



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: D

Date: May 21, 2024

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 May 6, 2024. Below is a summary of the meeting.

Updates from April Virginia Board of Education meeting from State Board Vice President

Public comment on agenda items

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from Richard Bland

B. First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from Old Dominion University – Suffolk

C. First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from George Mason University – Frederick

Updates from April Virginia Board of Education meeting from Mr. Bill Hansen, State Board Vice President

Mr. Bill Hansen presented the recently approved names of the lab schools that were presented to the Virginia Board of Education at their April meeting including Emory and Henry College, George Mason University, Roanoke College, Paul D. Camp Community College, Old Dominion University – Newport News, and Old Dominion University – Chesapeake. The Board also complimented the Lab School Standing Committee and VDOE staff for the quality of the work provided to the Board including complete and compliant Lab School applications from each of the Institutes of Higher Learning.

Public comment on agenda items

Dr. Andy Armstrong reported there were no public comments on agenda items.

First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from Richard Bland

The Standing Committee began the First and Final Review of the Laboratory School Application from Richard Bland College (“RBC”). Richard Bland College of William & Mary Globe Academy Lab School (“Globe Academy”) is a collaborative partnership between RBC and the public-school division of Petersburg City Public Schools (“Applicants”). Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Prince George County Public Schools and Sussex County Public Schools may enter the Globe Academy program in year three (3) or four (4).

The Globe Academy program is designed to establish a high school career academy for 9th-12th graders to serve as a “pipeline” for preparing future Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Art, and Health (“STEAM”) to meet the workforce shortages in central Virginia.

The mission of Globe Academy is to work collaboratively with regional education, technology, healthcare, and community partners to provide a rigorous, high-quality learning environment that promotes increased awareness of potential STEAM careers and prepares college and career ready students to pursue the required college degrees and professional credentials that lead to STEAM careers. The overall goal of the program is to develop a sustainable high school academic pipeline through rigorous dual and concurrent enrollment courses in foundational sciences, technology, engineering, mathematics, art, and healthcare career exploration. The outcome of the lab school is to transform the socioeconomic foundation of the Petersburg community and other communities in the future.

Applicant representatives included Dr. Debbie Sydow, President of Richard Bland College, Dr. Kimberly Boyd, Vice President Chief Research & Innovation Officer, Mr. Kenneth Pritchett, Petersburg Board Chair (Ward 3 Representative), Julius Hammond, Superintendent, Sussex County Public Schools, Jesse Vaugh, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at Richard Bland College, Christie Clarke, Director of Dual Enrollment and High School Programs, Kim Boyd, Vice President & Chief Research and Innovation Officer, Richard Bland College.

During the First and Final Review process, the Applicant presented an overview of the proposed Globe Academy Lab School application. At the conclusion of the Applicant's presentation, and after a robust question and answer period, the Standing Committee members approved First and Final Review of the Globe Academy Application and instructed the VDOE staff to post the Globe Academy Application for the attended public comment period in accordance with the Standing Committee's procedures. Any comments received from the public comment review period are to be included in the required reports, application, and attachments to be delivered to the Virginia Board of Education in consideration of the Globe Academy Application.

First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from Old Dominion University – Suffolk

The Standing Committee began First and Final Review of the Laboratory School Application from Old Dominion University - Suffolk ("ODU-Suffolk"). The STEM Academy at Booker T. Washington Elementary School ("STEM Academy") is a collaborative partnership between ODU and Suffolk Public Schools ("SPS") ("Applicant"). This partnership centers on a comprehensive integration of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education that will be incorporated into hands-on STEM experiences in the elementary curriculum to enhance students' academic proficiency for access and exposure to cultivate a generation of productive citizens equipped with skills and knowledge needed in STEM-related careers.

