



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: I

Date: October 19, 2023

Title: Report from the College Partnership Laboratory School Standing Committee

Presenter: Dr. Andy Armstrong, Assistant Superintendent of Strategic Innovation

Purpose of Presentation:
For information only: No action required.

Lab Schools in Virginia

According to the International Association of Lab Schools (“IALS”), there are approximately 200 lab schools in the world. While ambitious, the VDOE & the Standing Committee hopes to receive lab school applicants from all 8 regions in Virginia, and to be able to support and recommend for the Board’s consideration at least one high-quality, sustainable, public lab school in each region.

Further, from the applications received to date, the lab school opportunity is helping to (1) facilitate deeper collaboration between K-12 and higher education; (2) support local and regionally led innovation, (3) offer students and families new personalized learning opportunities and additional family engagement and outreach; and (4) address Virginia’s critical workforce shortages, in areas, such as teaching, cyber, and aerospace. The Standing Committee thanks the State Board for the opportunity to advise on this important work.

Executive Summary:

The College Partnership Laboratory Schools Standing Committee (“Standing Committee”) of the Board of Education (“Board”) met on October 3, 2023. Below is a summary of the meeting.

The Standing Committee began First Review of the Laboratory School Application from Germanna Community College, in collaboration and partnership with Laurel Ridge Community College and James Madison University, and school divisions in Culpeper, Orange, Madison,

Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, and Warren counties, and the city of Winchester (“Applicant”).

Applicant representatives included Taylor Landrie, Special Assistant to the President at Germanna Community College and Brenda Byard, Retired Dean, Early College & High School Partnerships at Laurel Ridge Community College, Dr. Anthony S. Brads, Division Superintendent for Culpepper County Public Schools and Dr. Janet Gullickson, President of Germanna Community College. The Applicant presented an overview of the proposed “Future Educators Academy” lab school application. At the conclusion of the Applicant’s presentation, the Lab Committee members posed comments and requests for elaboration to the Applicants on the following areas of the Germanna Community College Application:

- Commitment of participating school divisions to provide preference to teacher candidates for employment in their divisions;
- Identification of agreements between the community college and any institutes of higher learning (JMU/UM, etc.) to eliminate potential obstacles for full transfer of the earned associate degree to the IHE;
- Commented the Germanna Application was exceptional and offered a detailed execution plan.

The Applicants provided detailed information and insight to the Standing Committee through a robust exchange of questions and information. The Standing Committee approved First Review of the Germanna Application and noted the 10-day public comment posting could occur. A Lab Committee Second Review would be scheduled for November.

The Standing Committee began First Review of the Laboratory School Application from University of Mary Washington (“UMW”) and Stafford County Public Schools as the fiscal agent and hiring agent, as well as the four other school divisions in Planning District 16: Caroline County, Fredericksburg City, King George County, and Spotsylvania County (“Applicant”). Prior to consideration, VDOE Dr. Andy Armstrong and Standing Committee Chair Mrs. Wodiska conducted an on-campus site visit to UMW to provide technical assistance and review operational and academic plans for the proposed lab school.

Applicant representatives included Dr. Rebecca Towrey, Executive Director of UMW’s Academy of Technology and Innovation and Dean Peter Kelly, UMW College of Education. The Applicant presented an overview of the proposed “Academy of Technology and Innovation” lab school application. At the conclusion of the Applicant’s presentation, the Lab Committee members

posed comments and requests for elaboration to the Applicants on the following areas of the UMW Application:

- Praised the state-of-the-art school facility donated by UMW for the lab school.
- Plan for implementation of student transportation from school division location to lab facility location.
- General comments on overall administrative operational details such as transportation, meals, etc. being captured in Memorandums of Understanding between participating school divisions and the proposed lab school for shared understanding.

The Applicants provided detailed information and insight to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee approved First Review of the UMW Application and noted the 10-day public comment posting could occur. A Lab Committee Second Review would be scheduled for November.

2024 Lab Committee Meeting

The Lab Committee approved the following 2024 meeting dates:

- Monday, January 8, 2024
- Monday, February 5, 2024
- Monday, March 4, 2024
- Monday, April 8, 2024
- Monday, May 6, 2024
- Monday, June 3, 2024
- Monday, July 1, 2024
- Monday, September 2, 2024
- Monday, October 7, 2024
- Monday, November 4, 2024

Revised Lab School Application

Ms. Lorraine Venesky presented an update on the broad topical areas guiding revisions to the Lab School Application. Based on testimony from the International Association of Lab Schools, the Committee also plans to prompt applicants to provide additional information on professional development and instructional support plans, as well as how the Applicant will address teacher shortage issues in Virginia (consistent with the statutory requirements). The Committee also requested changes to include the in-kind and direct contributions from higher education institutions, e.g., the donation of a multi-million-dollar facility, into lab schools.

Customized Support for Lab School Applicants

Dr. Andy Armstrong presented an update on VDOE capacity/staffing/workflow plans to support lab school applicants. The VDOE and Chair Mrs. Wodiska are offering on-site technical support visits to lab school applicants, the first was successfully held with UMW. VDOE is also planning regional workshops and planned webinars for potential applicants. VDOE is also hiring an Innovation Coordinator to support and assist with the lab school initiative.

Schedule to Review Lab School Applications

Dr. Armstrong also provided an update on the College Partnership Laboratory School Application Pipeline (a forecast of possible lab school applications and timing therein). At the request of the Committee, VDOE is proactively reaching out to potential applicants in the Lab School application pipeline, with the hope to support applications from all 8 regions and inclusion of minority serving institutions (such as HBCUs). VDOE is also informing and reminding any potential applicants of the impending deadline of March 2024 for consideration/contract and obligation of funds by June 30, 2024.

Guidance on Funding and Lottery Compliance

At the request of the Committee, VDOE is working to develop guidance on the allowable Per-Pupil Funding of College Partnership Laboratory Schools. Dr. Andy Armstrong stated the VDOE Budgeting Team was developing clear parameters (e.g., what is allowable, how to calculate, etc.) of per pupil funding to integrate into the Lab School Application for ease of applicant completion. The VDOE team is also developing guidance on the lab school lottery process to ensure compliance. All guidance would be integrated into the Lab School Application.

Action Requested:

No action needed at this time.

Superintendent's Recommendation

No previous review or action.

Previous Review or Action:

No previous review or action.

Background Information and Statutory Authority:

Subsection A of § [22.1-349.6](#) of the Code of Virginia states, in part, that “[t]he Board shall establish procedures for receiving, reviewing, and ruling upon applications and shall make a copy of any such procedures available to all interested parties upon request. . . . The Board’s

review procedures shall establish a review committee that may include experts with the operation of similar schools located in other states.”