuse an absence must be turned in within 3 days, otherwise the absence is permanently marked unexcused. This may impact exam exemption
- Page 15: Revisions to the phone usage language. Phones can no longer be used in transitions or study halls. Codifies that the first offense is a warning.
- Page 21: Addition of an explicit prohibition on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence unless expressly permitted by the instructor. Specific boundaries must be provided in writing and expressed verbally by the teacher.
- Page 22: Expanded detail on consequences of honor infractions for first, second, and third offense based on school policy #4000.
- Page 23: Expanded detail on procedures for lost and found items of high value and donation of items not claimed within 2 weeks.
- Page 59: Reminder of the proper procedures for leaving school grounds and the potential consequences if these procedures are not followed.
- Page 62: Expanded detail on procedures for work detail and when it is employed in disciplinary cases.

Ms. Moses inquired about the cell phone policies and regulations that were submitted for legal review. Mrs. Janssen said after their review, the feedback from legal was that our policies, as written, comply with the Code. She was asked to elaborate, and stated the discussion was around bell-to-bell and what that meant here, as we do not use bells. She added, we also discussed shutting phones off, but as this is an open campus and we have students outside during lunch, that is the one caveat we wanted for our students' safety to have outside usage to receive VCU and other safety system alerts. The lawyer shared that our policy and regulation verbiage was in line with what the Governor has said.

On a motion by Kenneth Pritchett, seconded by Meredith Moses, the 2025-2026 Student Handbook was unanimously approved by the Regional School Board on a voice vote.

XI. Director's Report

A. Verbal Updates

- As an **administrative team**, we had the opportunity to meet with clusters in August and talk through goals for the year. We appreciated the thoughtful conversations and the way each group is approaching the work ahead.
- **Introducing C.O.S.E. Commons**

CENTER OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: C.O.S.E. COMMONS

- Purpose: Transforming the former 3rd-floor computer lab into a welcoming, flexible space for student collaboration during lunch and study hall.
- Concept: A cozy, student-centered environment designed to foster connection, reflection, and peer support.
- Pilot Year: Launching as a one-year trial to assess its impact on student well-being and engagement.
- Acknowledgment: Special thanks to Kim Forquer for the creative naming of the space.



- **Back to School Night** was September 4th. The PTSA provided a meal, and faculty parking will move to the lot adjacent to the building. While at first the logistics may feel like a small inconvenience, the evening is one of the best opportunities for families to put names to faces and see firsthand the devotion you bring to your classrooms. Those connections build trust and deepen the partnerships that make a difference for our students.
- **Recruitment:**
Max Smith and student volunteers already served at one of Henrico County's specialty center dates. Lisa Williams and Kristin Janssen will have their turns this week and next. Counseling will have its spin too.
 - In-Person Information Sessions at MLWGS, Saturday, October 25, 2025, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

- Recruitment Efforts: Planning Committee, recruitment material dissemination, etc.
- Middle School information visits have begun, and virtual and in-person options are available to divisions.
- **Admissions Handbook** updated by new Admissions Coordinator, Haidee Napier.
 1. Admissions Handbook
 - Page 7 - Graduate stats
 - Pages 10-14 - Updated dates

Admissions Handbook 2026

2. Application Schedule

Application Schedule 2026

- **Interims** were available on Friday, September 12th, which means we are reaching an important checkpoint in the race.
- During the Friday, September 5th lunch period, a group of students at Maggie Walker Governor's School chose to participate in a student-led walkout connected to the national "**Great Walkout.**" Students who participated conducted themselves respectfully, and staff members were present to ensure everyone remained safe. Because the event took place during lunch, no instructional time was disrupted. Students who did not participate continued with their regular lunch activities.

At MLWGS, we are proud of our students' thoughtfulness and engagement with important issues. We remain committed to balancing opportunities for student expression with maintaining a safe, structured environment for all. Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to ensure both the well-being and growth of all our students.

