

THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL

12301 Spotswood Furnace Road

Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Governing Board Meeting

October 20, 2016

MINUTES

Members Present: Mr. John Copeland, Vice Chair (Caroline); Ms. Tammy Indseth (King George); Mr. Bill Blaine, Chair (Spotsylvania); Dewayne McOsker (Stafford) participated by speaker phone from 4:20 until 5:00 p.m.

Also attending: Dr. Merri Kae VanderPloeg (The Commonwealth Governor's School Director); Dr. George Parker (Superintendent of Caroline County Schools); Dr. Robert Benson (Superintendent of King George County Schools) and Dr. Bruce Benson (Superintendent of Stafford County Schools)

Absent: Dr. Scott Baker (Superintendent of Spotsylvania County Schools); Mr. Keith Wolfe (Executive Director of Secondary Education for Spotsylvania County Schools)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Merri Kae VanderPloeg determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. Dr. VanderPloeg welcomed members of the CGS Governing Board, division administration, and guests.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 20, 2016 CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Copeland made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mrs. Indseth seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES & FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Copeland made a motion to approve the consent agenda and financial statement. Mrs. Insedth seconded the motion to approve the minutes and financial report. Motion passed 3-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Blaine was pleased to hear the parent workshops CGS hosted this Fall were informative for families in the region.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

No comments were made.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

CGS sponsored a college planning workshop on October 6 at Riverbend High School. The workshop was recommended by a parent of a senior. Contracted CGS Counselor, Mrs. Sabrina Gladney and Dr. VanderPloeg hosted the event for 11th and 12th grade families. Fifteen families attended the event which focused on the college application process and college admission requirements. The college planning workshop does not replace the annual college forum CGS sponsors with the PTO and University of Mary Washington.

The 'Toolkit for Success' and 'Merit Based Aid' workshops were held on October 13 at Riverbend High School. Forty families attended the workshops and it was open to grades 9-12.

Dr. VanderPloeg mentioned to the board that she visits all of the middle schools in the region for recruiting purposes in October and November. CGS student ambassadors share their academic experiences as well as show a student directed video about the program. CGS Parent Information Nights in the region will take place in November and December.

Mr. Blaine asked several questions about the math requirements needed in order to be in CGS as well as ways the school divisions could recruit elementary and middle school students for the program. In addition to county-wide program events, CGS partners with middle schools for

several school based outreach projects. The outreach projects expose middle school students to CGS related activities and gives them an opportunity to collaborate with CGS students.

In August, Dr. VanderPloeg asked faculty members from each site to complete the “How Is My Driving” form. Teachers had the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and high points of their site before they met with Dr. VanderPloeg to discuss their form and determine ways to improve and build goals. Dr. Parker asked about the diversity of the program if steps have been taken to increase the diversity of enrollment. Dr. VanderPloeg shared past measures that have been taken to increase the level of diversity such as hosting a diversity seminar, asking to attend church sponsored events, James Farmers meetings, and cultural groups. Dr. Bruce Benson suggested CGS request PSAT scores from the school division and then invite students with high PSAT scores to apply to the program. Mrs. Indseth and Mr. Copeland both suggested CGS personally invites potential students because it may attract individuals who might not apply. All of the school divisions offer portfolio nights for applicants so they have support in completing the application.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Kilroy Robotics Presentation

Kilroy Robotics Coach, Mr. Dave Shotwell, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the CGS Robotics team. The robotics team has been active for nineteen years. Currently, fifty-eight students from the region participate on the team. Kilroy also partners with the three middle schools and five high schools in Stafford and Spotsylvania counties. Two-thirds of the team are enrolled in CGS. The remaining third of participants are enrolled in the main high schools but expressed interest in computer programming and robotics design. They were also recommended by teachers in the region to pursue the club.

Upperclassmen construct and program the large robot and the middle school/9th grade group learns JAVA code, explores AUTOCAD fundamentals, and the construction elements of the smaller robot. The large robot for the competition team is comprised of eighteen team members (10 girls and 8 boys). The construction and program lab is housed at the old Gayle Middle School in Stafford which is located off of Route 17. Several volunteers who are professional computer programmers and engineers assist in educating and trouble-shooting computer programming and fabrication of the robot. It takes two students to manipulate the robots during the competitions but all of the team members have an opportunity to manipulate it.

