

# VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Planning Grant Application for a College Partnership Laboratory School

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### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

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1. **Name of Eligible Entity (Planning Grant Applicant):** Mountain Gateway Community College.
2. **Authorized Official Representative:** John Rainone, President.
3. **Name of Contact Person for Application:** Ben Worth, Vice President, Academic Affairs.
4. **Telephone:** 540-863-2933
5. **Email:** bworth@mgcc.edu
6. **Office Telephone Number:** 540-863-2933
7. **Date of Submission:** October 14, 2022.
8. **Amount of Funding Requested (\$200,000 maximum):** \$116,103.
9. Public institutions of higher education (IHE); public higher education centers, institutes, or authorities; or eligible institutions of higher education as defined in the Tuition Assistance Grant Program, as provided in [§ 23.1-628](#), (eligible entity or entities) may apply for a Virginia Board of Education (Board) College Partnership Laboratory School Planning Grant (Planning Grant).
10. Each Planning Grant Applicant (applicant) seeking a Planning Grant must read and comply with the Instructions for Application for a Planning Grant for a College Partnership Laboratory School (Lab School), which are available on the Virginia

Department of Education’s (Department) website, and fully complete this Planning Grant Application (application) to be eligible for a Planning Grant.

11. Applications may be submitted, and will be evaluated for Planning Grant awards based on factors set forth herein, on a rolling basis.

**12. Planning Grant Term: This application is for a one-time Planning Grant, the term for which will not exceed 12 months from the date of any award hereunder.**

13. The completed PDF version of the application and related materials must be sent to [labschools@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov) by email. The Department may return or reject proposals that are incomplete.

14. Please contact [labschools@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov) by email if there are any questions about the application process.

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## B. DEFINITIONS

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1. **College Partnership Laboratory School:** In accordance with Item 4-14 of the General Assembly’s 2022-2024 Biennium budget, the Code of Virginia § 22.1-349.1 is amended and reenacted, and the types of IHE eligible entities to establish Lab Schools are defined as follows:

a. "College Partnership Laboratory School" means a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious school in the Commonwealth established by a public institution of higher education; public higher education center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution, as defined in § 23.1-628. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-349.5, a public institution of higher education; a public higher education center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution, as defined in § 23.1-628 may submit an application for formation of a college partnership laboratory school.”

b. An “eligible institution” as provided above is an institution of higher education as defined in the Tuition Assistance Grant Program in accordance with § 23.1-628.

2. **At-risk student:** As provided in the Code of Virginia § 22.1-349.1, "at-risk student" means a student having a physical, emotional, intellectual, socioeconomic, or cultural risk factor, as defined in Board criteria, that research indicates may negatively influence educational success.

For the purpose of these guidelines and any Planning Grant awards, "at-risk students" include (a) students who have experienced learning loss as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) students served by low-performing schools that are designated as "accredited with conditions" or "accreditation denied" based on the Virginia Board of Education's accreditation ratings; and (c) students attending schools identified under the Every Student Succeeds Act within three support categories: (i) Comprehensive Support and Improvement, (ii) Targeted Support and Improvement, or (iii) Additional Targeted Support Category.

3. **Regional diversity:** For the purpose of evaluation of this application, regional diversity reflects representation from each of the Department's eight Superintendent regions.

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## C. ASSURANCES AND SIGNATURES

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### 1. ASSURANCES

- a. By signing and submitting this application, the applicant assures that it will adhere to state and federal laws and regulations governing public schools, including the *Virginia Standards of Quality*, the *Virginia Standards of Learning*, and the Board's *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.
- b. The applicant assures that all elements of the proposed school(s) will comport with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- c. The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in the application is correct, that all application elements have been addressed as required in this application, and that the applicant understands and will comply with the assurances.
- d. The applicant agrees to conduct a review of their planning phase, and submit milestones and deliverables as required, including, but not limited to, a comprehensive report with details for the projected Lab School implementation, expenses, and other items as may be prescribed by the Department.