- **The Science National Honor Society** offers tutoring during lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students are welcome to stop by room 311 for help with biology, chemistry, and physics!
- **College Recruitment visits** have begun for this cycle and will run through the fall. College recruiters visit MLWGS for personal meetings with interested students.

This fall, over 70 colleges and universities will be sending admissions representatives (either in-person or virtually) to meet with MLWGS students in grades 10, 11, and 12 during lunch (Monday-Thursday). Sign-ups and passes are not required-students simply may travel to the location of the presentation of their choice after the dismissal of their 3rd or 4th block class.

Senior Counselors Dr. Rachel Loving and Ms. Kim Forquer have presented information about the college application process to seniors in their English classes. Every student was given a hard copy of the September 2025 Senior Newsletter and a Transcript/Letter of Recommendation worksheet. Both documents can be found in the Resources section of the "College Information for the Class of 2026" Schoology group. The Senior Newsletter can also be accessed here: <https://sites.google.com/gsgis.k12.va.us/mlwgs-counseling/college-admissions-information/seniorjunior-newsletters> The Senior Newsletter contains college-related reminders and listings of scholarships and special programs with approaching deadlines.

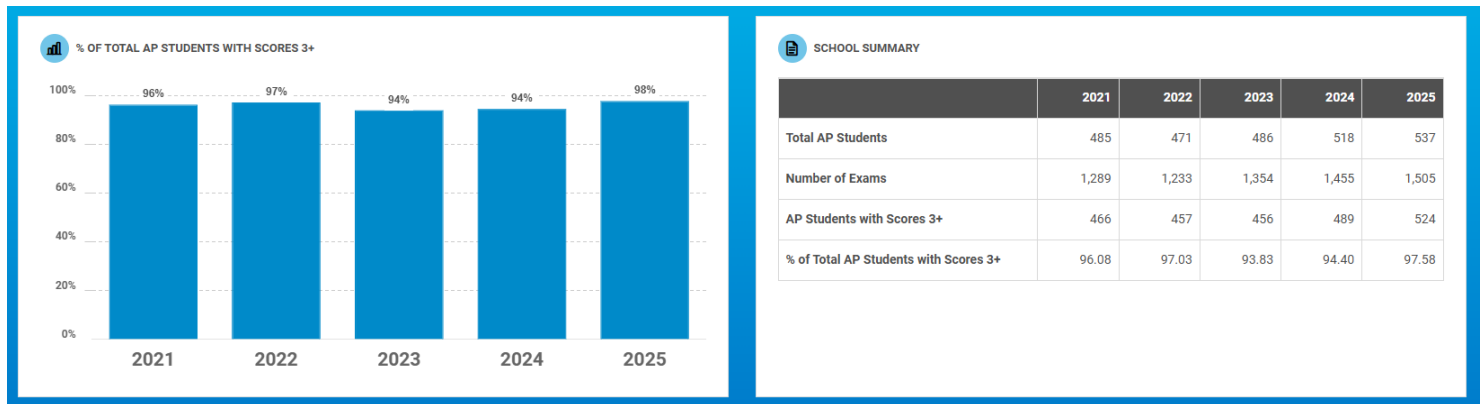
- The **PSAT** is a great practice opportunity for the SAT. PSAT Day will take place on Friday, October 17th. This year, the PSATs will be digital to help students prepare for the digital SATs.

- **Security Corner:** Senior off-campus lunch begins September 12, available to students each Friday throughout the year who have completed off-campus lunch forms.
- **After-school tutoring and testing labs** are open and run Monday-Thursday weekly until 5 p.m. until the end of the academic year.
- **Fall Festival at MLWGS, Friday, September 26, 2-7 pm**

The MLWGS Fall Festival is coming up on Friday, September 26, 2025, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. The PTSA sponsors this event to celebrate our school's international focus, offering clubs and classes a lively and enjoyable venue for community building and fundraising. Our students and clubs are excitedly preparing to host their booths and provide unforgettable entertainment.

