

Roanoke Valley Governor's School Regional Board Minutes of February 3, 2020 Meeting

The Roanoke Valley Governor's School Regional Board met on Monday, February 3, 2020, 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
Mr. Trace Bellassai	Craig County	
Dr. Michael Chiglinsky	Salem City	
Mrs. Michelle Crook	Botetourt County	
Mrs. Julie Nix	Franklin County	
Mr. Mike Wray	Roanoke County	

Also present: Roanoke City Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Rita Bishop, representing the Committee of Superintendents; Governor's School Director, Mark Levy; Clerk Cindy Poulton; Deputy Clerk Paula Buch; and Roanoke County Superintendent Dr. Ken Nicely.

Call to Order

Mr. Cathey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed new Board member Trace Bellassai representing Craig County; he noted Mr. Bellassai is a 2010 graduate of the Roanoke Valley Governor's School.

Approval of Agenda

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

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Dr. Bishop opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Dr. Chiglinsky moved the nomination of Mr. Cathey for Chairman, and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Nix. Hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed. By unanimous vote, Mr. Cathey was elected Chairman for 2020. Mr. Cathey expressed thanks to the Board for their vote noting he likes to run a fast meeting and the Board is lucky to have a tremendous director.

Mr. Cathey opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mrs. Nix moved the nomination of Mr. Johnson for Vice Chairman, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Chiglinsky. Hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed. By unanimous vote, Mr. Johnson was elected Vice Chairman for 2020.

Election of Clerk and Deputy Clerk

On motion by Dr. Chiglinsky and Mr. Wray, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Cindy Poulton as Clerk and Paula Buch as Deputy Clerk for 2020.

Personnel List

On motion by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Wray, the Board unanimously approved the Personnel List as presented establishing the stipends for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

Approval of October 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes

On motion by Mrs. Crook and Mrs. Nix, the Board unanimously approved the minutes as distributed.

Current Operating Budget

Mr. Levy directed the Board to the new reporting format for comparison of financials and reviewed current year-to-date financials as compared to the same period last year. Mrs. Crook noted the improved receipt of tuition payments at this time of the year versus last year; Mr. Levy stated it is not uncommon to have variations with catch up by the end of the year. Mrs. Nix expressed appreciation for the new reporting format, which was echoed by Mrs. Crook.

Mr. Wray asked about the \$23,084 capital outlay. Mr. Levy stated this is for the physics lab renovations that occurred last school year; the cost did not hit the books until this year, and it is really "a wash" as the funds were included in the 2018-19 budget and rolled into the carry-over funds in the 2019-20 budget. Mr. Wray asked if refinancing had been considered for the debt service; Mr. Levy stated \$173,340 is the last payment owed for new construction in 2000, and the only debt service that remains is for the roof replacement. He added that debt service funds are incorporated with the City and cannot be set aside for refinancing.

Preliminary 2020-21 Budget

Mr. Levy stated the 2020-21 Budget has been updated since the Board's meeting in October noting revenue projections for tuition were more conservative and based on 269 students rather than 271. He reviewed the State funding history for Academic Year Governor's Schools and stated because the Governor's budget uses the existing funding model, he has increased his leadership efforts to advocate for additional funding. Mr. Levy stated he has personally enlisted the support of Delegate Rasoul and Senator Edwards who have introduced budget amendments in the House and Senate to increase funding for Academic Year Governor's Schools. Mr. Levy stated he has encouraged the members of the Directors Committee to also reach out to their legislators, and he has prepared talking points for their use. He stated he is hopeful the efforts will yield positive results. Mr. Wray asked where the amendments were in the process; Mr. Levy stated Delegate Rasoul spoke to this matter during a Chamber discussion two weeks ago, but the Senate process is different, and he believed the discussion was at the subcommittee level. He added the final lists from both Chambers were expected on February 18. Mr. Levy stated he has suggested the proposed State budget include a reporting requirement for Governor's Schools that focuses on outreach for students in underserved areas. He added that should a State-level committee be formed, he would like to serve.

