

THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL
Stafford County Professional Development Center – Room 15
Stafford, VA
Governing Board Meeting
October 18, 2018

MINUTES

Members Present: Mr. John Copeland, Chair (Caroline); Mr. Bill Blaine, (Spotsylvania); Dr. Sarah Chase, Vice-Chair (Stafford)

Also attending: Dr. Robert Benson (Superintendent of King George County Public Schools); Dr. Scott Kizner (Superintendent of Stafford County Public Schools); Mr. Keith Wolfe (Executive Director of Secondary Education for Spotsylvania County Public Schools); Mr. Tom Nichols (Chief Secondary Officer for Stafford County Public Schools); Dr. Joanne Jones (Director of Curriculum & Instruction for Caroline County Public Schools); Mrs. Jennifer Grigsby (The Commonwealth Governor's School Director); Dr. Stephenie Fellingner (Teaching & Learning Facilitator for K-12 Gifted Education and Secondary Programs); Mr. James Conlee (CGS Mathematics Teacher – Riverbend HS Site)

Absent: Mrs. Gayle Hock (King George Governing Board Member); Dr. Scott Baker (Superintendent of Spotsylvania County Public Schools); Dr. Victor Hellman (Interim Superintendent of Caroline County Public Schools)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Dr. Sarah Chase at 4:00pm on October 18, 2018. A quorum was determined by Dr. Chase at 4:28pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Blaine shared his appreciation for the thoroughness and detail in the meeting minutes.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

There were no superintendent comments.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

NVCGTE Annual Retreat

The director attended the Northern Virginia Council for Gifted and Talented Education Annual Retreat in Luray on September 28. The main topics of the retreat were critical thinking in classroom environments for gifted students and twice exceptional students. A wide variety of strategies and information was shared, which the director plans on presenting to the teachers for consideration to be implemented in their classrooms.

AYGS Fall Meeting

The director attended the AYGS Director's Meeting on October 4 where there was major discussion of the funding formula used by the state to determine funding for all Governor's Schools. Consensus was to use the formula based on Standards of Quality, which would allow all AYGS to see an increase in funding (and reduce the deficit from funding that was removed for DE credit hours).

Discussion also revolved around the plan from the VCCS to have statewide fees for DE credits at \$50 per credit hour. This plan is a benefit to wealthier areas, such as Northern VA, but will decimate students' ability to take courses for credit in rural and low-socioeconomic areas. AYGS and superintendents across the state are petitioning for this to not take effect.

CGS Middle School Information Meetings

The director will be traveling to all of the regional middle schools with CGS student representatives to review the program and answer prospective student questions starting next week through the second week of November. The goal is to speak to all students who will complete Algebra I by the end of 8th grade.

Professional Development Session

On November 6, all CGS teachers will be participating in a professional development session led by Dr. Amy Colley and Sarah Hylton from The College of William & Mary. The focus will be on engaging strategies in instructional practices, development of engaging practices by content area, integrating these strategies into broadcast, and the use of dialectical journaling across content areas.

CGS Middle School Student Visits

Interested students will be visiting each of the CGS sites in late November / early December to see the program in action and be able to get a better idea if the program is a good fit for them. The director hopes to bring at least half of the eligible students on visits to our CGS sites.

Question from Dr. Chase: Will the gifted resource teachers be available to help all students with their CGS applications regardless of whether or not the student is designated previously as gifted?

Answer from Mrs. Grigsby: Students will have access to the application help nights to receive assistance on their applications, and these events are for all students not just those designated as gifted.

Clarification from Dr. Chase: Gifted resource teachers currently work with gifted students on their applications during their allotted gifted instructional time, whereas non-identified students do not receive this extra assistance.

Current Engaging Strategies Presentation

The director presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Governing Board highlighting the engaging strategies observed during 1st marking period observations throughout the CGS program and all six sites. The categories are based upon the SURN observation tool that was selected to be used for all CGS observations.

PRESENTATION AND QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

James Conlee, CGS Mathematics Teacher at the CGS Riverbend HS site, presented data on the SOL and AP scores for the 2017-2018 school year. This year CGS had the greatest number of AP exams taken in the program's history. He explained that there are stories behind all of the scores. Overall, CGS students performed better than the international average on most of the exams given. Seniors often do not take as many exams if they know that their selected college or university will not accept any more. The program is not solely AP-focused but instead is aligned to meet the needs of gifted and accelerated learners. The instruction is student-centered and created to challenge the needs of these advanced students.

During the question and answer portion of the presentation, the following questions, answers, and discussion points occurred:

Question – Dr. Kizner

If the College Board were to do away with AP testing, how different would the CGS program be?

Answer from Mr. Conlee: More time would be freed to allow more instruction and less stress on the students on performing on exams.

Discussion: Dr. Kizner commented that he saw some amazing instruction and learning occurring when looking at the slide presentation and he wishes that could occur everywhere. Although the scores are impressive, is the testing possibly holding back the students from more growth? Dr. Chase commented that she does remember when there wasn't testing attached to courses, and that there were examples of horrible experiences for students. So, it can go both ways. Could the curriculum be tailored even further to meet the needs of these advanced students if the restrictions of AP were removed?

APPROVAL OF MEETING & CONSENT AGENDAS

Mr. Blaine made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. Mr. Copeland motioned to approve the meeting minutes with a second from Mr. Blaine. The motion passed 3-0. Mr. Copeland then motioned to approve the financial report for October 2018. Mr. Blaine seconded the motion, and the motion passed 3-0.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2017-2018 AP & SOL Data

The Director highlighted that there was an increase in the number of AP exams taken in 2017-2018 with an increase of 3.72% from the previous year. Additionally, 10 out of 12 AP tests given were above the global average. The lowest SOL exam pass rate was in World History II at a 97% due to the misalignment of the SOL test and the AP European History course in which students are enrolled. Students were highly successful on their SOL examinations.

CGS Application Update

The only change for the application process will be the removal of the activities category. This decision was made to make the process more equitable since not all students have access to be involved in extracurricular activities for a variety of reasons (socioeconomics, transportation concerns, etc.). Those points were redistributed into the category of interview skills in order to continue to gauge the whole student. Ultimately, participation in activities has no bearing on whether or not a student will be successful in an academic Governor's school, and it was thus removed to create the greatest equity and access for all students.

CGS Consitution, By-Laws, & Joint Agreement Review

Attached were the Director's notes on potential concerns with practice versus policy. The Director will recommend changes to be voted upon at the next meeting based on those notes and the feedback from the superintendents in the committee meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

Amended Budget FY 2019

The budget reduction outlined occurred due to the per pupil funding being reduced by the General Assembly in June. Additionally, the actual student enrollment as of September 30, 2018 was 597, which was six less than the projected enrollment of 603. This also caused a reduction in funding. Thus, the total reduction was \$34, 333 compared to the approved budget in May 2018.

Mr. Copeland motioned to approve the budget as presented with a second of the motion from Mr. Blaine. The motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

FINAL COMMENTS

Adjournment

Dr. Chase adjourned the meeting at 4:40pm.