- **College Board AP Snapshot Report on MLWGS Testing Results** 2025 had 537 students take 1,505 exams with 98% scoring a 3 or higher.

MLWGS achieved a five-year high, both in number of tests taken and in % of score at 3 or higher.



B. Coming Events

September 18, 2025, through October 16, 2025, Coming Events

Thursday, September 18 th	Regional School Board Meeting, 9:00 am, MLWGS Room 153
	Prince George HS Visit for Admissions, 6 pm
Friday, September 19 th	Class of 2026 Honor Pledge Signing Ceremony, 11:35 am, Gymnasium
Saturday, September 20 th	Quiz Bowl Cavalier Classic Competition
	Senior Regional Orchestra Auditions @ James River HS
Tuesday, September 23 rd	Powhatan HS Fair at Powhatan HS, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Wednesday, September 24 th	Staff Flu Shots (Clinic)
	William & Mary College Visit, 11:35 am, Auditorium
	Petersburg at St. Joseph's Visit, 4:00 pm
	College Panel (Open to the Public), University of California-Berkeley, Davis, Riverside, and Santa Cruz, 6:00 pm, Auditorium
Friday, September 26 th	Annual Fall Festival Sponsored by the PTSA, 1:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Saturday, September 27 th	Robotics: Chesapeake Icebreaker (Off Campus)
Tuesday, September 30 th	Virtual Henrico HS Fair, 5:30 pm
	Virtual Hanover HS Fair, 5:30 pm
	Goochland HS Expo, 6:00 pm
	Chesterfield HS Fair at Bird HS, 6:30 pm
Wednesday, October 1 st	NHS Induction, 6:30 pm, Auditorium
Thursday, October 2 nd	School Holiday – CLOSED
Friday, October 3 rd	Band and Chorus Concert, 7:00 pm, Auditorium
Tuesday, October 7 th	Monthly Faculty Meeting, 3:30 pm
	Orchestra Concert, 7:00 pm, Auditorium
Wednesday, October 8 th	Chesterfield HS Fair at Monacan HS, 6:30 pm
Thursday, October 9 th	Virtual Finance Committee Meeting, 9:00 am
	RPS: Dogwood MS Visit, 11:30 am
	RPS: Boushall MS Visit, 1:45 pm
Friday, October 10 th	RPS: Albert Hill MS Visit, 11:30 am
	RPS: Lucille Brown MS Visit, 1:45 pm
Monday, October 13 th – Friday, October 17 th	Spirit Week
Monday, October 13 th	Hopewell MS Visit at Woodsen, 6:00 pm
Tuesday, October 14 th	RPS: MLK MS Visit, 11:30 am
	RPS: River City MS Visit, 2:30 pm
Wednesday, October 15 th	RPS: Franklin Military MS Visit, 10:45 am
	RPS: Henderson MS Visit, 1:45 pm
Thursday, October 16 th	Regional School Board Meeting, 9:00 am, MLWGS Room 153
	Shake-Out Day

C. 2026-2027 Division Enrollment Planning

As MLWGS begins the planning process for the next school term as directed by policy adopted May 18, 2000, amended December 18, 2014, December 17, 2015, and October 15, 2020, it annually seeks this slot commitment statement from participating divisions.

Letters will be provided for participating school divisions at the October meeting for their 2026-2027 student enrollment commitment. Note that each letter should be executed by the division superintendent and school board member and returned to MLWGS by December 1, 2025.

D. New Student Club Proposals for 2025-26 for Board Information

Provided for board information: the following was vetted by Paige Hawkins, AD, and is operating as a new club this year:

Club Name	Sponsor	Stipend
1) <u>Japanese Culture Club</u>	Sponsored by Yoko Eshita	\$0.00
2) <u>ReTech for Kids</u>	Sponsored by Sha Li	\$0.00
3) <u>Young Physicists Tournament Club</u>	Sponsored by Joshua Lehman	\$0.00

Club bylaws and/or constitutions were provided to the board.