- e. Applicants receiving a Planning Grant are expected, by the end of the term of such grant, to submit a subsequent application for the launch of a Lab School to the Department, for review and approval by the Board.
- f. Applicant provides assurance to subscribe to the following reporting requirements timetable:

| TIMELINE   | BENCHMARK AND DELIVERABLES   |
|--|--|
| On or before the end of the first quarter of the grant term  | Awardee must present a proposed list of milestones, measures of success, and deliverables.   |
| On or before the end of the second quarter of the grant term | Awardee must submit a progress report in order to be eligible for the second installment of the award.   |
| On or before the end of the third quarter of the grant term  | Awardee must present progress on milestones and deliverables, including submission to the Board of an application for approval to launch a Lab School. |
| On or before the end of the grant term                       | Awardee is expected to have attained approval by the Board to launch a Lab School.   |

**2. SIGNATURES**

- a. Higher Education Authorization:

Signature of [AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE of public institution of higher education; public higher education center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution]:



Printed Name: John Rainone.  
 Title: President.  
 Date: October 14, 2022

b. Fiscal Agent Authorization (if applicable):

Signature of Division Superintendent of Fiscal Agent School Division:

Mountain Gateway Community College will serve as the fiscal agent.

**Printed Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

c. Signature of Chairman of School Board of Fiscal Agent:

Mountain Gateway Community College will serve as the fiscal agent.

**Printed Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

## **D. REGIONAL AND APPLICANT DIVERSITY**

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1. Planning Grants will be awarded in a manner that encourages ready access to Lab School options and the establishment of Lab Schools in each of the Department's eight Superintendent regions.
2. Indicate Proposed Name(s) of Lab School: Mountain Gateway Community College Information Technology Academy (MGITA).
3. Identify Proposed Physical Location(s) of Lab School: Mountain Gateway Community College, Main Campus (Clifton Forge) and Rockbridge Regional Center (Buena Vista) with hybrid and online delivery provided in area high schools: Alleghany High School (Covington), Bath County High School (Hot Springs), Rockbridge County High School (Lexington), Parry McCluer High School (Buena Vista), and James River High School (Buchanan).

## **E. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, GOAL, AND TIMELINE**

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### **1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

#### **a. General description of the program *(2-3 paragraphs maximum)*:**

The Mountain Gateway IT Academy (MGITA) will provide residents of 4 rural Virginia counties (Alleghany, Bath, Botetourt, and Rockbridge) with critical, in-demand information technology skills. While still in high school, students will have the opportunity to begin study in one or more areas: (1) cybersecurity, (2) cloud computing, and (3) IT technical support (Help Desk). Students are eligible to complete a career studies certificate while still in high school and to receive instruction to earn industry recognized certifications including the CompTIA A+, Network +, Security+, Linux + Certification and AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner.

The program will leverage existing partnerships Mountain Gateway Community College (MGCC) has developed for the five high schools in its service area: Alleghany High School, Bath County High School, Rockbridge County High School, Parry McCluer High School, and James River High School. MGCC will build on the success of the Jackson River Governor's school, located on its main campus in Clifton Forge, as well as the dual enrollment provided in local high schools. Instruction may be provided either on the main campus in Clifton Forge, at MGCC's Rockbridge Regional Center in Buena Vista and/or through hybrid instruction delivered through synchronous and asynchronous delivery in the high schools. MGCC is very interested in exploring hybrid delivery that will leverage the college's experience with video instruction to reduce travel across the wide service area MGCC serves, covering over 1,800 square miles. MGITA students will also have the benefit of collaborating with students from different school districts.

MGCC believes in hands-on learning, and MGITA will also provide work-based learning opportunities for high school students by providing them with internships in the IT departments of their local high schools or in nonprofit organizations in our local communities. The program will also provide transfer opportunities in support of continued study in two-year and four-year institutions.

b. Rationale for the program (2-3 paragraphs maximum):

A large number of MGCC students are considered under-served, meaning they are either first-generation college students, a racial or ethnic minority, or low-income. Roughly one-third of MGCC students are considered first-generation college students and another third are low-income. In 2018, over 60% of MGCC's were from underrepresented populations. These demographics are mirrored in our K12 partners as well. Student populations receiving free or reduced lunch are high across the school systems that MGITA will serve: Alleghany County, 56.08%; Bath County, 55.11%; Botetourt County, 27.41%; Buena Vista City, 67%; Rockbridge County, 46.68%, (Source: 2019-2020 Free and Reduced Lunch Report).

MGITA will provide opportunities for these students.

