



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: K

Date: November 15, 2023

Title: Report from the College Partnership Laboratory School Standing Committee

Presenter: 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 November 6, 2023. Below is a summary of the meeting.

Presentation from Dr. Jill Sarada, Fanny Edell Falk Laboratory School

Based on a recommendation from the International Association of Lab Schools (IALS), the Standing Committee and Dr. Andy Armstrong invited Dr. Jill Sarada to present the history and organization of resources of the Falk Lab School at the University of Pittsburgh College of

Education. Dr. Sarada is School Director and reports to Dean of School of Education at the University. The lab school is a tuition-based, independent school on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania whose overarching goal is to provide college education students with the opportunity to observe methods of teaching in K-8 grades.

The objectives of the Falk Lab School – (1) Progressive, (2) Experimental and (3) Demonstration align with the International Association of Lab Schools (“IALB”) Five Tenets of lab schools: (1) teacher preparation programs, (2) research, (3) curriculum development, (4) innovation, and (5) professional growth.

The Lab School focuses on research & innovation through a 4-tiered method:

1. Research by Falk faculty.
2. Research with Falk faculty with external collaboration.
3. Research completed external to the Falk classroom.
4. Research shared with families that happens outside of school.

The Falk Lab School has a process for Experimentation, Inquiry and Research through its Research Fellow Program. The Research Fellow Program is a monthly professional learning community for teachers which provides opportunities for teacher professional development. The program is supported by a level-based promotion structure for teachers.

- Level A – recent graduate / learning to teach with 0-5 years’ experience; incumbents advance to next level or leave (“up or out”)
- Level B – Committing to profession of teaching; over 3 years of experience; engage meaningful and mentoring student teachers; join a faculty committee. Teachers can remain at this level and be eligible for regular salary increases.
- Level C – 3 years in Level B and starting to take leadership roles; leading faculty committees or other leadership roles. Salary increase provided.
- Level D – “Give back” via publishing and providing “lessons learned” to future faculty.

Dr. Sarada recommended three additional lab school as a possible learning resource. The Standing Committee will follow-up and invite, as appropriate, additional subject matter experts to the Standing Committee.

- Burriss Lab School in Indiana
- Kilby Lab School in Alabama
- University of Texas at Tyler

Germanna Community College

The Standing Committee began Final Review, and unanimously approved for referral to the State Board of Education, the Future Educators (“FEA”) Academy Laboratory School Application from Germanna Community College, a partnership between Germanna Community College, Laurel Ridge Community College, James Madison University, and the Superintendents Region 4 school divisions of Culpeper, Madison, Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Warren, and Winchester City. (A specific action item will be presented to the Board on this matter)

The goal of FEA, to provide high-quality, accelerated teacher education to produce exceptional teachers, is responsive to the continuing shortage of qualified professional teachers in Central Virginia. Students enrolled in the FEA lab school will experience hands-on exposure to the profession and participate in a streamlined, scalable model designed to accelerate the path to full teacher licensure, including dual enrollment coursework toward an associate’s degree that will include several required courses and experiences needed to achieve full licensure as a Virginia teacher, allowing students to potentially be graduates and applicants to local school division teacher openings 2 years post-graduation.

University of Mary Washington

The Standing Committee began Final Review, and unanimously approved for referral to the State Board of Education, the Academy of Technology and Innovation (“ATI”) 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 Superintendent’s Region 3: Caroline County, Fredericksburg City, King George County, and Spotsylvania County. (A specific action item will be presented to the Board on this matter)

The student experience at ATI will be characterized by project-based, authentic learning approaches, where field experiences will be leveraged whenever possible to ensure students engage real-world problem solving. This approach will ensure students are able to witness and experience the application of computer science, data science, and broader technology across content areas and economic industries through work-based learning experiences. As part of this approach, intentionality will be given towards the provision of externships and internships to build the durable skills necessary for entering the workforce.

UMW will leverage all three of its colleges to support the efforts of the lab school, providing content experts from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Business to consult on the development of curricular resources and field experiences in partnership with the College of Education and Stafford Schools.

George Mason University

The Standing Committee began First Review of the Laboratory School Application from George Mason University (“GMU”). ACCESS Academy is a collaborative partnership between GMU, Northern Virginia Community College (“NOVA”), and Fairfax County Public Schools (“FCPS”) (“Applicant”). This partnership will extend multi-institutional pathways from FCPS high schools to both NOVA and GMU, leveraging existing proven programs such as Early Identification Program (EIP), ADVANCE, and wraparound services such as academic advising, success coaching, writing support, and career coaching among other services to reduce the administrative and financial burden associated with college.

Applicant representatives included Dr. Ingrid Guerra-López, Dean of Education at GMU, Christine Carter, Director of Dual Enrollment at GMU, and Kimberley Daily, Project Manager at GMU.

The Applicant presented an overview of the proposed ACCESS Academy lab school application. At the conclusion of the Applicant’s presentation, the Standing Committee members posed comments and requests for elaboration to the Applicants on the following areas of the GMU application:

- The decision behind the chosen location (Annadale) and description of student population
- Identification of seat time waiver
- Support to students for guidance on curriculum pathways
- Ability/process overview for students to revert to standard education program.

The Applicants provided detailed information and answered questions from the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee approved First Review of the GMU Application and noted the 10-day public comment posting could occur. A Standing Committee Second Review is scheduled for December 1st.

Planning Grant Expenditures Update

Dr. Armstrong stated a detailed communication went out to all potential lab school applications on upcoming deadlines and technical support.

College Partnership Laboratory School Application Pipeline

Dr. Armstrong also provided a color-coded Lab School Application Pipeline* from Planning Grant to Contract to clearly identify indicate where all potential applicants are in the Lab school Application process. Dr. Armstrong also provided an interactive map which identifies where

potential lab schools would be located in Virginia. *The color-coded Lab School Application Pipeline document is attached.

Lab School Applicants applications must be submitted by VDOE no later than beginning of February, for consideration by the VDOE Subject Matter Expert Review Committee, the Standing Committee, the public, the State Board of Education, and ratification of a contract. The Standing Committee and VDOE is prepared to manage this workload, is proactively reaching out to potential applicants, offering on-site technical assistance visits, and scheduled public meetings to afford consideration of applicants.

Memorandum on Per Pupil Funding

In response to discussion with lab school applicants and the Standing Committee, Dr. Armstrong provided a calculation of per pupil funding to be provided to Lab School Applicants as a guideline for budgeting compliance. The VDOE Budget and Finance Subject Matter Experts calculated \$9,578 per pupil funding. This information provides guidance information for Applicants to comply with per pupil funding requirements.

Best Practices on Administration of Lotteries for College Partnership Laboratory Schools

In response to discussions from lab school applicants and the Standing Committee, Dr. Armstrong provided best practices guidelines for compliance on administration of lottery admission requirement developed by the VDOE y Subject Matter Experts. This guidelines document will be provided to Lab School Applicants to assist in administering the state regulations on lottery admissions process. Applicants can create their own process or use this process as a guideline.

Development of Partnership Laboratory Schools Professional Learning Communities

Dr. Armstrong presented on overview and next steps for creating a Laboratory School Professional Learning Community within Virginia to promote opportunities for networking, professional growth, and sustainability of lab schools within Virginia.

Virtual Lab Committee Meetings

Ms. Wodiska announced the Standing Committee will be engaging VDOE to explore the possibility of select virtual meetings in the future, in compliance with state law and VDOE virtual meeting guidance. The Standing Committee will discuss virtual meetings at the December meeting and welcomes guidance from the State Board of Education and public.

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.”