

THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL

12301 Spotswood Furnace Road

Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Governing Board Meeting

January 15, 2015

MINUTES

Members Present: Mr. Dewayne McOsker, Chair (Stafford); Dr. Mary Anderson, (Caroline); Mr. Ken Novell, Chair (King George) Mr. Ray Lora, Vice Chair (Spotsylvania)

Also attending: Mrs. Merri Kae VanderPloeg (The Commonwealth Governor's School Director); Dr. Greg Killough (Superintendent of Caroline County Schools); Dr. Bruce Benson (Superintendent of Stafford County Schools); Dr. Scott Baker (Superintendent of Spotsylvania County Schools)

Mr. Robert Benson (Superintendent of King George County Schools) and Mr. Keith Wolfe (Executive Director of Secondary Education in Spotsylvania County) were absent.

Mr. Novell determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 15, 2015 AGENDA

Mr. Lora made a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0

CITIZEN COMMENTS

No comments at this time.

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. McOsker wished everyone a Happy New Year. Mr. Lora announced that at the end of 2015, he would not be seeking a fourth term on the school board and it would be his last year as a representative on The Commonwealth Governor's School Governing Board. He and his wife plan to move to Virginia Beach; however, he looked forward to working on the board for the

remainder of the year. Mr. Novell shared with the board that King George had good student and family attendance at the Governor's School information sessions. He anticipates there will be a lot of student interest to apply to CGS in 2015.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

The Superintendents wished everyone a Happy New Year.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Mrs. VanderPloeg checked in with the school divisions on the application process and the online application roll-out. Applications were available to interested students on January 5th. Prior to the January application roll-out, Mrs. VanderPloeg received a count of interested families who were in attendance at the school division parent/student information sessions in December. There were approximately 120 families in Spotsylvania and 125 families in Stafford. There were 45 families from Caroline Co. and 80 families were in attendance at the King George information session. This year, it was very challenging to schedule division-wide events in the evening because of winter performances, sports, and other conflicts; however, the program was pleased with the attendance.

Two CGS teachers presented at the National Gifted Association conference in Baltimore. Each year, Mrs. VanderPloeg encourages the CGS teachers to submit proposals to present at professional organizations because it is an excellent professional development opportunity and it helps promote the program. The Commonwealth Governor's School pays the travel expenses and the conference fees for those who are selected to present at professional conferences. Mr. Lettefier and Mr. Meier's presentation at NAGC highlighted the interdisciplinary activities CGS conducts and how the activities support differentiated instruction and integrated curriculum.

Mrs. VanderPloeg and Dr. Dan Walker's publication of the CGS alumni study was selected for publication by *The Gifted Child Quarterly* professional magazine. The white paper will be printed sometime in 2015 or 2016. *The Gifted Child Quarterly* is a national professional magazine.

The Governor's School Directors met by conference call on January 13th to discuss changes to the Governor's School funding formula. The current funding formula has not changed in fifteen years yet the numbers of Governor's Schools has tripled in the last fifteen years. A committee of Directors met over the summer to develop different funding scenarios and seven options were discussed on January 13th. Two options were recommended by the group and the options will be passed to the VDOE for consideration. The two options for consideration address the needs of small and large programs. Mr. Novell inquired what the different financial issues were between the small and large Governors' Schools. Mrs. VanderPloeg explained that many of the issues related to per pupil funding as well as financial obligations such as the Virginia Retirement System which was a huge burden to the smaller programs.

