



Virginia College Partnership Laboratory School Application

Approved by the Virginia Board of Education

July 26, 2012

Updated August 31, 2022

School Name: Accelerated College and Employability Skills (ACCESS)
Academy

Date of Submission to Virginia Board of Education: August 11, 2023

Name of Authorized Official: Maggie Ewell **Date:**

George Mason University

Signature of Authorized Official:  George Mason University

Open Signed By

Margaret B. Ewell

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Date:

Instructions

All applicants for a college partnership laboratory school should read the College Partnership Laboratory School Application Process before completing the application. The process is available on the Virginia Department of Education's website at the following link:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/laboratory_schools/index.shtml.

Please complete the cover page and insert the name of the college partnership laboratory school into the footer before completing the application. Each gray section in the document must contain a response.

<mailto:labschools@doe.virginia.gov>: Completed applications and supporting documents must be submitted to labschools@doe.virginia.gov. The Department may return or reject applications that are incomplete.

Note: The *Virginia Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA), § [2.2-3700](#) et seq. of the *Code of Virginia*, guarantees citizens of the Commonwealth and representatives of the media access to public records held by public bodies, public officials, and public employees. Please be advised that documents submitted to the Virginia Department of Education are subject to FOIA and must be released in response to a FOIA request unless the records are exempt as specifically provided by law.

Part A: Applicant Information

School Information

School Name: George Mason University

Does the applicant presently have access to a facility suitable for a school? Yes No

If the answer is yes to the question above, insert address and information regarding ownership of the facility:

Annandale High School (a Fairfax County Public School)
4700 Medford Drive, Annandale, VA 22003

School Location (City/Town and Zip Code): Annandale, VA 22003

Is the applicant a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious school in the Commonwealth established by a public institution of higher education; public higher education center, institute, or authority; or an eligible institution, as defined in § 23.1-628 related to the Tuition Assistance Grant Program? Yes

Proposed Opening Date (Date should be at least twelve (12) months from the date of this application.): 8/1/2024

Grades to be Served for the Full Term of the Contract (Please Check All That Apply)*			
Pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sixth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seventh Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eighth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ninth Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Third Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenth Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fourth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eleventh Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fifth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Twelfth Grade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*If the college partnership laboratory school intends to add or change grade levels at some point during the school's operation, please provide this information in the education program section of the narrative.

If the college partnership laboratory school is going to have a specialized focus (e.g., Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics [STEM], at-risk students, special education, career and technical education, gifted education), please describe the focus:

The Accelerated College and Employability Skills (ACCESS) Academy, a lab school designed to support the transition of at-risk learners into college and high-demand careers, with a preliminary focus on Information Technology. In later years, after ACCESS Academy is established, the lab school will scale-up to partner with additional school district stakeholders but also expand to focus on educational and healthcare career pathways.

If the college partnership laboratory school is going to be in partnership with a local school division, please describe the partnership briefly.

ACCESS Academy is a collaborative partnership between George Mason University (Mason), Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). This partnership will extend multi-institutional pathways from FCPS high schools to both NOVA and Mason, 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. In addition, ACCESS Academy will incorporate employability skills, as well as innovative teaching and learning methods and experiences that will be co-designed with industry partners, researchers, and instructional faculty.

Contact Information

Name of Individual/Organization Submitting Application: **George Mason University**

Name of Contact Person for Application: **Ingrid Guerra López, Ph.D.**

Title/Affiliation with Individual/Organization Submitting Application: **Dean, College of Education and Human Development**

