



Regional Board Meeting
May 28, 2025

- I. Public Comment on FY26 Budget
- II. Call to Order
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Approve Minutes: March 26, 2025
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Presentation from Theatre and Visual Arts Departments
- VII. Closed Session: Personnel Actions
- VIII. Reports
 - a. Financial Report.....Dr. Cihak
 - i. Revenue
 - ii. Expenditures
 - b. School Report.....Dr. Cihak
 - i. Fourth Quarter Celebrations
 - c. Foundation Report.....Foundation Representative
- IX. Unfinished Business
- X. New Business
 - a. FY25 Retention Bonuses
 - b. FY26 Operational Budget
 - c. Domestic Overnight Field Trips 2025-2026
 - d. Regional Board Meetings for 2025-2026
 - a. September 24, 2025
 - b. January 28, 2026
 - c. March 25, 2026
 - d. May 13, 2026
 - e. Approval of Foundation Board Member(s).....Foundation Representative
- XI. Items by Board Members
- XII. Adjournment



REGIONAL BOARD MEETING
March 26, 2025

MINUTES

The Regional Board of The Governor's School for the Arts met in hybrid format at the SECEP offices and virtually on March 26, 2025. Attending the meeting were:

Regional Board Members in Person

Ms. LaChanda Parker	Franklin
Mr. Jason Maresh	Isle of Wight
Col. Ken Paulson	Norfolk
Ms. Kim Melnyk	Virginia Beach

Regional Board Members Virtual

Ms. Karen Jenkins	Suffolk
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Superintendents In Person

Dr. Theo Cramer	Isle of Wight
Dr. Sharon Byrdsong	Norfolk
Dr. Elie Bracy III	Portsmouth
Dr. John B. Gordon III	Suffolk
Dr. Donald Robertson	Virginia Beach

GSA Staff:

Dr. Shelly Cihak	Executive Director
Ms. Deborah Thorpe	Assistant Director
Ms. Kristen Outlaw-Hartman	Office Manager

GSA Instructors and Students:

Joni Petre-Scholz	Dance, Chair
Janelle Spruill	Dance, Associate Chair
Kyla Carrington	Dance, Student
Lillian Langer	Dance, Student
Peyton Whitehurst	Dance, Student
Chip Gallagher	Musical Theatre, Chair
Jeff Warner	Musical Theatre, Associate Chair
Grace Santo	Musical Theatre, Student

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Ms. Parker at 11:04am.

Roll Call: Attendance was taken by Dr. Cihak.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Ms. Melnyk, seconded by Mr. Maresh, to approve the minutes from January 29, 2025. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Public Comment None.

Presentation by the Dance and Musical Theatre Departments: Dr. Cihak introduced the students and staff that came to the Regional Board meeting to share their GSA experience. Senior Kyla Carrington shared about her experience teaching dance to students at Teens With A Purpose, while Lillian Langer and Peyton Whitehurst described the process of choreographing their senior capstone together and having it selected for performance at the National High School Dance Festival. Grace Santo performed a piece from *Sister Act*. Following the performance, Grace shared the impact GSA has had on her and highlighted her trip to Japan to connect cultures through the arts.

Closed Session: Ms. Melnyk made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A), for the purpose of discussing the personnel report and a personnel matter, which was seconded by Col. Paulson. The Board entered into closed session at 11:25am. At 11:33am the closed session ended after a motion from Ms. Jenkins, seconded by Mr. Maresh. A motion was made by Ms. Melnyk to approve the personnel report, which was seconded by Mr. Maresh. The personnel report was approved unanimously.

Reports

Financial Report

- a. **Revenue:** Referring to the March 18, 2025 revenue report, Dr. Cihak noted that tuition is reflected from all but two localities. The payment from Norfolk Public Schools has been received but has yet to be posted to the account, while Southampton's Finance Office has confirmed they are processing payment.
- b. **Operational Budget Expenditures:** Dr. Cihak shared that the March 18, 2025 expenditure report is in line with where it should be this time of year and reflects the allocations of the additional state entitlement funds approved at the January 29, 2025 meeting. Dr. Cihak highlighted that the state entitlement overage has been used for hourly wages and supplies. The orchestra students will be receiving 60 iPads and foot-pedals paid for by the equipment grant.
- c. The financial report was accepted by unanimous consent.