E. Class of 2026 has (18) National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists

Officials of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced on September 10th, the names of more than 16,000 Semifinalists in the 71st annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 6,930 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million that will be offered next spring.

This year, MLWGS has eighteen National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists from the Class of 2026, nine from Henrico, five from Chesterfield, three from Hanover, and one from Richmond. Congratulations to our seniors:

Asra Z. Ali – Richmond	Abigail H. Barnett – Henrico	Elijah Chen – Henrico
Lilith E. Holmes – Chesterfield	Rowan Kanach – Hanover	Alina Laraway – Henrico
William Lin – Henrico	David Lins – Chesterfield	Yash Maurya – Henrico
Sriram Panchagnula – Henrico	Joel Pritchard – Chesterfield	Ethan Roerink – Hanover
Samhith Sarva – Henrico	Sophia Schaffernoth – Henrico	Helen Teague – Chesterfield
Thienvan Vo – Chesterfield	Mark Wood – Hanover	Daniel Zhang – Henrico

F. Provided for Information Only – No Action Required

The previously approved international trip to Spain in 2026 by Ms. Alecia Nichols, has changed travel dates from June 15 – June 24, 2026, to June 29 – July 8, 2026.

XII. Unfinished Business

Strategic Plan update – the matrix provided to the Regional School Board is located at the end of these minutes.

The executive director stated there was nothing new to report this month on the strategic plan. It's not tabled; it's just that we're moving forward into the next phase, which is actually the development of the strategic plan for the next five years. We're launching that right now. It's a 2026-2031 plan and is going to guide our work today to shape the direction of the years to come.

Most of you in this room have been involved with strategic planning and then the comprehensive plan afterwards. The foundation of the work starts for us, with the mission and the vision. The mission serves as our compass, our present purpose, while the vision is going to find where we are going. We are doing this work ourselves. Dr. Williams, Dr Smith, and myself are guiding our leadership team. You can pay for vendors to do these things. But to be economical, we are doing it ourselves. I think we feel comfortable doing that. All three of us have been involved numerous times with strategic planning. The biggest piece right now is making sure we have varied voices at the table. We want students, families, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners to contribute to making basically what causes this building to be so special, and that's all of you. You (*board members*) will be receiving our survey tomorrow. It's comprehensive. It'll take about twenty-five minutes to complete. It's going to show you the current mission and vision, and then try to give you a framework, and later asking if you would like to serve further on in the process, and what would you be interested in serving on.

Below is the Executive Director's update/report on the 2026-2031 strategic plan development:

1. Inclusivity in Admissions

We continue to work with our partner school divisions to increase inclusivity in our student population.

Because divisions send us their classes, collaboration remains essential. Ongoing conversations are focused on ensuring broader access and representation across our region.

2. Fiscal Responsibility

Progress is being made in strengthening our fiscal responsibility systems:

- Financial Officer Hiring: We are moving forward with hiring a Financial Officer to work alongside the Business Manager.
- Audit Closure: This role will provide needed support in closing out the remaining audit requirements.
- Updated Processes: The added capacity will allow us to transition toward current, sustainable fiscal processes and procedures.

3. Food Service Planning

We are exploring long-term solutions for our school meal program:

- RIC Vendor: We are working with a recommended vendor from RIC to evaluate next steps.
- 2026–2027 Planning: Early discussions are underway with RIC to build a possible vendor partnership for the 2026–2027 school year.
- Federally Reimbursable Meals: This partnership may allow us to transition into a federally reimbursable meal program, creating a more sustainable model.

4. Mission and Vision Development

We are currently revising our mission and vision statements with the full engagement of our community:

- Stakeholder Groups: Staff, students, alumnae, parents, and community partners are all providing input.
- Strategic Alignment: Updated mission and vision statements will serve as the foundation for the 2026–2031 Strategic Plan.