In addition to competing throughout the school year, the Kilroy team provides outreach to elementary and middle school groups in the areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) as well as sponsors a Lego Robotics competition each November for teams across Virginia, DC, and Maryland.

Last year, Kilroy was eligible to participate at the World Competition and earned four trophies which recognized the team's fundraising efforts, business plan, and public relations.

One of the challenges for Kilroy is facility space for construction and programming of the robot. Mr. Shotwell would like the team to apply for grants that would fund construction upgrades of the facility. He hopes the Governing Board would support this effort. Mr. Copeland asked what the projected budget would be in order to make construction improvements. Mr. Shotwell approximates \$8,000 to improve parts of the HVAC system (heating of specific rooms). Mrs. Insedth asked if the competition requirements change each year and Mr. Shotwell said they did. He publically recognized three fabrication shops that assist in the fabrication of parts for the robot. Several private corporation, non-profit organizations, and private individuals donate funds as well as the award of two grants off-set expenses for robotics construction, computer hardware/software, travel, and competition fees. Dr. Benson stated that the HVAC project at the facility was pushed back due to other projects but was hopeful the rearranging of space could be reviewed. Moreover, Stafford County is looking for alternative space for the other programs that share the facility with the robotics teams.

Review of CGS Student Enrollment

Dr. VanderPloeg provided the board a five-year trend of enrollment demographics as well as the total application pool. The number of applicants have not changed in the last four years. When analyzing the retention of students from one grade to the next, there are a variety of reasons such as moving out of town, leaving due to low grades, challenge of the program's coursework, extra-curricular obligations, and scheduling conflicts. It is difficult to fill seats of eleventh and twelfth grade openings due to scheduling alignment, lack of pre-requisites, and changing learning environments as upperclassmen. Stafford gained one eleventh grade student who had moved in from Northern Virginia. Spotsylvania gained two students who were enrolled in schools outside of the country. Spotsylvania, King George, and Caroline had students on the application waitlist who were approached over the summer to fill open seats.

Mr. Blaine voiced his concern of increasing diversity of student enrollment. He asked how CGS was trying to diversify the enrollment of the program. Dr. VanderPloeg stressed the importance of outreach and would explore the board's suggestion. Dr. Bruce Benson shared that schools need to build the cognitive capacity of every demographic and not simply be satisfied with the state's SOL assessment expectations. Schools need to carefully choose assignments that stress application, synthesis, and evaluation as well as provide students a toolkit that will enable them to solve problems. Dr. Bruce Benson was concerned about the decrease in enrollment at the CFHS. Dr. VanderPloeg gave specifics reasons relating to school culture, teacher/student engagement, and student self-confidence (i.e. perfectionism). Dr. Robert Benson suggested taking a school climate survey. Dr. Bruce Benson said that Stafford Co. gave a Gallop student climate survey last year and some of the information was revealing. Dr. VanderPloeg will investigate the Gallop survey and see if the CGS students in Stafford can be disaggregated. She

also shared that the program annually has students take an end-of-course survey in June but wants to change the instrument in 2017 as well as the time in which it is given.

ACTION ITEMS

Review and Amend FY2017 CGS Budget

Dr. VanderPloeg explained the changes of the General Assembly's student funding allocation formula. Additional funds from the state per pupil/per course initiative was moved into line items such as professional development, instructional materials, and summer enrichment. Dr. Robert Benson asked if the state's funding allocation decreased in the FY18, would that adversely impact program operations. Dr. VanderPloeg explained that adjustments would be made and some projects/expenditures may be split between two fiscal years. Dr. Parker stated that reoccurring line items would take priority such as utility expenditures but other items as the instructional materials line item may see a decrease in funds.

Mrs. Insedth made a motion to pass the FY17 budget amendment. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

Adjournment

The next meeting will be January 19 at the Stafford County SBO at 4:00 p.m. Mrs. Indseth made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. The Governing Board adjourned at 5:37 p.m.