School Report

1. **Third Quarter Review:** A very busy third quarter featured numerous performances and enriching experiences. GSA had the most amazing experience working with young composer Alma Deutscher, as our Vocal Music Department, accompanied by our Instrumental Music Department's orchestra, performed her opera, *Cinderella*. Alma was in residence at GSA for two weeks and conducted the orchestra for the performances. In addition to the cross-discipline performance for the school and invited guests, the performance for the general public was sold out at the Sandler Center. This project would not have been possible without our partnership with the Virginia Arts Festival. The Visual Arts Department held the 11TH Annual Wearable Art Fashion Show at the Chrysler Museum---it was an incredible event with the works of visual artists on the runway, accompanied by the tunes of the GSA jazz musicians. The entire school got to attend a version of the fashion show yesterday, during the cross-discipline event featuring the Visual Arts Department. Artist Joyce Scott, whose exhibit was one source of inspiration for the students' creations, attended the show, which drew a crowd of over 550 people.
2. **Fourth Quarter Preview:** Dr. Cihak shared that numerous events are planned for the fourth quarter including the Opera Scenes at University Theatre, Spring Dance and Orchestra Concerts, Spring Jazz Concert, Piano Recital, Chamber Music, the 37TH Annual Spring Juried Art Exhibition, the Theatre & Film Department's production of *Almost Maine*, and the Annual Student Film Festival at the NARO Expanded Cinema. The Musical Theatre Department will

have a coproduction of *Footloose* with Virginia Musical Theater. Additionally, senior capstone events include the Senior Vocal Recital and Musical Theatre Senior Cabaret, along with 27 Senior Art Shows and 22 Senior Recitals. Dr. Cihak shared that fourth year Dance senior, Grace Malenda, has received over \$1 million in scholarships. Jazz student, Jack Parker has been offered a full-ride to Berklee.

3. **Alumni Update:** Dr. Cihak shared updates on several alumni including that Adrienne Warren has returned to Broadway in *The Last Five Years*, which the Theatre & Film students will see on their trip to New York. Ryan Speedo Green is in *Moby Dick* at the Metropolitan Opera; Marquise Hitchcock was on *Watch What Happens Live* on BRAVO; and Courtney Connor, a film student who graduated in 2024, has been selected to travel to Morocco for an intensive two-week film project with the VCU Cinema Department.

Foundation Report

Ms. Thorpe shared that there was nothing new to report.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business

1. **2025-2026 International Trips:** Dr. Cihak presented two international trips for consideration. Theatre and Film requests travel to London over spring break to attend workshops and perform. Visual Arts requests to travel to Venice in the summer for a glass intensive that will be almost 100% funded by artist Marcantonio Brandolini D'Adda. A motion to approve the trips was made by Ms. Melnyk, seconded by Col. Paulson, and approved by unanimous consent.
2. **FY26 Budget Public Hearing:** Dr. Cihak requested the FY26 Budget Public Hearing be set for May 28, 2025 at 11am prior to the next meeting of the Regional Board. A motion was made by Col. Paulson, seconded by Ms. Melnyk, and approved by unanimous consent.

Items by Board Members

Ms. Parker announced that Franklin will move to a pre-Labor Day start.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Melnyk, seconded by Mr. Maresh, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Personnel Report
May 28, 2025
The Governor's School for the Arts

Resignations

None

Retirements

None

Promotions

None

Elections

Katherine Mielish
Salary: \$75,232.69

Technical Director

Effective July 1, 2025

Kate Mielish

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Production Management

2004 – Present

Production Manager

TCC Roper Performing Arts Center

2012-Present

Advance all technical production requirements using riders and direct communication with clients; supervise and oversee contracted live productions from load-in through load-out; meticulously maintain all equipment in house leading to seldom need to replace, however when needed, recommend, update, and purchase new equipment keeping within established budget guidelines; keep all technical, client, labor, and safety documents, including MSDS and OSHA, current; create and settle estimated production costs, coming in, on average, on or below budget; provide cost-savings efficiency on annual repeated events; recruit, hire, and train top notch professional stage crew. Act as liaison between clients and FOH Roper staff.

Production Manager

TCC Blackbox & Grove Stage, Chesapeake Campus

2021-Present

Established a more efficient work process using industry professionals to render a superior product while at the same time provided new learning opportunities for students. Maintaining and repairing theatrical equipment resulting in significant departmental cost savings for the college. Design the lighting for dept productions to create a professional artistic production. Train and supervise students on lighting equipment.