XIII. Materials for Board Review and/or Discussion

a. Policy: New Cell Phone Usage and Student-Athlete Concussion Update – (*First Read*)

The following are submitted to the Regional School Board for first read and review.

Final	RL		New/Amended	Actions
		Foundations		
		School Board Governance		
		Administration		
		Instruction		
		Student Services		
	<u>4025</u>	Student Cell Phone and Smart Device Possession and Use	NEW	Committee discussion. Questions in comments.
	<u>4025-R</u>	Regulation on Student Use of Cell Phones, Tablets, or Smart Devices During the School Day	NEW	Provided by Goochland
	<u>4025-R1</u>	Regulation on Student Cell Phone, Tablets, or Smart Device Infractions During the School Day	NEW	Provided by Goochland but infractions were changed to match MW student handbook.

	<u>4090</u>	Student-Athlete Concussion	Amended	Duplicated from CCPS
		Human Resources		
		Community Relations		
		Finance & Operations		
		Student Conduct		

As stated earlier, the cell phone policy proposals were reviewed by legal.

These policies will be presented to the Regional School Board for approval at their October meeting.

b. New International Trip Proposal: Argentina, 2027, by Ms. Alison Manning (*First Read*)

SPONSOR: ALISON MANING
ARGENTINA, JUNE 9-17, 2027

This trip will mainly take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina (days 1-6). On the sixth day, we will take an internal flight to Iguazú Falls (UNESCO World Heritage Site) where we will spend two days before returning to Buenos Aires for our flight home.

On this trip, students will be exposed to the Spanish language, history, art, and architecture. Being immersed in a Spanish-speaking country will strengthen students' Spanish language skills. Students will get first-hand exposure to several different cultures within Argentina.

A request for approval of this new international trip proposal will be made at the board's October meeting.

c. New International Trip Proposal: England, Spring Break 2026 by Ms. Kara Love (*First Read*)

SPONSOR: KARA LOVE
ENGLAND, March 26 – April 3, 2026

Traveling to London, Bath, and Chawton offers a focused, immersive experience that brings Jane Austen's world—her life, works, and cultural legacy—to life. In London, students can situate Austen within the broader literary and historical context of Regency England, exploring museums, neighborhoods, and archives that shaped the era's society and readership. In Bath, where Austen lived and set portions of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, students can walk the very streets she described, visit the Jane Austen Centre, and experience firsthand the city's Georgian architecture, assembly rooms, and social customs that figure prominently in her novels.

By exploring authentic sites connected to Jane Austen's life and Regency England, students will gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, historical, and social contexts that shaped her novels. The trip encourages critical thinking as students analyze how place, history, and lived experience

informed Austen’s literary works and how modern portrayals—in museums, film, and popular culture—interpret and reimagine her legacy.

A request for approval of this new international trip proposal will be made at the board’s October meeting.

d. Regional School Board Self-Evaluation 2025 (*First Read*)

The Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School Regional Board reviews its performance annually to ensure its proper discharge of responsibilities to the community.

The last self-evaluation was completed in **October 2024**.

A link to the evaluation form was emailed to board members after this meeting.

Survey feedback for this survey will be provided at the board’s October meeting.

XIV. Information

- Annual Required Notifications to the Community
- Annual Required Notifications of School Policies to the Community
- Back to School Night Notification
- MLWGS Teacher Attends CA Language Teachers’ Association Summer Seminar
- MLWGS Teacher Featured in Calculus Blog

XV. Superintendent’s Steering Committee Report

Dr. Teigen, Chair, reported that the group had a morning meeting and welcomed some new members to the meeting. Their main discussion was around student meals and their financial impact on the MLWGS budget.

XVI. New Business

- Lunch Program Sustainability Proposal offered for discussion.

Background

Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School is not federally funded for student meals. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, invoices were sent to partner divisions, which paid for their students’ meals. That system shifted during the pandemic, and the current model is no longer sustainable.

