VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Instructions for Planning Grant Application  
for a College Partnership Laboratory School**

## 1. BACKGROUND

1. **PURPOSE**
   1. The purpose of the grant funding is to provide planning grants (Planning Grants) to any public institution of higher education; public higher education center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution of higher education as defined in the Tuition Assistance Grant Program, as defined in § [23.1-628](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/23.1-628/), (eligible entity or entities) to apply to the Board of Education (Board) for planning funds to support the purpose of establishing a College Partnership Laboratory School (Lab School) as a new school or through the conversion of all or part of an existing school.
   2. The Virginia General Assembly’s [2022-2024 Appropriations Act](https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/get/budget/4623/HB30/), as re-enacted in [Item 4-14](https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2022/2/HB30/Chapter/4/4-14.00/), provided an appropriation of $100,000,000 for the first year from the general fund to be deposited to the College Partnership Laboratory Schools Fund (Fund) established pursuant to [§22.1-349.2](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/22.1-349.2/), Code of Virginia.
   3. Under that appropriation, the Board is authorized to award up to $5,000,000 from the College Partnership Laboratory Schools Fund for planning grants to entities pursuing the creation of new Lab Schools. The Board is authorized to award up to $20,000,000 from the Fund to approved Lab Schools to assist with initial startup costs. The Board is authorized to distribute remaining amounts from the Fund to support per-pupil costs for approved Lab Schools.
   4. Prior to the disbursement of funds, the Board shall establish guidelines for the distribution and award of these funds and submit such guidelines to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees by December 1, 2022. Such guidelines shall consider and be consistent with the distribution of state funds for Standards of Quality, Categorical, Incentive and Lottery program per-pupil costs.
   5. All funds that have not been obligated for approved Lab Schools as of June 30, 2024 shall revert to the general fund.
2. **DEFINITIONS**
   1. **College Partnership Laboratory School:** In accordance with [Item 4-14](https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2022/2/HB30/Chapter/4/4-14.00/) of the General Assembly’s 2022-2024 Biennium budget, the Code of Virginia § [22.1-349.1](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/22.1-349.1/) is amended and reenacted, and the types of IHE eligible entities to establish Lab Schools are defined as follows:
      1. "College Partnership Laboratory School" means a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious school in the Commonwealth established by a public institution of higher education*;* public highereducation center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution, as defined in § [23.1-628](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/23.1-628/). Notwithstanding the provisions of § [22.1-349.5](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/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](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/23.1-628/) may submit an application for formation of a college partnership laboratory school.”
      2. 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](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/23.1-628/).
   2. **At-risk student:** As provided in the Code of Virginia § [22.1-349.1](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/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 (1) students who have experienced learning loss as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) 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 (3) 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.

* 1. **Regional diversity:** For the purpose of evaluation of Planning Grant applications, regional diversity reflects representation from each of the Department’s eight Superintendent [regions](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/directories/schools/school_info_by_regions.shtml).

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

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](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title23.1/chapter5/section23.1-628/), (eligible entity or entities) may apply for a Virginia Board of Education (Board) College Partnership Laboratory School Planning Grant (Planning Grant).

## 3. APPLICATION DETAILS AND PLANNING GRANT TERM

1. **APPLICATION DETAILS**
   1. The goal of the Planning Grant program is to support eligible entities as they develop innovative education programs designed to (1) promote the thoughtful design of new Lab Schools to improve student achievement and outcomes; (2) create a pathway to launch Lab Schools by providing support to those eligible applicants well-positioned and motivated to advance Lab School applications and launch Lab Schools; (3) guarantee, to the greatest extent possible, that new Lab Schools are built on strong, sustainable programmatic and financial foundations; and (4) encourage regional diversification and increased access to new Lab Schools meeting the needs of students – especially those at-risk – across the Commonwealth.
   2. Eligible entities may apply for grants of no more than $200,000 per Lab School creation pursued. 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.
   3. Applications may be submitted, and will be evaluated for Planning Grant awards based on factors set forth herein, on a rolling basis.
   4. All expenses must be directly related to the proposed Planning Grant activities. Applicants should only include direct operating costs. Indirect costs and capital outlay costs are not allowed. Applicants should include a description of expenses that explains appropriateness of expenses based on the category descriptions shown in the Planning Grant Application.
   5. Planning Grant Applications must include evidence of commitment to pursue implementation of a Lab School, noting that additional priority will be given to eligible entities serving at-risk students, those with an earlier Lab School launch timeline, and those which encourage the establishment of Lab Schools in each of the Commonwealth’s [eight Superintendent regions](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/directories/schools/school_info_by_regions.shtml).
   6. Grant awards to eligible entities will be determined based on the points awarded in accordance with Planning Grant Application Evaluation Rubric.
   7. Any eligible entity interested in pursuing a Planning Grant to establish a Lab School must submit a complete application in PDF format and related materials to [labschools@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov?subject=Inquiry%20re:%20Lab%20School%20Planning%20Grants). The Department may return or reject proposals that are incomplete.
2. **PLANNING GRANT TERM**

