

**THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL**

**12301 Spotswood Furnace Road**

**Fredericksburg, VA 22407**

**Governing Board Meeting**

May 19, 2016

**MINUTES**

Members Present: Mr. John Copeland, Vice Chair (Caroline); Ms. Tammy Indseth (King George); Mr. Bill Blaine, Chair (Spotsylvania)

Also attending: Dr. Merri Kae VanderPloeg (The Commonwealth Governor's School Director); Dr. George Parker (Superintendent of Caroline County Public Schools); Mr. Keith Wolfe (Executive Director of Secondary Education)

Dewayne McOsker (Stafford County) was absent.

**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 MARCH 17, 2016 AGENDA**

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

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No comments at this time.

## **BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS**

Mrs. Insedth inquired about the Dahlgren field trip the 12<sup>th</sup> grade students attend and whether it was possible to bring younger students to the military installation. Dr. VanderPloeg stated that due to security reasons and the nature of the trip, the contact persons at Dahlgren and CGS preferred the trip only to be offered to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students taking Physics. Every year, CGS has to receive special permission to bring students and teachers on base. Dahlgren has very strict parameters to follow such as proof of citizenship, background checks, no photography is allowed, and tight supervision of students. Moreover, it was preferred to host the physics students because the course objectives naturally fit with applications Dahlgren representatives were going to discuss during the Railgun presentation.

Mrs. Insedth asked about the ‘Cookies with the Commonwealth’ events across the divisions as well as the Senior Symposium. She wondered if they were open to board members. Dr. VanderPloeg explained the ‘Cookies with the Commonwealth’ was a social/invitation for new students to meet the teachers. Seniors who could not attend the Culminating Symposium presented their projects to the new students. They were certainly open to the board members as well as other events. All of the CGS events are posted on the Director’s Notes section of the board packet as well as the CGS website.

There were no further comments from other board members.

## **SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS**

Dr. Parker asked if there were recent developments in the state budgetary process. At the time of the board meeting, the state had not made any new changes to the FY17 proposed budget.

## **DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Dr. VanderPloeg announced that 127 seniors will graduate from CGS and from their respective high schools. They will be recognized at the Senior Ceremony on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at the University of Mary Washington. All of the students will be graduating on time and will be attending college or the military in the Fall. Twenty-eight seniors will be attending out-of-state schools. Three students will be attending Ivy League schools and two students will be studying abroad. One student is participating in AmeriCorp before she enrolls at James Madison University.

All four school divisions completed their new student applications and events such as ‘Cookies with the Commonwealth’ are slated for the end of May. Four upperclassmen were placed in the Spotsylvania County CGS sites due to vacancies. Stafford County has lower numbers with only a few upperclassmen being admitted in September. There are some factors attributing to the low enrollment. For example, Stafford High School does not share a site with a

feeder high school. North Stafford did not reach the 30-seat capacity because they primarily compete with IB at North Stafford and the STAT program at North Stafford.

CGS professional development days will be slated in late June and early August for all faculty members. The CGS teachers are on extended contracts and use the added days to plan for the upcoming school year, analyze AP/SOL scores as a regional program, and participate in a professional learning opportunity relating to gifted education, technology, or Governor's School practices.

Dr. VanderPloeg explained the CGS orientation schedule and invited board members to attend the orientation days. The August 9<sup>th</sup> orientation day will be at the sites and the August 10<sup>th</sup> event will be at Stafford High School. Parents are invited to a technology workshop and teacher meet & greet on 8/9 and a region-wide parent orientation on 8/10. She recommended board members attend the site orientation because it is localized and a smaller atmosphere. Parking will be very limited at Stafford High School. Orientation was scheduled in early August because King George and Caroline are starting in mid-August. The orientation also does not conflict with extra-curricular activities such as band, football, etc.