For FY25-26, \$35,000 has been appropriated toward meal costs. However, based on the number of families who submitted our “need” forms, the actual projected cost is \$78,000 this year if we continue to provide meals at \$3.00 per breakfast and \$5.00 per lunch.

Current Challenges

Cost Gap – Projected costs exceed appropriation by approximately \$43,000.

Vendor Access – Only one non-affiliated, federally reimbursable vendor applied.

Partnership Limitations – It has been difficult to secure external partners.

Division Equity – Covering costs centrally is inequitable; not all divisions contribute proportionally.

CEP Confusion – Two families indicated they submitted need forms only because their division is a CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) division, which allows districts with high poverty rates to provide free meals to all students regardless of individual income. MLWGS does not qualify for CEP.

Comparison to Peers – CodeRVA uses its fiscal agent to provide meals. ARGs is facing similar struggles and has yet to secure a sustainable solution.

Immediate Realities

Administration contacted all families who submitted forms; all but two confirmed true financial need.

Current funds will not cover this year's demand.

Clarification on Prior Year Costs:

Although this year's projected need (\$78,000) appears high, the actual cost last year was lower. Based on similar student enrollment, this likely reflects the reality that many eligible students did not consistently eat breakfast or lunch every day. While the number of need forms suggests a potential maximum obligation, actual meal participation patterns reduce the total cost somewhat. However, the gap between appropriation (\$35,000) and potential need remains substantial and unsustainable.

Without a change, the burden falls unevenly across divisions, which is not sustainable.

Proposed Direction

1. Short-Term (This Year)

Continue invoicing divisions for their students' meals, as was done prior to COVID.

Require affected divisions to cover the gap by paying their respective invoices.

Maintain emergency support for verified families in need.

2. Long-Term (Next Year and Beyond)

Division-Based Responsibility: Each division should fund its own students' meals. If we are able to secure a vendor with federal guidelines, we will still need transparent cooperation with school divisions. Federal forms will need to be submitted to individual divisions for approval or divisions will need to provide access to MLWGS.

Vendor Engagement: Administration has identified a potential vendor for future service; discussions are underway. (Thank you, Ms. Ricard, and RPS)

Recommendation:

Approval Request:

Administration respectfully requests that the Board approve the continuation of the current

vendor arrangement for meal service and validate that each participating division will cover the cost of meals for their respective students. This action ensures equity across divisions and allows the school to meet the immediate needs of families without exceeding budget capacity.

Board Discussion:

Mrs. Janssen said, “The team and I are very committed to solving this problem.” We now have more students who appear to be eligible for free and reduced lunch. As we are not part of a federal program, we don't get reimbursed for the meals that we serve. The current vendor that we have, and we put it out for RFP, we had only one vendor that picked it up. And it's the same vendor that we've had for eleven years. Most vendors will not pick up a locality this small because you just don't make enough profit, or you don't even make a profit because of the number of meals that are served. We are lucky that we have had someone who has been willing to do that for eleven years. Serve1 charges us \$3 for breakfast and \$5 for lunch, which is very reasonable.

The issue now is the number of students who require meals. At first, we could absorb it, even put it in the budget for \$35,000. But if everybody eats every day, we now estimate it will be \$78,000. There was a discussion with the school divisions using the model we had pre-COVID, which is that they would actually get billed for the students that we're feeding. To the localities, we cannot absorb that big of a difference; we're talking about \$43,000. I'm hoping that amount will be less because last year it was less, but we wanted to err on the side of caution with the worst-case scenario, and also ensure the children are getting fed.

We are looking at something long-term. We've been in discussions with RPS and are very happy with the partnership that we have, and they have geared me towards a certain direction. Dr. Williams and I met with an individual online, and there was a meeting with the three of us to determine if it is possible that we could work with a non-profit that is federally connected, and we could get free meals as part of a program the following year.