The MGITA will provide students with the foundational skills critical for many entry-level IT positions, a high demand field that is experiencing regional and national growth. The high schools in the MGCC service area have struggled to provide IT training to their students, and MGITA will raise the bar significantly. The training provided by the MGITA will allow graduates to find employment as help desk specialists/technicians, desktop support specialists, technical support specialists, and cybersecurity professionals. Job opportunities exist locally, and telecommuting in IT fields provides opportunities for students to find employment in regional or national companies without having to relocate.

c. Nature of innovation proposed for the program, including how it will improve student academic proficiency, mastery, college and career readiness, and long-term outcome goal (2-3 paragraphs maximum):

In addition to the brick-and-mortar resources of the local community college and high schools, the MGITA will provide hybrid delivery of instruction with support provided in the high schools to allow multiple modes for learning. MGCC has experience in this model, having worked with local school systems to provide real time video lectures (Zoom) that are supported by teacher's aides in the high schools.

Hybrid instruction will allow students to benefit from learning how to solve problems, collaborate with others, and conduct learning while working at a distance. Face-to-face learning experiences will be provided to allow hands-on training with state-of-the-art equipment.

Students will also utilize and have access to simulations and remote live labs that will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to aid in mastering course learning objectives. This allows students to practice at times that fit students' schedule. Simulations and labs have step-by-step instructions and can be repeated as many times as necessary to master the skills presented.

MGCC is an active participant in the statewide Transfer Virginia (TVA) initiative and MGCC will use its ongoing work with TVA to ensure MGCC's graduates have pathways to study in the IT programs such as MGCC's Information Systems Technology Associate of Applied Science as well as transfer to four-year institutions.

d. Expected student learning benefits *(2-3 paragraphs maximum)*:

Students will learn core IT skills and meet and exceed all high school IT learning competencies. Students will receive instruction to allow them to sit for nationally recognized certifications such as:

CompTIA A+ Certification  
CompTIA Network +  
CompTIA Linux + Certification  
CompTIA Security+ Certification  
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner

Instruction will also include MGCC's SDV 100, College Success Skills, which prepares students for post-secondary educational study and explores topics such as test taking skills, financial management, career exploration, and time management skills.

e. Expected teacher learning and professional development benefits *(2-3 paragraphs maximum)*:

The expanded presence of IT instruction on high school campuses will drive professional development training in support of IT skills needed by all K12 teachers.

The fields represented here--cybersecurity, cloud computing and IT technical support--are current, in-demand fields, and today's teachers need to have knowledge of the technologies, terminology, skills and tools used in these fields to prepare students for future careers. By partnering with local high schools, teachers will have an opportunity to train and obtain industry certification in these in-demand fields.



f. Content areas addressed:

In addition to the certifications listed above, study in the MGITA will support VDOE Standards of Learning and CTE Competencies in Computer Information Systems (10005 Business and Computer Applications).

**2. GOAL**

State the overall proposed goal for the program:

The goal of the Mountain Gateway IT Academy is to provide instruction leading to completion of one or more career studies certificates in the fields of cybersecurity, cloud computing, IT technical support (Help Desk); to provide the opportunity to complete industry recognized certifications in the field of Information Technology; and to provide a pathway to transfer to two-year and/or four-year degree programs.

**3. TIMELINE**

Provide a timeline of the planning process, including the proposed date/school year for launch of a Lab School:

November 2022-December 2022

Hire Project Administrator

November 2022-January 2023

Conduct meetings with MGCC staff, High School teachers, counselors and principals

February 2023

Complete Curriculum Review and determine MGITA course offerings  
Complete mode of delivery analysis  
Identify Work-Based Learning opportunities  
Identify Faculty Training Needs

March 2023

Complete first draft of Lab School Application and share with high schools

April 2023 – May 2023

Receive and incorporate feedback from high schools and from MGCC staff

June 2023

Submit Lab School Application

*Pending Approval of Application*

July 2023

Begin development of hybrid delivery of curriculum  
Provide Professional Development to MGITA instructors

August 2023 – December 2023

Finalize curriculum and mode of delivery  
Begin student recruitment

January 2024

Begin enrolling students in courses for 2024-2025

August 2024

Launch Mountain Gateway Community College IT Academy

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## **F. STUDENT POPULATION AND RELEVANT RESEARCH**

### **1. TARGETED STUDENT POPULATION**

- a. Describe the student population and discuss why they are proposed. Include the number of students, reporting group(s), and grade level(s):

Most students attending MGCC are under the age of 25 (70%) and are classified as part-time, taking fewer than 12 credits per term (80%). A high percentage of these traditional-aged, part-time students are in high school, taking courses for both college and high school credit through MGCC's dual enrollment program. In fact, in the Fall 2021 term, 35% of MGCC's full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE) were dual enrolled high school students. The dual enrollment program is seen as a strength of the College and increasing the number of dual enrollment opportunities is supported by the local school districts as well as the MGCC.

