

**THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL**

**Stafford County Public Schools, School Board Office**

**Fredericksburg, VA**

**Governing Board Meeting**

**March 15, 2018**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Mr. John Copeland, Chair (Caroline); Mr. Bill Blaine, (Spotsylvania); Dr. Sarah Chase, Co-Chair (Stafford); Mrs. Gayle Hock (King George)

**Also attending:** Dr. Merri Kae VanderPloeg (The Commonwealth Governor's School Director); Dr. Robert Benson (Superintendent of King George Schools); Mr. Mike Brown (Director of Professional Development and Special Programs of Spotsylvania County Schools); Dr. Bruce Benson (Superintendent of Stafford County Schools); Mr. Keith Wolfe (Executive Director of Secondary Education for Spotsylvania County Schools); Mrs. Lindsey Rose (Caroline County Schools)

**Absent:** Dr. Scott Baker (Superintendent of Spotsylvania County Schools)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF March 15, 2018 CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Merri Kae VanderPloeg determined there was a quorum. Mr. Copeland asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda with an amendment to discuss the replacement of the Director. Dr. Chase made a motion. Mr. Blaine seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Dana Brown, a Mountain View High School parent with a student in CGS at the North Stafford site, spoke about concerns relating to lost instructional time for students who travel to the sites.

She also had concerns about the culminating project and how some counties provide credit for the work and Stafford does not. Her daughter doesn't find it to be fair.

### **APPROVAL OF JANUARY 18, 2018 MINUTES & FINANCIAL REPORT**

Dr. Chase made a motion to pass the minutes and the financial report. Mrs. Hock seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

### **BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS**

Mr. Blaine gave thanks to Dr. VanderPloeg for her eight years of service as Director of CGS. He was impressed with the success of the program and the students who have participated in the program. Mr. Copeland stated it was a pleasure working with Dr. VanderPloeg for two years and thought she had done an awesome job of leading the program. He appreciated her help during his transition as Board Chair. Mrs. Lindsey spoke on behalf of Caroline County. The school division appreciated the work Dr. VanderPloeg had done to provide Caroline County students the opportunity to participate in CGS and how their enrollment and enthusiasm for the program has grown over the last six years.

There were no other comments.

### **SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS**

Dr. Benson of Stafford County thanked Dr. VanderPloeg for her years of service to the CGS Program. Mr. Wolfe commended Dr. VanderPloeg for her work and dedication to the program and to its students.

### **DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Dr. VanderPloeg gave a report on the Spotsylvania High site's alumni breakfast which was held in early March. Many of the alumni attendees graduated nearly twenty years ago. There were also a few graduates in attendance who departed from CGS a couple of years ago. The breakfast program centered on the fine arts and CGS students' talents in the arts. Three students sang at the breakfast and several students displayed their artwork. Seven administrators and dignitaries from the school division attended. June 23<sup>rd</sup> will be the All-Class celebration at Riverbend High School. Dr. VanderPloeg encouraged the board to communicate the event in their counties.

The CGS Model UN team participated at the Baltimore Model UN competition in February. Over twenty students attended the event. Many thanks to coaches Joan Darby and Cyndi Christopherson as well Mr. Maginnis for supervising the students and providing them a great learning opportunity.

The CGS Robotics team attended a competition in mid-March. The team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and was able to compete in the quarter finals. They received the Inspiration award.

Four hundred and eighty students attended Snowball. Six elementary and three middle schools received after-school snack donations which was part of the admission ticket.

Dr. VanderPloeg shared the application numbers for the 2018-19 CGS admissions process.

Stafford Co.-184 (152 applied in 2017; 140 in 2016). 5 students were upperclassmen.

Spotsylvania-161(152 applied in 2017; 146 in 2016). 15 students were upperclassmen.

King George-49 (26 applied 2017; 35 2016). 4 students were upperclassmen

Caroline-22 (14 applied in 2018; 12 in 2016)

Each site has 30 seats with exception to King George which has 25 seats (5 seats are reserved for Caroline).

Dr. VanderPloeg shared the upcoming events sponsored by CGS in the Spring. She also shared a draft work calendar for 2018-19 with the board

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **Mid-Year Climate Survey**

Dr. VanderPloeg shared the results of the mid-year student climate survey. 237 students responded between the end of January through the middle of February. This year, CGS used Google Survey which was over 200 pages long. She condensed the narratives into themes of responses in a document rather than printing it. It was also too large of a document to email to board members. She shared the feedback and the data with the board. Dr. Chase asked if there were any curriculum changes based on the data and feedback specifically for AP Biology. Dr. VanderPloeg explained different students were surveyed compared to last year. Secondly, the teachers recently were working very hard to provide students opportunities to retake quizzes if they scored low. Also the study/tutoring session attendance has improved this year at some of the sites. The 11<sup>th</sup> graders commented how difficult it was to balance AP classes in and outside of the program but they believe the program will help them reach their goals in the long term. Dr. VanderPloeg recently shared the feedback with faculty during a faculty meeting.

Mrs. Hock perceived that some of the survey pertained to relationship building. Dr. VanderPloeg spoke about the contracted counselor and how she works with small groups and individually with relationship building. Mrs. Gladney will see this survey and determine if a particular area needs to be addressed with students. Mrs. Hock was pleased to see that students desire bonding between grade levels. Since the climate survey, a spirit club has been formed which strives for community building between grade levels and sites. Dr. Chase asked how Mrs.