Mrs. VanderPloeg highlighted upcoming CGS events and formally invited members of the board and the Superintendents to the CGS Snowball which would be held on February 21. Mr. McCosker mentioned that when he chaperoned as a parent, he was impressed with the turnout and its appeal with non-Governor's school students. On February 26th, AKA Martial Arts will be hosting a self-defense and campus security workshop for CGS students. The martial arts studio is providing the workshop for free to students. It is an excellent outreach for the students.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Dr. Anderson nominated Mr. McOsker to Chair the board. He accepted the nomination. Mr. Lora seconded the motion for nomination. Motion passed 4-0. Mr. Novell made a motion for Mr. Lora to be Vice Chair. Mr. Lora made a motion to nominate Dr. Anderson as Vice Chair but she declined since this was her last year on the board and she said Mr. Lora was very experienced in holding the position. Mr. Lora accepted the nomination. Dr. Anderson seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER MINUTES & FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Novell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. McOsker seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Alumni Outreach

Mrs. Winona Siegmund and Stafford High School Junior, Maddie Counsell, presented a slideshow about the CGS Alumni Networking Breakfast which was held on December 18. One of the goals of the CGS program is to provide outreach to the alumni and to provide fellowship between graduates and current members of the student body. Mrs. Siegmund is the English teacher at Stafford High and site leader. For many years the Stafford High CGS site hosted an alumni breakfast but this year it was directed by Mrs. VanderPloeg and the program's outreach committee to implement a program-wide alumni breakfast as part of the CGS Strategic Plan. The breakfast is held on the last day of school before winter break. Mrs. Siegmund asked a few alumni to spread the word about the breakfast. The other sites communicated the event in a similar fashion and the response was positive.

The sites asked alumni to share the post-secondary institution they attended, their major, and interests they had while in college. After introductions, the alumni were paired with current CGS students based on interests, career goals, and college choices. Maddie is exploring dance and James Madison University. She was able to speak to Sara Phillips, a 2014 King George graduate and JMU student, about the dance program at JMU. The information and the common bond they shared as CGS students helped Maddie really understand what the university had to

offer besides taking a traditional tour of the campus or speaking to campus guides. Mrs. VanderPloeg interjected that the conversation was not a sales pitch but an opportunity to learn about various programs.

Mrs. Siegmund said the breakfast brought excitement to the 11th graders who are beginning to think about colleges and specific career fields. Furthermore, the networking breakfast assisted 12th graders who are in search of scholarships since many of them had already submitted college applications. Secondly, the networking event taps into the skills and talents of alumni. This year, alumni have talked about their career choices to CGS students during after-school chats. Mrs. Siegmund shared a thank you note from a parent of a senior who said the alumni networking breakfast was a wonderful event for students. Her daughter was excited about her college selection choices and the potential scholarships she learned from alumni who attended the breakfast.

Mr. McOsker remarked that it sounded like a great event with little to no cost. Mr. Lora said it is wonderful to have alumni come back and to see how they are doing after high school. Mrs. VanderPloeg noted there are over 125 alumni on the CGS Alumni Facebook page but many of the graduating classes have their own social media platforms they use for networking purposes. Furthermore, Mrs. Vanderploeg said that alumni are approaching her to speak to students about their college and career journey.

The Virginia Department of Education Evaluation Work Session

Mrs. VanderPloeg set up a date, time, and location for a Governing Board work session to discuss the policies and procedures of CGS before the March VDOE evaluation. The work session will be February 20th. She also reminded the board of the VDOE Evaluation Dinner on March 25th. If members of the board could not attend the work session, Mrs. VanderPloeg would be happy to meet individually to discuss the work session items. The VDOE Evaluation will be March 24-26 but the dinner for stakeholders will be on 3/25 at Riverbend High School.

Mr. Novell asked if questions will be given to the board ahead of time. Mrs. VanderPloeg said usually the team did not provide questions in advance but she would check. McOsker asked what the process would be during the visit. Mrs. VanderPloeg explained the process. Mr. Lora shared his experiences from past evaluation visits and said it was not a negative experience. It was a very open ended interview and the meeting was cordial with the evaluation team.

Mr. McOsker asked if there were areas of improvement the last evaluation team noted in their report that may continue to be challenging for CGS. Mrs. VanderPloeg said that during the 2009 evaluation, the VDOE recommended that the culminating project be a graded, credit course. At this time, CGS is getting closer to adopting the culminating research experience as a graded, credit course in Spotsylvania but has faced some challenges in adopting it as a course in Stafford.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items during the meeting. Mr. Lora made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. McOske seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. The Governing Board adjourned at 5:05 p.m.