A large number of MGCC students are also considered under-served, meaning they are either first-generation college students, a racial or ethnic minority, or low-income. Roughly one-third of MGCC students are considered first-generation college students and another third are low-income. In 2018, over 60% of MGCC's were from under-represented populations. Approximately 16% of students identify as non-White. In MGCC's service region, 8% identify as non-white.

These demographic are mirrored in the high schools that MGCC serves. Nearly one-half of the students in the counties served by MGITA receive free or reduced lunch: Alleghany County, 56.08%; Bath County, 55.11%; Botetourt County, 27.41%; Buena Vista City, 67%; Rockbridge County, 46.68%, (Source: *2019-2020 Free and Reduced Lunch Report*).

MGITA will target high school juniors and seniors with a goal of providing services to exceptional sophomores.

| <b>GRADES TO BE SERVED FOR THE FULL TERM OF THE<br/>APPROVED LAB SCHOOL CONTRACT</b><br>(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY*) |  |                |   |
|--|--|----------------|---|
| Pre-K  |  | Sixth Grade    |   |
| Kindergarten   |  | Seventh Grade  |   |
| First Grade  |  | Eighth Grade   |   |
| Second Grade   |  | Ninth Grade    |   |
| Third Grade  |  | Tenth Grade    | x |
| Fourth Grade   |  | Eleventh Grade | x |
| Fifth Grade  |  | Twelfth Grade  | x |

\*If the applicant intends to add or change grade levels at some point during the Lab School's operation, please provide this information in the education program section of the narrative.

- b. Describe the community(ies) the school(s) serves:  
The counties of Alleghany, Bath, Botetourt, and Rockbridge as well as the cities of Buena Vista, Covington, and Lexington.
- c. If the Lab School is going to have a specialized focus (e.g., Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics [STEM], at-risk students, special education, career and technical education, gifted education, classical education, etc.), please describe the focus:

The Lab School will focus on Information Technology and specifically in the areas of cybersecurity, cloud computing and IT Technical Support

**2. RELEVANT RESEARCH**

Discuss any relevant research tied to the proposed student population and overall goal of the program to demonstrate that it will improve student academic proficiency, mastery, college and career readiness, and long-term outcomes:

## **G. COLLABORATION AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

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1. Describe the involvement of local school divisions, community-based organizations, employers, teachers, and parents in the planning, development, and implementation of the proposed program:

MGCC has received the support of the following school systems:

Rockbridge County Public Schools  
Alleghany Highlands Public Schools  
Botetourt County Public Schools  
City of Buena Vista Schools  
Bath County Public Schools

The MGCC Information Systems Technology Program Advisory Board includes membership from higher educational institutions (Virginia Military Institute, Washington and Lee University, Radford University), local school systems, and local industry and community organizations (Impact Advisors, Rockbridge Regional Public Safety Communication Center).

2. If the Lab School is going to be in partnership with a local school division(s), please describe the partnership briefly:

The MGITA will provide for close collaboration between Mountain Gateway Community College and the public school systems MGCC serves. MGCC has current dual enrollment contracts with all five school systems.

## **H. SUSTAINABILITY**

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1. The goal of the Planning Grant program is to support public institutions of higher education; public higher education centers, institutes, or authorities; or eligible institutions of higher education as defined in the Tuition Assistance Grant Program, as defined in § 23.1-628, as they develop and implement programs in order to create or improve capacity to operate and sustain a Lab School independently of long-term state funding, and in a manner that promotes quality, innovation, and program results.
2. Please describe the capacity of your public institution of higher education; public higher education center, institute, or authority; or eligible institution to implement a Lab School:

Mountain Gateway Community College has a proven track record providing instruction for high school students both on our campus and in the high schools. We currently operate the Jackson River Governor's School, which serves students from across the MGCC service area to study in STEM fields on our main campus in Clifton Forge. We provide dual enrollment courses in support of

Career and Technical Education and transfer education in all of the high schools in our service area and annually award the Associate of Arts and Sciences degree to high school graduates. MGCC currently provides instruction in Cybersecurity to three high schools in our service area and annually awards the Cybersecurity and Networking Foundations Career Studies Certificate to high school graduates.