Applications are for a one-time Planning Grant. Planning Grant awards may be for a grant term not to exceed 12 months from the date of any award thereunder.

## 4. APPLICATION SECTIONS AND EVALUATION

1. **APPLICATION SECTIONS**
   1. The Planning Grant Application must be completed by applicants. Planning Grant applications will only be considered if all sections are complete and include all of the required components:
2. General Information
3. Definitions
4. Assurances and Signatures
5. Regional and Applicant Diversity
6. Program Description, Goal, and Timeline
7. Targeted Student Population and Relevant Research
8. Collaboration and Stakeholder Involvement
9. Sustainability
10. Budget of Direct Costs ($200,00 Maximum)

**Appendix:** Planning Grant Application Evaluation Rubric

1. **EVALUATION**
   1. A funding evaluation review committee convened by the Department will evaluate applications for completeness, and according to the Planning Grant Evaluation Rubric.
      1. Priority will be given to applications from eligible entities demonstrating an intention to serve at-risk students, those with an earlier Lab School launch timeline, and those which encourage regional diversity.
      2. **NOTE: The Department will prioritize Planning Grant applications which indicate a plan for opening a Lab School by the 2023-2024 school year.**
   2. Decisions about Planning Grant award amounts will consider factors, including the amount of available funds, the number of applications recommended for funding, and the amounts requested in the recommended applications.
   3. Funds will only be awarded to applicants whose applications earn a score deemed satisfactory by the review committee using the weighted Planning Grant Evaluation Rubric.
      1. Applicants are not guaranteed the requested award amount and awards may be proportionally adjusted according to application’s score and to reflect only those expenditures that are designated as permissible.
      2. Additional funding may be considered at the discretion of the Department on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with available funds.
   4. If the total amount requested in the applications recommended for funding exceeds the total amount of available funding, awards may be adjusted to reflect the difference.
   5. Department staff will evaluate each application based on the Planning Grant Application Evaluation Rubric criteria identified below:

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| **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. | **30** |
| 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. | **20** |
| Sustainability | Evidence of institutional commitment to the viability of a Lab School in a manner that promotes quality, innovation, program results, and sustainability. | **20** |
| Collaboration | Evidence of engagement and collaboration with stakeholders, including local school divisions, community-based organizations, employers, teachers and parents. | **15** |
| 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** |

## 5. GRANT AWARDS AND DISBURSEMENTS

1. Successful applicants (grant awardees) will be notified by the Department within 30 days of the decision to award a Planning Grant.
2. Planning Grant awards may provide a staggered distribution of moneys to a grant awardee during the term to ensure that the awardee is progressing toward the submission to the Board of an application for approval to launch a Lab School.
3. Grant awardees will receive notification of the approved award amount and disbursement of Planning Grant funds.
4. The Planning Grant term and use of funds may not exceed 12 months from the date of award. **Note: Any unspent Planning Grant funds remaining at the end of the grant term must be returned by the recipient to the Department.**

## 6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Planning Grant applicants must provide assurance that they will subscribe to the following reporting requirements timetable:

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| **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. |

## 7. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Any eligible entity interested in pursuing a Planning Grant to establish a Lab School must submit a completed PDF version of the Planning Grant Application and related materials by email at [labschools@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov?subject=Inquiry%20re:%20Lab%20School%20Planning%20Grants). The Department may return or reject proposals that are incomplete.
2. The eligible entity’s Authorized Official Representative shall sign proposals.
3. Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the Planning Grant Application. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.
4. All pages should be numbered.
5. The applicant should use a standard 12-point Arial font for the proposal and any additional materials.
6. Each proposal should contain a completed application. Any additional material provided with the application should be clearly referenced in the table of contents as an appendix in the order in which it is referenced in the application.

## 8. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact [labschools@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov?subject=Inquiry%20re:%20Lab%20School%20Planning%20Grants) by email if there are any questions about the application process.