Mr. Levy reviewed proposed expenses including the addition of one full-time position that will allow him to step away from classroom responsibilities and increased salary supplements/stipends for enhanced programming around student outreach/equity of access and a summer research opportunity. He noted the proposed new stipends are listed separately on the preliminary budget as *Salary Supplements - Enhanced Programs*. Mr. Levy stated health insurance costs will increase, utilities will increase slightly, and educational expenses and maintenance/repair will remain the same. He noted debt

service costs will be considerably lower and cover the cost to hire an additional staff member, and debt service for the roof replacement is all that remains. Mr. Levy stated he has shown a track record of not spending all of the money and these efforts will continue as a deficit budget is presented for 2020-21. He stated anticipated unspent funds based on the 2019-20 budget is \$513,309; with the proposed budget for 2020-21 he expects unspent funds at the end of the year to be \$470,393, which is still above the \$400,000 floor the Board agreed to previously. Mr. Johnson asked how many hours staff would be expected to work in the summer; Mr. Levy stated a model was still being developed but he expected it to be an intensive two-to-three-week session. Mrs. Crook asked when the new position would be posted; Mr. Levy stated he wanted to be sure the Board was in agreement with the plan before the position was posted. Board members concurred with the plan and suggested the position be posted as soon as possible. Mr. Cathey noted two staff members would leave at the end of the year bringing the total to three positions to be posted. Board members expressed appreciation to Mr. Levy for the leadership role he has assumed around funding for the Academic Year Governor's Schools.

Review of Department of Education Evaluation Results

Mr. Levy presented an overview of the 20-page report received following the formal evaluation of the Governor's School conducted on site in November by the Virginia Department of Education. For the six standards in the evaluation rubric, each with accompanying sub-standards, the Governor's School received 13 "exceeds standard," 47 "meets standard," 2 "doesn't meet standard," 20 commendations, and 8 recommendations for improvement. Mr. Levy stated the overall impressions from the evaluation team were highly positive, and references such as "unique" and "one of a kind" were offered. He commended Mrs. Paula Buch for her efforts to ensure the evaluation went smoothly and the evaluation team had what it needed. The Board congratulated Mr. Levy on an excellent report.

Directors Report

Project Forum: Mr. Levy reported a most successful event and thanked the Board members for attending. He commended Governor's School Mathematics Teacher Melissa Fisher for planning and coordinating a wonderful event.

Science Award: Mr. Levy stated Cave Spring High School and Governor's School Senior Kevin Sheng has been recognized among the top 300 students in the international Regeneron STS competition.

2020 Annual Fundraiser: Mr. Levy reported this year's campaign was incredibly successful raising more than \$32,000 and recognized the RVGS Foundation and parents for their support. He stated efforts to secure additional sponsors has resulted in interest by Freedom First and Carilion.

Community Outreach/Collaboration: Mr. Levy reported tours and student visits went very well; students, parents, and staff attended a recent Roanoke Branch NAACP luncheon and heard from the NAACP National Chairman Leon Russell, which was a valuable professional development experience for all. He stated the Shelly STEM Challenge went very well and AEP again partnered with the Governor's School. Mr. Levy

stated efforts to increase diversity and ensure equity of access for all students continues, and the process for applicants is as fair as it can be.

Student Support: Mr. Levy stated student well being and personal development efforts included a new feature this school year, "No Freak Out November," and there was a menu of options to help address student stress. He thanked Counselor Kathy Sebolt for her work in this area. Mr. Levy noted students at academic risk have been identified, and support is offered students in the areas of time management, study skills, and academic monitoring.

2020-21 Recruitment: Mr. Levy stated there was a 29 percent higher attendance rate over previous years; there was standing room only at the first meeting for parents and students interested in the Governor's School requiring students to be relocated to classrooms to free up space for parents.

Staffing: Mr. Levy announced the retirement of Dr. Brent Holt, Physics and Engineering Teacher, and the resignation of Mrs. Nancy Aldridge, Physics and Engineering Teacher, who is moving out of state.

Senior Dinner: Mr. Levy asked Board members and Superintendents to mark their calendar for the Senior Dinner on May 4 at the Hotel Roanoke.

Board Discussion Items

Mrs. Nix expressed how impressed she was to observe how invested the students are in what they are doing and how well the students presented themselves during Project Forum. Several Board members added that it was a great idea to move the awards ceremony to the gymnasium.

Mr. Johnson stated he had spoken with a parent of a Bedford student who wanted to leave last year, but because of the supports provided the student now wants to stay. He stated, "the work you are doing is paying off and parents have noticed this."

2020 Meeting Calendar

The Chairman reminded Board members of the next meeting on Monday, April 27 and noted a copy of the 2020 Meeting Calendar was included in the agenda packet reflecting the upcoming meeting dates:

April 27, 2020
June 1, 2020
October 5, 2020

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

Mark K. Cathey, Chairman

Cindy H. Poulton, Clerk