Technical Director

Todd Rosenlieb Dance Company, VBT, and Ensembles

2008-2023

Transformed dance studio into proscenium and blackbox style stage for both company performances and rentals. Proposed and implemented upgrades of the theatre space to take advantage of new technologies and allow more flexibility in the expanding needs. Toured with company to other venues and successfully led load-in, hang & focus, and tech including on several occasions, coordinating with the Chrysler Museum of Art to turn the Atrium into a performance space, ODU's University Theatre, The American Theatre, and Arts of the Albemarle.

Assistant Tech Director

Roper PAC -Virginia Arts Festival

2004-2008

Lighting Design

2004 – Present

Design plot, lead and perform hang & focus, and collaborate closely with directors and choreographers to create the lighting concepts to enhance the overall visual aesthetic of the performance. Work in several different venues and recreate the design for seamless transitions to multiple venues. Often recommended for new projects and called upon to train, troubleshoot, and consult on lighting equipment and design.

Tidewater Community College Theatre Dept

Chesapeake, VA 2020-Present

Governor's School for the Arts

Norfolk, VA 2009-Present

Todd Rosenlieb Dance, VBT, Ensembles

Norfolk, VA 2008-2023

Actor's Workshop Theatre of Virginia

Norfolk, VA 2009-2023

Old Dominion University Dance Dept

Norfolk, VA 2021

Virginia Arts Festival

Norfolk, VA 2004-2012

Thomas Nelson Community College Theater

Hampton, VA 2009-2019

Shakespeare in the Plot & Push Comedy Theater

Norfolk, VA 2021

Hurrah Players

Norfolk, VA 2004-Present

Stage Management

2004 – 2023

Governor's School for the Arts

Virginia Musical Theatre

ODU Dance Dept

Todd Rosenlieb Dance

Suffolk Community Players

Production Assistant

2009 – Present

Mary T Christian Auditorium TNCC

Hampton, Virginia

Torrie Sanders

2009- 2019

The American Theatre

Hampton, Virginia

Brad Monahan

2008-2012

Virginia Arts Festival

Norfolk, Virginia

Varies

2004-2011

Suffolk Center for the Cultural Arts

Suffolk, Virginia

Russ Brown

2007-2010

NEON Festival

Norfolk, Virginia

2021-Present

Other

Governor's School for the Arts

Intro to Lighting Teacher

Shawn Crawford 2016-2017

Governor's School for the Arts

RHSD Festival LD & PM

Deborah Thorpe 2013-Present

Tattoo Virginia Arts Festival

Tattoo Hullabaloo Coordinator

Jennifer Hafner 2011

Shakespeare in the Plot

Production Coordinator, TD, LD

Brad McMurren & Deborah Wallace 2021

Onyx Live

Lighting Designer

Larry Parker 2023-Present

Arts for Life Benefit

Lighting Designer, TD

Ricardo Melendez & LGBT Life Center 2007-2022

Kate Mielish

NORFOLK, VA 23504 • CELL: 412-716-8291 • KATEMIELISH@GMAIL.COM

Education

Ohio Wesleyan University BA 2004 **Major:** Theatre; Technical and Stage Management Concentration
Continuing education through **Electronic Theatre Controls** at **ETC Cues** 2013-2017
Continuing education at **LDI** 2014

Additional Skills

Computer skills: Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point. LightWright, VectorWorks, Offline editors for ETC., Qlab, Google Calendar, Docs, Sheets, etc.

Lighting Consoles: ETC – EOS family, Express 250, Obsession, SmartFade; Strand - Palette, MX; Lightronics – similar to TL2448,.

Analog and Digital Sound Console operation: DDA CS8, Yamaha M7CL, Dante (Certified Level 2)

Christie Digital Solaria Plus One Cinematic Projector, Extron AV Switcher

Sculpture and 3-D Art and Design, basic carpentry and use of power tools, personal lift, technical writing, lighting & sound equipment maintenance, box office work, basic sewing.

References

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THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

FY25 Operational Budget Summary of Revenue

May 19, 2025

Revenues	FY25	YTD
Anticipated State Entitlement*	\$2,199,945.00	\$1,856,755.54
State Technology	\$26,000.00	\$0.00
Fund Transfer	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tuition**	\$1,820,800.00	\$1,820,800.00
Education Stabalization Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$4,046,745.00	\$3,677,555.54

*Based upon enrollment of 382.