There will be two summer trips open to rising 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> CGS students and a summer mentorship program open to rising 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Two science boot camps will be available to Spotsylvania and Stafford county students as well as a potential AP Euro workshop for rising 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in August.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES & FINANCIAL REPORT**

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

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

The Kilroy Robotics team was unable to attend the meeting; however, the team will demonstrate the robot at the CGS family picnic. The family picnic is on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Pratt Park.

### **Contracted Counselor Survey**

During the 2016-17 school year, CGS contracted with a retired counselor to work with the sites and individual students who were struggling academically, in need of social skills, or students in need of college advisement. The decision to contract with a counselor was made last Spring because of a recommendation by the state governor's school auditors and at the request of teachers, students, and CGS families. The contracted counselor worked individually with students and with small groups. One site requested the counselor meet with an entire class to

discuss building good relationships with peers and teachers. She met with some students and/or parents on a regular basis and was available to meet with students and parents for single sessions. At the request of the 2015-16 Governing Board and the Superintendents, Dr. VanderPloeg compiled an end-of-year review of the contracted arrangement. Teachers were asked to provide feedback and was administered on an anonymous GoogleDocs survey platform. Nineteen out of forty-three teachers responded. Sixty-eight percent surveyed referred students to the counselor. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers believed it was important to continue having the counselor work with students in 2016-17. In addition to meeting with students about underachievement, perfectionism, academic struggles, and school/home conflicts, there were other topics the counselor addressed with students. In addition to meeting with students at school, the counselor led parent workshops in the Fall and at the end of the first semester. The counselor was paid under the contracted services line item. Dr. VanderPloeg asked the Governing Board to determine if counseling services needed to continue. All three members of the board in attendance agreed to have the counselor continue working with CGS students during the 2016-17 school year.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Approval of May 19 Financial Statement**

Mr. Copeland made a motion to approve the May 19 financial report. Mrs. Indseth seconded the motion to approve the financial report. The financial report passed 3-0.

### **Approval of the 2016-17 CGS Budget**

Mrs. Indseth made a motion to approve the 2016-17 budget. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. Dr. VanderPloeg explained the Virginia Department of Education increased the per pupil amount for FY 2016-17 which would be an increase. The state allotted \$4,622 in FY 2016 projected to allot \$5,053 per pupil for FY2017. The state is also considering to increase funding based on the number of courses each student enrolls in during the 2016-17 school year but this action has not been finalized yet. CGS hopes the state will make a final decision by the time the budget is amended after the student enrollment count is done on September 30. The budget the board is looking at only refers to the per pupil allotment not the per course suggestion the state is reviewing over the summer.

There is an increase of \$10,000 for the contracted services line item. The contracted services line item pays for guest speakers, equipment service contracts, the counselor, potential site leader stipends, and other areas such as paying teachers to supervise boot camps when they are not under contract. The board members in attendance thought a stipend for site leaders was justified.

Under the maintenance contracts line item, CGS anticipated an increase of contracts when they are to be renewed for FY16-17 (i.e. Verizon, Noodletools, Blackboard, Electronic Systems, etc.). Mrs. Inseth asked if some of the line items are set in stone. Dr. VanderPloeg said that

money can be transferred to other areas if it warrants but the state allocated money has to be spent by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Copeland wondered why there was an increase of new equipment and upgrades in the budget. Dr. VanderPloeg gave examples of new equipment purchases that were made in 2016-17 as well clarified replacement parts the program kept on-hand. Mr. Copeland also asked what the maintenance contracts were. Dr. VanderPloeg gave examples of maintenance contracts and emphasized the need to have contracts since the program is not reliant on the school divisions for repairs and upgrades. The different maintenance accounts are separated because they all have different purposes. Many thanks to Program Manager, Donna Welch, for her thorough work in preparing the budget for Dr. VanderPloeg's review and presentation.

Motion to adopt the FY 2016-17 budget was passed 3-0.

### **Adjournment**

The next meeting will be September 15<sup>th</sup> at the Spotsylvania Co. School Board office. Mrs. Indseth made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. The Governing Board adjourned at 5:22 p.m.