Applicant representatives included Dr. Okema Branch, Chief Academic Officer, Suffolk Public Schools, Dr. Katelyn Leitner, Coordinator of Science Instruction, Suffolk Public Schools, Dr. Tish Szymurski, Associate Vice President, Regional Higher Education Centers, ODU, Dr. Karen Sanzo, Director, Institute for Design Thinking and Leadership Development, ODU, Dr. Stenette Byrd, III, Chief Academic Officer, Suffolk Public Schools, Dr. John B. Gordon III, Division Superintendent, Suffolk Public Schools, Albert S. Moor, City Manager, Suffolk City Council.

At the conclusion of the Applicant’s presentation and a robust question and answer period, the Standing Committee members approved First and Final Review of the ODU-Suffolk Lab School Application and instructed the VDOE staff to post The STEM Academy Application for the attended public comment period in accordance with the Standing Committee’s procedures. Any comments received from the public comment review period are to be included in the required reports, application, and attachments to be delivered to the Virginia Board of Education in consideration of The STEM Academy.

First and Final Review of College Partnership Laboratory School Application from George Mason University – Frederick

The Standing Committee began First and Final Review of the Laboratory School Application from George Mason University (“GMU”) and Frederick County Public Schools (“Applicant”). The Shenandoah Valley Rural Regional College Partnership Laboratory School for Data Science, Computing and Applications (“DCSA Lab School”) led by GMU is a collaborative project with seven partner school districts, one Governor’s School and Laurel Ridge Community College (“LRCC”) in the Shenandoah Valley. The seven-partner rural and rural fringe school divisions include Clarke County, Fauquier County, Page County, Shenandoah County, Warren County and Winchester City, along with the Governor School at Mountain Vista. GMU will leverage the expertise from faculty in the College of Science, College of Engineering and Computing, GMU Smithsonian Mason Conservation Center, LRCC and Shenandoah University, to engage the students and teachers in the DSCA Lab School.

The DSCA Lab School will provide access to five learning experiences including:

- A. Interdisciplinary Coursework Experience: Students will be exposed to data-focused coursework from various aspects of STEM that applies to the real-world workplaces;

- B. Research and Creative Experience: Students will work on specific, student-led research projects, where he/she works closely with the faculty across the commonwealth and other researchers helping them earn college credit through George Mason University;

C. Design-thinking and Entrepreneurship Experience: Students will learn to solve problems using a human-centered approach to problem solving and, in this process, learn to build viable business models;

D. Work-based Learning Experience: Students will be mentored by Big Data business and industry partners through a choice of work-based experiences; and

E. Global and Multicultural Experience: Data collaborations around global challenges where every student will interact with students from developing countries.

In addition, the DSCA Lab School will create new teacher professional learning opportunities that build capacity in the Valley for high school teachers to teach Data Science and/or Computer Science elective courses.

Applicant representatives included Dr. Padhu Seshaiyer, GMU, Dr. Deb Crawford, Frederick County Public Schools, Benjamin Johnson, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools, Cody Edwards, Executive Director, Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation, GMU and Interim Dean, College of Science, GMU, Julie Myers, Director of Middle and Secondary Instructional Services, Frederick County, Kelly Huff, Regional Director, Mountain Vista Governor's School, Michelle Weon, Student - Mountain Vista Governor's School and Fauquier County, Jill Keenan, Teacher, Millbrook High School, Frederick County, William Bennett Weiss, Student, Millbrook High School, Frederick County, Brian Thomas, Teacher, James Wood High School, Frederick County.

At the conclusion of the Applicant's presentation and a robust question and answer period, the Standing Committee members approved First and Final Review of the DSCA Lab School Application and instructed the VDOE staff to post the DSCA Lab School Application for the attended public comment period in accordance with the Standing Committee's procedures. Any comments received from the public comment review period are to be included in the required reports, application, and attachments to be delivered to the Virginia Board of Education in consideration of the DSCA Lab School Application.

Discussion of Current Issues

The Lab Committee discussed meeting in July 2024 and voted to remove the meeting from the calendar and noted the next Lab Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 3, 2024.

The meeting was adjourned.

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.”