**Funding 400 students for FY25.

**The Governor's School for the Arts
Operational Budget Expenses for FY25
Financial Report As of May 19, 2025**

OBJECT CODE	DESCRIPTION	FY25 BUDGET ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	REVISED EST REV	ACTUAL YTD	ENCUMBERED TO DATE	AVAILABLE BALANCE	% EXPENDED ENCUMBERED AS OF 5/19/2025
1110	Administrative Salary	\$ 245,323.00	\$ 245,323.00	\$202,521.10	\$0.00	\$42,801.90	82.60%
1120	Teachers: Contracted	\$ 755,000.00	\$ 755,000.00	\$642,161.85	\$0.00	\$112,838.15	85.10%
1121	Teachers: Hourly Salary	\$ 880,000.00	\$ 924,362.50	\$656,851.99	\$0.00	\$267,510.51	71.10%
1150	Clerical Salary	\$ 90,196.00	\$ 90,196.00	\$68,838.36	\$0.00	\$21,357.64	76.30%
1621	Stipends	\$ 14,800.00	\$ 14,800.00	\$13,454.60	\$0.00	\$1,345.40	90.90%
2100	Social Security	\$ 152,578.00	\$ 152,578.00	\$124,551.82	\$0.00	\$28,026.18	81.60%
2210	VRS Retirement	\$ 80,145.00	\$ 82,516.56	\$64,520.59	\$0.00	\$17,995.97	78.20%
2220	VRS Retirement - Hybrid	\$ 100,361.00	\$ 97,989.44	\$70,251.24	\$0.00	\$27,738.20	71.70%
2300	Health Insurance	\$ 150,759.00	\$ 150,759.00	\$120,652.59	\$0.00	\$30,106.41	80.00%
2400	VRS Group Life	\$ 13,048.00	\$ 13,048.00	\$10,965.87	\$0.00	\$2,082.13	84.00%
2510	VLDP Disability-Hybrid	\$ 7,441.00	\$ 7,441.00	\$2,176.72	\$0.00	\$5,264.28	29.30%
2750	VRS Retiree Healthcare	\$ 11,391.00	\$ 12,191.00	\$11,244.42	\$0.00	\$946.58	92.20%
2800	Terminal Leave Payment	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,700.00	0.00%
3000	Contracts	\$ 396,013.00	\$ 500,594.50	\$298,978.34	\$29,559.35	\$172,056.81	65.60%
3117	Equip Maint Contract	\$ 700.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$915.40	\$0.00	\$84.60	91.54%
5110	Electricity	\$ 38,450.00	\$ 38,450.00	\$25,537.10	\$10,912.90	\$2,000.00	94.80%
5120	Natural Gas	\$ 3,334.00	\$ 3,334.00	\$2,277.12	\$361.54	\$695.34	79.10%
5130	Water	\$ 4,620.00	\$ 4,620.00	\$2,043.72	\$722.89	\$1,853.39	59.90%
5250	Postage/Courier	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$250.93	\$0.00	\$549.07	31.40%
5260	Telephone	\$ 24,100.00	\$ 24,100.00	\$17,900.36	\$5,387.21	\$812.43	96.60%
5300	Insurance	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 10,149.00	\$10,149.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	100.00%
5400	Leases/Rentals	\$ 696,720.00	\$ 615,071.00	\$589,815.01	\$8,044.30	\$17,211.69	97.20%
5501	Local Travel	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 28,000.00	\$20,705.87	\$0.00	\$7,294.13	73.90%
5550	Staff Development	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	0.00%
6000	Supplies	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 229,186.00	\$122,237.72	\$47,863.99	\$59,084.29	74.20%
6040	Technology	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00	\$16,080.67	\$0.00	\$1,919.33	89.30%
8200	Equipment Additions	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 26,000.00	\$23,133.83	\$2,784.00	\$82.17	99.70%
		\$3,881,279.00	\$4,051,209.00	\$3,118,216.22	\$105,636.18	\$827,356.60	79.60%

Proposed Disbursement of the FY25 Bonus Payments
The Governor's School for the Arts

The Governor's School for the Arts was recently notified by the VDOE Director of Budget, Ed Lanza, that "Chapter 725, 2025 Acts of Assembly, authorized \$134.4 million from the general fund in fiscal year (FY) 2025 to school divisions, Academic Year Governor's Schools, and Regional Alternative Education Programs for bonus payments to instructional and support personnel. The state payment to school divisions is based on the cost of a \$1,000 bonus payment to SOQ-funded instructional and support personnel. The state payment to Academic Year Governor's Schools and Regional Alternative Education Programs is based on the cost of a \$1,000 bonus payment for staff reported to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) on the most recent collection of the Annual School Report (FY 2023 at the time of calculation). VDOE is required to make the payments to school divisions and eligible regional programs no later than June 1, 2025. School divisions have the authority to amend the bonus paid per employee to maximize the use of the state funds to promote retention among instructional and support positions. A local match is not required to receive these funds."