Mrs. Janssen is asking the board to consider that we will be moving forward with billing school divisions because we just can't absorb this price difference anymore.

A question was asked, “Are you at liberty to share who the nonprofit is? Is it a FeedMore or something like that?” Yes, it's called the Underground Kitchen, and he is so passionate, and that's why I'm hoping that it works, because when we talk to him, he makes me look slow because he's just so energetic. He makes you excited about food, feeding students, and making sure that we give them healthy choice options. It was infectious! I'm really hoping that this works. Another question: “What would prevent it from working?” If somehow the cost prohibits us, there still would be a cost because it's farm-to-table, so you're talking about high quality. The vendor seemed like we could make this work because he's going to get people to help offset the cost for all of you. His vision was that this would become a model for others that can work in a bigger division. He wants to start small and then expand. His ultimate vision is RPS. Ms. Ricard added, “My hope is they will cut Maggie Walker a good deal to start building this model out for other school districts to pick up.”

Dr. Williams stated, what was promoted aligns with our mission and vision. He wanted to share details about healthy eating, eating habits, and how to prepare meals. So, it's a lot bigger than just serving students' lunch.

Dr. Taylor next asked how many students typically eat breakfast or lunch, not just free and reduced, but across the board. He stated that when he was here, it seemed like everybody brought their own lunch. Mrs. Janssen responded, Breakfast is less, but what you'll see is that there are a ton of kids getting a la carte items. We have a considerable number of kids now that is their meal (*the a la carte item*). I think we're at seventy-nine right now, but they're participating in breakfast and lunch.

Dr. Taylor further questioned, "Does this vendor have the bandwidth in capacity? More people will want it if it serves good food instead of the typical lunchroom fare. Will they have the bandwidth to be able to provide three-quarters of the student body versus the current numbers?" Mrs. Janssen answered him that we had that question as well, and to learn more, we're going to visit his kitchen. But he also told us that it's not just him; he has a network of chefs who create menus and meals. He currently has a model that he's working with for approximately fourteen preschools; he just wants to expand it. And Maggie Walker seems like it would be a fit for their expansion.

Dr. Smith added, "Historically, we have had between thirty-five to forty percent of the student body here to take advantage of at least the a la carte service at the school. Participation could increase to between fifty to sixty percent under a new model, depending on what kind of food was provided. Over the last ten years, there have often been calls for more healthy options, such as wraps, soups, salads, and other items."

Ms. Moses shared her concern regarding potential costs and what this administration will be asking the divisions to contribute, stating Goochland had not budgeted for this. Mrs. Janssen said she understood the concern, but added, there is a disparity between zero and fifty-three students. For most school divisions, it will be zero to five students, and two divisions have a larger number.

Ms. Atkins asked about the growth potential of this vendor, and can we look at trends. In the beginning, the vendor had x number of students, and over time, it grew to what number? Divisions would be looking to build in a buffer on this budgetary item.

Dr. Pennycuff shared that the superintendents discussed this matter at their morning meeting and recognized that, as of now, the largest billing will be for two divisions. We talked about using a template for each division that states MLWGS does not identify if a student qualifies for free and reduced food, so the bill for every child who eats, whether they qualify for this service or not, will be coming back to their school division. If it is a division policy that all of their students receive free food, then that division may decide they will cover the cost for every one of their students at MLWGS and build it into their budget. Another option could be if food is not completely free in a particular division, then that division will determine if the student/family meets the federal criteria. While that division cannot claim the student on their federal funding because it's not an approved school lunch program and cannot be charged back, but is a way for a division to determine if families could afford to pay, and possibly to ask those families to pay, but would be determined within each division. For now, knowing what each of the division bills is projected to be this year, this would provide a better way to determine how to proceed and would solve the budgetary question this year while planning for the next one.

