

Roanoke Valley Governor's School Regional Board Minutes of April 23, 2018 Meeting

The Roanoke Valley Governor's School Regional Board met on Monday, April 23, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. in the Roanoke Valley Governor's School Lecture Hall. The following Board members were present:

Mr. Mark Cathey	Roanoke City	Chairman
Mr. Jason Johnson	Bedford County	Vice Chairman
Dr. Michael Chiglinsky	Salem City	
Mrs. Michelle Crook	Botetourt County	
Mr. Patrick Myers	Craig County	
Mrs. Julie Nix	Franklin County	
Mr. Mike Wray	Roanoke County	

Also present were Dr. Rita Bishop, representing the Committee of Superintendents; Governor's School Director, Mark Levy; Clerk, Cindy Poulton; Deputy Clerk, Paula Buch; and Dawn Verhoeff, Bedford County Schools' Science, Foreign Language and Gifted Supervisor.

Call to Order

Mr. Cathey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

Former Chairwoman Communication

Mr. Cathey stated former Board Chair Ruth Wallace had written a very nice note to her Board colleagues and the note was available for Board members to read.

Approval of Agenda

On motion by Dr. Chiglinsky and Mrs. Nix, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as distributed.

Approval of February 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes

On motion by Mrs. Nix and Mrs. Crook, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the February 5, 2018 meeting as distributed.

2017-18 Operating Budget Update and Financial Report

Relative to the 2017-18 budget, Mr. Levy provided an historical overview of 2017-18 Governor's School operations to date as compared to 2016-17 noting similar financial positions when comparing the two years. Mr. Cathey asked if there was anything unusual to note regarding the current operating budget; Mr. Levy stated there was not, and he reiterated his efforts to conservatively expend funds while ensuring the very best educational program for students. Mr. Wray asked if changes in revenue were expected; Mr. Levy stated for the current school year no changes were expected; however, changes were expected relative to the 2018-19 budget.

Proposed 2018-19 Budget

Mr. Levy stated the Governor's School budget remains in limbo like all other division budgets because the Commonwealth has not adopted a budget. He stated the proposed budget is based on House budget projections, which removes the previous \$50/credit hour bonus that Governor's Schools received in the previous biennium. Mr. Levy stated there will be four fewer students enrolled impacting both tuition and State revenues, and he has planned accordingly for the reductions as last year's tuition increase provides a buffer for income difficulties perhaps for the next two years. Mr. Levy noted that there are available student slots should a district be interested in increasing the number of slots it is currently allocated.

Mr. Levy stated expenses remain flat, and the only increases are in salaries and mandatory employer-paid items such as VRS, FICA, and health insurance. He stated utilities remain flat for the third consecutive year, debt service continues to decrease, maintenance and repair costs are flat, and educational expenses remain the same. Mr. Levy stated the budget is not balanced but it is as good as it can be, and the unspent funds balance is projected to remain above the \$400,000 threshold set by the Board.

Mr. Levy reiterated that everything is being done to ensure the Governor's School is a top notch program while protecting discretionary spending. Mr. Johnson asked what purchases have been delayed in order to be more conservative and are any critical to operations; Mr. Levy stated a few pieces of lab equipment and a second 3D printer were not purchased and are not critical to operations at this time. He added "we are moving forward and doing what is needed, but we are being cautious."

Mrs. Crook asked if the Board would be asked to adopt a revised budget after approving the proposed budget this evening once the State approved a final budget; Mr. Levy stated this has been past practice and the Board would receive a revised budget as soon as possible after State adoption for formal approval.

Director's Report

School Safety—Mr. Levy stated this is the Board's first meeting since the tragedy in Parkland Florida and he wanted the Board to know that school safety is not taken lightly at the Governor's School. He stated he communicated with students and parents about efforts to secure the building, and at the appropriate time he would invite the newly-appointed Roanoke City Public Schools chief of security to address the Board regarding additional efforts. Mr. Cathey noted RCPS hired the former Roanoke City chief of police and stated Dr. Bishop has always been on top of school safety. Dr. Chiglinsky stated he has never had a concern regarding the safety of children at the Governor's School because safety has always been at the forefront and he appreciates the efforts. The Superintendent stated fire drills would continue but evacuations would be handled in a different matter. She noted that national security expert Ken Trump would visit Roanoke again in the coming months.

Science Fairs—Mr. Levy stated since the Board's last meeting a number of science fairs were conducted with significant results for Governor's School students. At the Western Virginia Regional Science Fair held on March 17 at Virginia Western Community College, Governor's School students received 12 first place awards and two students were grand award winners and will attend the International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh in May. At the Virginia Junior Science and Humanities Symposium on March 16 at James Madison University, 14 Governor's School students participated with seven receiving "outstanding research" awards, and five students won gold medals, two of these students placed in the top five and earned trips to the nationals in May with the other three named as alternates. At the State science fair held in Roanoke at the Berglund Center and hosted by the VTC School of Medicine, there were 12 Governor's School projects and six received awards; RVGS earned the third most category awards of any school in the Commonwealth. Mr. Levy stated he serves as a member of the State Science Fair Board, and the State science fair would be held in Roanoke for the next two years.

Recruitment Update—Mr. Levy stated all students who received acceptance letters responded by the due date; district staff was updated as needed if there were issues or there were students who declined offers. Mr. Levy recognized the work of guidance counselor Kathy Sebolt who works closely with the individual high schools; he stated he has nominated Ms. Sebolt for the State guidance counselor award.

Community Outreach and Industry Collaboration—Mr. Levy stated STEM Career Panels were held on March 20 where professionals from a diverse range of STEM careers participated in panel discussions for students. He noted students enjoyed hearing from many of the panelists who shared that they did not know what they wanted to be when they went to college, and many students were impressed by the words of an emergency room physician who first went to Virginia Western then on to nursing school where they made a decision to be a doctor and went on to the VTC School of Medicine while working as a nurse. Mr. Levy stated students indicated the event was beneficial, and there are plans to continue the event annually. He reported Governor's School physics and engineering teachers Brent Holt and Nancy Aldridge hosted an electrical engineering workshop for staff from participating districts and pre-service teachers; attendees were given instruction on how to use various pieces of equipment including the 3D printer and had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Governor's School.

Staff Updates—Mr. Levy stated Chemistry teacher Steve Smith was named the Governor's School Teacher of the Year and is a semi-finalist for the Division Teacher of the Year, and Mr. Smith has been named the Outstanding High School Chemistry Teacher by the Blue Ridge Section of the American Chemical Society and will attend the national meeting this summer at Notre Dame supported by a \$1,000 grant. Mr. Levy stated there is no staff turnover anticipated and he was happy for the stability as it is a great team for the students.

Senior Dinner—Mr. Levy encouraged Board members to attend the Senior Dinner on Monday, May 7, at the Hotel Roanoke and asked them to RSVP for the event that recognizes all of the Governor's School seniors.

Discussion by Board Members

Mr. Wray stated he was pleased that Roanoke County would begin providing transportation for its students attending the Governor's School in 2018-19. Mr. Levy stated all divisions will now be transporting students and this is so important for equity.

Mr. Cathey stated he was pleased to see the student awards spread across all of the divisions.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Roanoke Valley Governor's School Regional Board is Monday, June 11, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Nix stated this conflicts with her regular Board meeting; Mr. Cathey apologized for the conflict and stated it would be corrected for future meetings

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Mark K. Cathey, Chairman

Cindy H. Poulton, Clerk