GSA proposes to follow the actions of fiscal agent, Norfolk Public Schools, to provide a \$1,000 retention bonus payment to the full-time staff (and part-time staff who work over 25 hours each week) and a \$175 bonus to the 75 part-time faculty members who taught all four quarters of the 2024-2025 school year and who return for the 2025-2026 school year.

GSA will receive \$31,219 in funding and respectfully requests approval to allocate the additional funds as follows:

9200-8-870-900-98100-0000-166000-	\$3000
9200-8-870-900-98120-0000-166000-	\$2000
9200-8-870-900-98140-0000-166000-	\$3000
9200-8-870-900-98200-0000-166000-	\$1000
9200-8-870-900-98180-0000-166000-	\$2000
9200-8-870-900-98160-0000-166000-	\$2000
9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-	\$18,219

GSA respectfully requests that from the allocations, bonuses in the amount of \$1,000 be paid to the following individuals:

NAME	POSITION	BUDGET CODE
Bussey, Peter Joseph	Instrumental Music/Jazz	9200-8-870-900-98140-0000-166000-
Cihak, Michelle	Executive Director	9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-
Courts, Liana	Visual Arts	9200-8-870-900-98180-0000-166000-
Coxe, Stephen	Instrumental Music	9200-8-870-900-98140-0000-166000-
Gallagher, Terry	Musical Theatre	9200-8-870-900-98160-0000-166000-
Gates, Amanda	Instrumental Music	9200-8-870-900-98140-0000-166000-
Lasakow, Kathy	Dance	9200-8-870-900-98100-0000-166000-
McCall, Rachel	Assistant Director	9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-
Mielish, Kate	Technical Director	9200-8-870-900-98120-0000-166000-
Milam-Ratliff, Michele	Vocal Music	9200-8-870-900-98200-0000-166000-
Mitchell, Donovan	Theatre	9200-8-870-900-98120-0000-166000-
Outlaw-Hartman, B. Kristen	Office Manager	9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-
Petre-Scholz, Joni	Dance	9200-8-870-900-98100-0000-166000-

Quaintance, Wallis	Student Data Specialist	9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-
Spruill, Janelle	Dance	9200-8-870-900-98100-0000-166000-
Warner, William	Musical Theatre	9200-8-870-900-98160-0000-166000-
Wright, Benjamin	Visual Arts	9200-8-870-900-98180-0000-166000-

With the remaining \$14,219 paid in amounts of \$175 to each part-time faculty member who taught all four quarters of the 2024-2025 school year and who returns for the 2025-2026 school year from budget code 9200-8-870-900-98300-0000-166000-.

If approved, there will be \$1,094 remaining in funds allocated from the state.



Proposed Domestic Overnight Trips **2025-2026***

Date	Department	Location	Description
Fall 2025	Visual Arts	Eastern Shore of Virginia	Fall Plein Air Weekend to focused on the centuries-long tradition of Plein Air artmaking that captures the wonder of the wilderness through camping or cabin/yurt experience.
January 15-18, 2026	Vocal Music	New York, New York	Workshops/Tours/Performances including working with alums Ryan Speedo Green and Frederick Ballentine at The Metropolitan Opera, workshops with Juilliard faculty, and meeting with opera agents.
February 27-28, 2026	Instrumental Music	Harrisonburg, Virginia	All-Virginia Auditions
March 5-8, 2026	Instrumental Music	New York, New York	Cultural Tour to include experiences such as: Three live music performances; tour and Q&A at Lincoln Center; Master Classes
April 2-6, 2026	Theatre & Film and Musical Theatre	New York, New York	Workshops/Tours/Performances with specific activities for acting, film, and design/tech students.
April 16-18, 2026	Instrumental Music	Richmond, Virginia	All-Virginia Rehearsals and Performance
Spring 2026	Dance	New York, New York	College Workshops/Tours; View Performances; Participate in Master Classes

*International trips previously approved by Committee of Superintendents and Regional Board.

A Governor's School sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education and the public school divisions of Chesapeake, Franklin, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Southampton, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.