Ms. Hudgins asked if any of our students pay for lunch, to which Mrs. Janssen replied, Yes. Initially, we used a form version that looked like the federal form [*to identify the students for free foods*], but we were told not to use that because we did not follow federal guidelines. But now, we have students coming from a division where all students receive free food. Being cognizant, we

made a few phone calls to explain that we were different here and having to pay out of pocket for student meals, and people did say that they had the means, so it's just where we are at. Dr. Teigen added that for some divisions, while the entire division might not be under a CEP program, some of the schools of that division might be, meaning that some of their students who might be utilizing it wouldn't qualify outside of their CEP school.

Ms. Walwer asked if she was understanding correctly that the program we are looking at in the future would qualify for the federal program and reduce costs, to which Mrs. Janssen responded, yes, that is the goal. But Dr. Teigen said she was not sure this school would ever qualify for the federal program because of the heavy paperwork load it would require.

Ms. Moses said she was not comfortable making a decision today, with Dr. Taylor answering her that the board was not being asked to make a decision, only to take this financial need and information back to their respective boards, letting them know the division will be getting an invoice, and as we move into the new budget process, to plan for this need next year. Mrs. Janssen committed to sending the superintendents and board members the division student numbers and amounts as they exist currently regarding the number participating.

Dr. Pennycuff raised a question on the \$35,000 that was already built into the budget for this, and will the divisions only be asked for the amount over the difference? Mrs. Janssen indicated that her team would figure out a fair way to make that calculation.

There was no additional discussion on this matter.

XVII. Closed Meeting

None.

XVIII. Certification of Closed Meeting

None.

XIX. Announcements

None.

XX. Adjournment of Regular Meeting

The meeting t was adjourned at 10:15 am.

Next Meeting – Regional School Board

October 16, 2025, at 9:00 am. Location: MLWGS Campus, Room 153 804-354-6800 x2190.

Dr. James Taylor, Chair

Kristin K. Janssen, Executive Director

Minutes Recorded by:
Barbara Marshall, Regional Board Clerk

MLWGS 2020-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS/OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

DATE: September 18, 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	Measure-ment	Year to begin Implemen-tation	Cost to Budget
				2020	
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	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. Our school social worker will collaborate with security, counseling, and administration to revise the threat assessment process and forms to align with current standards and best practices.		
1.2.4	Enhance communications to make sure students have	Counseling	The PTSA is planning a session with the VA First Lady to support teenage		

	knowledge of and are able to seek resources		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. The school has implemented restrictions on student cell phone usage with priority placed on instructional time. Students and parents have provided feedback indicating that they would like a school policy for next year that allows for the use of devices during non-instructional time.		
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	Dr. Lowerre	We have been working with districts to improve access for underserved minorities. Significant improvement has been		

	support a plan to increase the percentage of historically underserved populations at MLWGS.		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.		
	Explore methods for broadening our applicant pool	Mr. Brown, subcommittee chair	Establishment of a subcommittee on hiring and recruiting		
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	Measure-ment	Year to begin Implemen-tation	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 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. The master schedule build will include Italian III. This is a high level elective language course that is rarely offered. Administration approved the course based on strong student and parent advocacy.		
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	Veteran staff share resources, write plans, and coordinate pacing for new MLWGS teachers	Dr. Anderson	MLWGS 101 curriculum writing based on lessons learned from first year of the initiative, teachers met over the summer		
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. Our coordinator of strategic engagement has adopted a block of		

			Moore Street on behalf of our school. Efforts are being made to organize a quarterly clean up through our MLWGS101 or Dragon Advisory.		
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.		
2.2.2	Build a 2-Day New Teacher Academy to allow for more time to learn the school's culture and norms.	Dr. Williams	This will help build relationships between mentors and their mentees. Department chairs can assist with MLWGS practices and procedures.	2025	
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	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.		
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.		
3.3.5	Redesigned forms and process to align with modern best practices, partner division guidance, and internal resources	Mr. Jordan (security) and Mrs. Ortiz (social worker)	Updated safety manuals to include a section on threat assessments	2025	
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			