

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Virginia Board of Education**  
**College Partnership Laboratory School Committee**

**Wednesday, September 22, 2010**

Mr. David Foster, chair of the College Partnership Laboratory School Committee, called the committee meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Committee member Dr. Virginia McLaughlin was present. Also present were Virginia Board of Education (Board) members: Mrs. Elizabeth Beamer, Mrs. Isis Castro, Mrs. Eleanor Saslaw, and Mr. David Johnson, as well as Dr. Patricia Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction. Dr. Ella Ward, a member of the Board, was present for part of the meeting.

Two panel discussions took place. The first panel consisted of provosts from certain Virginia public institutions of higher education and the second panel consisted of deans from the schools of education at certain Virginia public institutions of higher education.

The members of the Provost's panel were:

- Dr. Bill Gannon, Radford University, representing the Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Jerry Benson, Provost and Senior Vice President, James Madison University
- Dr. Weldon Hill, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Virginia State University

The panel members raised several issues:

- There is tremendous potential with college partnership laboratory schools in that they can reach out to local school divisions and under-represented populations and expand opportunities for training teachers. However, budgets may limit opportunities for instruction and may put stress on existing systems, such as technology, food services, etc.
- These schools have the potential to provide an opportunity to look at innovation that will lead to good research and ideas. It would be good to expand the model to include partnerships with local school divisions with governance by both partners in terms of curriculum development and possibly establishing a college partnership laboratory school within a school division. However, one of the biggest challenges is the funding for such a school. Funding from Average Daily Membership may not be enough to provide services.
- The Board should consider measures of accountability, define those measures, and give the schools the freedom and latitude to experiment.

- There should be collaboration between all of the stakeholders (industry, the military, economic development, private sponsors).
- Both administrative and fiscal burdens need to be examined. For instance, a residential college partnership laboratory school could be expensive and logistics need to be considered.
- Consideration needs to be given as to how these schools could be created so that such schools would benefit all parties involved.

Dr. McLaughlin asked how institutions of higher education might make a decision to participate and at what level would the decision be made within an institution. Dr. Benson responded that a first could be that his institution could target one of the schools in Harrisonburg as a potential college partnership laboratory school. He was inclined to start that school at the younger ages. He also indicated that the decision to move forward would be made at the Provost level or in the President's office. Dr. Benson mentioned that it would also be important to include input from faculty across the campus.

Dr. Hill indicated that his institution would start with its College of Education which could gather data and provide advice as to how to proceed. However, it would ultimately be a Board of Visitors decision. Dr. Hammond indicated that a recommendation would come from Radford University's College of Education to the Provost.

Dr. Benson indicated that collaboration with school divisions is needed and should target a highly diverse population, under-represented populations and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The president would make the decision with faculty input.

Mrs. Saslaw noted that all of the panelists seemed to be focused on collaboration. She asked if they had had conversations about college partnership laboratory schools in their communities. All of the panelists responded that these conversations had taken place. Dr. Hill noted that there was some opposition from school division leadership, primarily focused on financial concerns. Dr. Hammond indicated that there were questions about the benefits of a college partnership laboratory school. If such a school were opened, then the impact of school divisions needs to be examined.

Mr. Foster asked what would make these schools attractive to the school divisions and show mutual benefit to both the school division and the college partnership laboratory school. Dr. Hammond indicated that when there is mutual benefit, then everyone wins. Dr. Hill indicated that finances are the biggest concerns and that true partnerships have flexibility.

Dr. McLaughlin asked the panel how funding could be set up and what funding is needed for a college partnership laboratory school. The panelists agreed that it is difficult to answer this

question but any funding that is provided must be sustainable. The Governor's school programs were used as an example of sustainable funding.

Mrs. Castro asked if there were other factors that might hinder the establishment of college partnership laboratory schools. She asked the panel if any groups would be opposed if the General Assembly appropriated funding. The panelists did not indicate that there would be opposition and Dr. Benson indicated that other businesses and industries may be interested. Dr. Hill indicated that there needs to be a good conversation with all stakeholders.

Dr. Wright indicated that different models for forming college partnership laboratory schools should be considered. Local division superintendents have expressed concerns about how the schools would be formed and funded so it is important to cultivate and maintain relationships.

The second panel of deans was comprised of the following individuals:

- Dr. Susan Magliaro, Associate Dean for Professional Education and Director, School of Education, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Phil Wishon, Dean of the School of Education, James Madison University
- Dr. Patricia Shoemaker, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, Radford University
- Dr. Rebecca Kneedler, Associate Dean for Academic Partnerships and International Initiatives, University of Virginia

As part of the roundtable discussion, the panel members discussed several issues:

- Flexibility in the structure of a college partnership laboratory school would be helpful in attracting interested faculty.
- If one institution established a college partnership laboratory school, then it would be helpful to involve other institutions to leverage resources.
- All areas of an institution should be involved in establishment, not just colleagues within a college of education.
- Partnerships with schools are important and will aid in professional development.
- Different types of programs should be considered, such as mini-college partnership laboratory schools, college partnership laboratory school weeks, and college partnership laboratory school summer programs.
- The term 'laboratory' is a key word when considering the establishment of a school.
- Regional responsibilities need to be examined and existing partnerships need to be re-examined when considering the establishment of a college partnership laboratory school.
- Consideration needs to be given as to whether a college partnership laboratory school fits with a university's mission.

- The impact of a school needs to be considered, particularly in the areas of existing partnerships, political issues, demographics and the rationale for the school.
- There will be challenges surrounding governance.

Mr. Johnson asked if any of the institutions represented would have moved forward with college partnership laboratory schools if legislation had not been passed.

Dr. Magliaro indicated that it is likely that Virginia Tech would not have moved in this direction because it has existing partnerships in education that it would look to strengthen. Dr. Shoemaker indicated that Radford University closed its laboratory school in 2003 primarily due to fiscal issues and the fact that the school was not an integral part of the institution's mission. Dr. Shoemaker indicated that school divisions currently approach Radford University for educational assistance. Dr. Wishon indicated that James Madison University would not have moved in this direction and is heavily invested in existing partnerships. Dr. Kneedler indicated that the University of Virginia would continue to building on current partnerships.

Dr. McLaughlin asked how current partnerships could be strengthened or 'ratcheted up.' Dr. Shoemaker responded that there should be clear outcomes for students and an evaluation component. Dr. Wishon indicated that some rules should be suspended. It would be helpful to overlay ideas with existing regulations to assess where flexibility may be needed. Both Dr. Kneedler and Dr. Magliaro indicated that contracts/memoranda of understanding are critical to balancing needs and benefits.

Dr. Ward asked if any of the institutions have had laboratory schools and if these schools existed, why they may have closed. Dr. Shoemaker stated that Radford had a school that started sometime in the 1930 and it was closed in 2003 primarily due to fiscal concerns. The school was a preschool-elementary program and relied heavily on volunteers. Dr. Magliaro indicated that Virginia Tech had a school until 2005-2006 but the school was closed due to funding issues. Dr. Wishon indicated that James Madison University had a K-8 school for years but the school was closed due to funding issues.

Dr. Wright commented that college partnership laboratory schools are like any other public school in terms of the services that must be provided to students and in terms of accountability.

The members of the Board asked the panelists for additional information on their existing partnerships. The committee meeting adjourned at 3 pm.