Gladney divides her time between six sites. Dr. VanderPloeg explained that Mrs. Gladney divides her time based on individual needs of students, small groups, and the sites. She is contracted for a certain amount of hours per month and then given special projects to work on relating social/emotional learning and college/career readiness.

### **FY 2019 Governor's School Budget**

Dr. VanderPloeg presented the FY19 budget draft. The General Assembly had not come up with a final budget for Governor's School; however, CGS was given a preliminary per pupil amount. At the time of the Governing Board meeting, the Assembly continued to debate whether or not to the state should provide \$50 per student per course funds to each Governor's School in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The proposed budget is \$1,854,000 based on the 603 student enrollment projection. If the per student/per course rate is withdrawn or adopted, CGS will amend the budget in May. Dr. Chase asked if the program or localities receive funds for students who are placed in a CGS math course due to a low course enrollment but are not in CGS full time. Dr. VanderPloeg explained that CGS only receives funding for students who are officially identified as gifted and in the Governor's School. The funding draft included the per student/per course but would change if the Assembly removed that funding source. The Director's salary and benefits would change once a new Director is selected.

A supplement increase was added to the Program Manager's position because it has not been increased since 2006. Due to the economic recession in 2008, the division superintendents suspended the increase of the supplement in 2008 and the Governing Board took their recommendation. The Program Manager's job responsibilities have increased such as managing the dual enrollment tuition, overseeing the funding stream of the Robotics and Model UN teams, and increased responsibilities pertaining to web design and promotional materials that are advertised program-wide. Since 2008, CGS has increased its enrollment and added a site. Presently, the supplement is embedded in the program manager's salary. Dr. VanderPloeg is happy to include the justification document when the budget is finalized. Mr. Copeland and Mrs. Hock asked if the program manager has received a salary increase in the last ten years or if the salary was frozen. Her salary has not been frozen but the supplement has not increased in ten years. Furthermore, the amount proposal increase includes the COLA and the supplement increase.

Maintenance contracts and equipment upgrades increased in FY19 because software licenses and student online service contracts were renewed. The liability insurance premium remained the same. Dr. Chase asked how the state streamlines the budget and if some of the funds go to the localities. Dr. VanderPloeg explained that the budget presented to the board is strictly funds that go to the CGS Program which are allocated for supplies, equipment, contracts, and the CGS office personnel. Mrs. Welch is the budget manager for the program and if the board had any further questions about the state allocated funds to contact her.

## **Director Position Interview Process**

Dr. VanderPloeg provided copies of past job descriptions and responsibilities from the last twenty years. These documents may help the board with the job posting. Mr. Wolfe explained the interview process and the interview panel selection for the interviews. Since Spotsylvania is the fiscal agent, they will coordinate the panel but receive feedback from the other school divisions. Additionally, Mr. Wolfe provided a proposed hiring process timeline. Mr. Blaine asked Mr. Wolfe what the role is for the fiscal agent. Mr. Wolfe explained that the funding streams for CGS are overseen by Spotsylvania County Schools as well as the personnel aspects of the CGS Program.

The goal is to recommend a person for the position on May 14<sup>th</sup> and the individual will begin his or her duties on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Chase had concerns about the tight timeline to post the position a few days after the Governing Board meeting. Mr. Wolfe was happy to receive the board's input. Mr. Copeland asked why a doctoral degree was not required. Mr. Keith stated that having the expectation for a doctorate may limit the number of applicants received. Dr. Bruce Benson recommended a writing sample to be part of the application process and asked if the interview questions would be competency based. He also suggested to have the candidate complete a case analysis on how he/she would approach a situation or problem. Mr. Wolfe said that in the past, the process appeared similar to Stafford County Schools. Dr. Chase asked why the proposed job posting did not include work experience with high ability or gifted learners. Mr. Wolfe said he would recommend this suggestion to the Director of Human Resources, Michelle Colbert and to include the board's feedback as well as extend the timeline for feedback. Mr. Copeland believed the proposed timeline is tight for posting the position but the other timeline dates could remain the same. Dr. Bruce Benson suggested Dr. VanderPloeg provide a transition plan. Dr. VanderPloeg stated that she would leave a transition binder for the new Director. She plans on leaving the state tentatively June 19. Dr. VanderPloeg stated that Mrs. Welch suggested the position be posted on national searches as well as state job searches. Mr. Wolfe asked that board members provide their feedback by March 22<sup>nd</sup> so the posting could occur by March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the earliest and March 26<sup>th</sup> at the latest. Dr. Chase asked that the Director of HR send a draft posting to the board before it is posted. Dr. VanderPloeg offered to send the board members' email addresses to human resources so they can correspond. The board continued to discuss dates to discuss the interview panel selection and review the process. April 29<sup>th</sup> was selected for the board to meet with Spotsylvania County's human resources' representatives. Dr. VanderPloeg asked who would be responsible to select the interview panel members. Mr. Wolfe said that parents and teachers would be on the panel. Dr. Chase suggested each member bring a list of parents and teachers who would be suitable for the panel. Mr. Blaine suggested larger divisions have more representation on the panel. Dr. Chase suggested parents with multiple students in the program may be suitable. Dr. VanderPloeg suggested the board look at parents who have leadership roles in the program such as the PTO President.

## **FINAL COMMENTS**

### **Adjournment**

Dr. Chase made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Hock seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. The Governing Board adjourned at 5:27p.m.