3. Identify potential affiliates, partners, and describe potential sustainable funding sources:

MGCC is a beneficiary of the Carl D. Perkins grant, which supports career and technical instruction, including the MGCC Information Systems Technology Program. MGCC also receives funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia Equipment Trust Fund. MGCC is committed to identifying private sources for funding should additional funds be required to launch MGITA.

4. Identify potential barriers to the planning process and possible ways to address them:

Works remains to identify the hardware and software needed to scale up IT instruction across the service area and to determine which IT programs to incorporate into the MGITA: Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, IT technical Support, or all three. Once the curriculum is determined, the delivery of instruction (on-ground, hybrid, online) will need to be reviewed. It is well within the scope of this planning grant to answer these core questions.

## **I. BUDGET OF DIRECT COSTS (WITH \$200,000 MAXIMUM)**

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1. Complete the budget table below outlining the financial plan of how the Planning Grant will be used in the effort to establish a Lab School. The Planning Grant period and use of funds may not exceed 12 months from the date of award.
2. Only include direct operating costs. Indirect costs and capital outlay costs are not allowed. Include a description of expenses that explains appropriateness of expenses based on the category descriptions shown below.
3. All expenses must be directly related to the proposed Planning Grant activities. Applicants are not guaranteed the requested award amount and any award may be proportionally adjusted according to application's weighted Planning Grant Application Evaluation Rubric score and to reflect only those expenditures that are designated as permissible.
4. **Note: Any unspent Planning Grant funds remaining at the end of the grant term must be returned by the recipient to the Department.**

| CATEGORY                                     | DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSES   | FUNDING REQUESTED |
|--|---|-------------------|
| <b>1000 – Personal Services</b>              | Project Administrator   | \$60,000          |
| <b>2000 – Employee Benefits</b>              |   | \$41,033          |
| <b>3000 – Purchased/Contractual Services</b> | Instructional Designers – funds to provide 10 \$1,000 stipends to MGCC faculty for development of courses for hybrid/online delivery. | \$10,000          |
| <b>4000 – Internal Services</b>              |   |                   |
| <b>5000 – Other Services</b>                 | Travel Expenses to cover visits to area high schools. The state vehicle will be used when available.                                  | \$2,000           |
| <b>6000 – Materials and Supplies</b>         | Laptop, office supplies   | \$3,000           |
| <b>Total</b>                                 |   | <b>\$116,033*</b> |

**\* Total cannot exceed \$200,000 with additional funding considered at the discretion of the Department on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with available funds.**

Please visit the [Virginia Department of Education OMEGA object codes universal guidelines](#) for a complete description of the budget categories.

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## APPENDIX: PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

For the applicant’s information, the following will be used as the Planning Grant Application Evaluation Rubric for this application. Applicant does not need to complete this section.

| AREA OF CONSIDERATION                                | DESCRIPTION  | POINTS AVAILABLE |
|--|--|------------------|
| Targeted Student Population(s) and Relevant Research | Application proposes intention to serve at-risk students and/or offer a new, innovative model of instruction grounded in evidence-based practices to improve student academic proficiency, mastery, college and career readiness, and long-term outcomes.  | <b>30</b>        |
| Clarity of Program Description Goal, and Timeline    | The program description and goal are clear and attainable. Indication of programmatic, operational, and infrastructural capacity to advance an application to launch a Lab School program, as well as launch a Lab School no later than the 2024-2025 school year. Additional preference will be given to applicants with an earlier Lab School launch timeline. | <b>20</b>        |
| Sustainability                                       | Evidence of institutional commitment to the viability of a Lab School in a manner that promotes quality, innovation, program results, and sustainability.  | <b>20</b>        |
| Collaboration  | Evidence of engagement and collaboration with stakeholders, including local school divisions, community-based organizations, employers, teachers and parents.  | <b>15</b>        |

| AREA OF CONSIDERATION            | DESCRIPTION  | POINTS AVAILABLE |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Regional and Applicant Diversity | Evidence of diversity of location, with the goal of Lab Schools in each Superintendent region. For applicant diversity, preference will be given to new applicants in the event a concurrent applicant has previously received a Planning Grant during the current application period. | 15               |