Office Telephone: **703-993-2004** Mobile Telephone: **248-910-6116**

Fax Number: **703-993-2001** E-mail Address: **iguerral@gmu.edu**

Prior Experience

1. Has the applicant had any prior experience operating a college partnership laboratory school or similar school?
Please check one of the following: Yes No
2. If the response to the question above is “yes,” please describe any prior experience with establishing and operating college partnership laboratory schools and/or similar schools. Please provide information such as the name of the school, the state where it is located, years of operation, and contact information. If the school is no longer operating, please provide the reason(s) for closure:

n/a

3. Please describe the relevant experience of the members of the governing board:

The Advisory Board for ACCESS Academy includes the Dean of George Mason’s College of Education and Human Development, the Chief Academic Officer of Northern Virginia Community College and the Chief Academic Officer of Fairfax County Public Schools. Additional board members will include business/industry representative or chamber stakeholders, parent representatives, and community representatives. Additionally, a board secretary will be hired to manage the business of the Board. The Board will report to VDOE. Biographical information of those

affiliated with George Mason, Northern Virginia Community College, and Fairfax County Public Schools will be provided in the Governance section of the application. The other board members will be selected once the lab school is approved.

Contact Information – Institution of Higher Education Partner

Name of Contact Person for Application:

Ingrid Guerra-López

Title/Affiliation with the Institution of Higher Education:

Dean, College of Education
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Part B: Narrative

The application narrative must contain all of the elements in § [22.1-349.5](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.

- I. **Executive Summary:** Provide an executive summary that addresses the need for the college partnership laboratory school and its goals and objectives. (The suggested length is two pages.)

Need and Purpose

In today's fast-paced world, technological advancements are transforming industries at an unprecedented rate. The decisions we make now will shape the future of our students, impacting their ability to thrive in an ever-evolving landscape. As technology continues to evolve, we have a unique opportunity to harness its power, unlocking the full potential of our students and providing them access to high-demand, well-compensated careers. ACCESS Academy recognizes the urgent need for transformative education to empower at-risk students. By offering innovative pathways that lead to high-demand careers, alongside certificates and college degrees, we are paving the way for a brighter future.

The Challenge: Many at-risk students face a number of barriers on their journey to a college education and high-demand careers. Limited financial resources can make it difficult to afford college tuition and related expenses, as well as create a critical need to work to help sustain themselves and their families. Insufficient access to academic and career advising, tutoring, counseling, and awareness of financial support can also hinder academic progress and career advancement. Finally, limited support networks can make it challenging for students to find mentors and allies to help them effectively navigate the rapidly evolving workplace, particularly in high-demand, technology careers.

The Solution: ACCESS Academy is our response to these pressing challenges. We are committed to delivering robust, innovative, and transformative educational experiences that provide clear pathways to high-demand careers. By reducing administrative and financial burdens on students and their families, we are leveling the playing field and giving our students the chance they deserve. Our unique blend of problem-based learning, employability skills, and real-world experience with industry partners ensures that ACCESS Academy students are not only well-prepared but also in high demand within the information technology field and other critical industries.

Scaling Up Impact: Our vision extends beyond just the IT field. ACCESS Academy is the first step towards establishing a regional consortium, partnering with school divisions across Region IV to scale up our success in information technology careers, as well as replicate the success with other high-demand careers such as those in education and healthcare. We aim to innovate and deeply transform the way we prepare students for high-demand careers, shaping a better future for students, their families, and the entire region.

Goals and Objectives

ACCESS Academy aims to alleviate the administrative and financial costs associated with preparing students for high-demand careers. With multiple pathways and on/off ramps to support student access and workforce readiness for high-demand careers in software development, cyber security, data management, and networking in the Information Technology field, ACCESS Academy will utilize 1)

wraparound support, 2) innovative teaching and learning methods, 3) transdisciplinary collaboration, and a 4) learn and earn approach, alongside an assets-based approach to students' strengths and funds of knowledge to create college and employment opportunities.

ACCESS Academy has developed the following goals:

- To develop problem-based learning (PBL) and employability skills in ACCESS Academy students;
- To build wraparound services that will reduce the administrative and financial burden connected to college admissions for students and families;
- To provide dual enrollment and IT course credits to students;
- To create pathways for students to earn micro-credentials and industry certificates while they work in IT-related fields; and
- To implement a professional learning and technical support program for teachers centered on PBL and employability skills.

ACCESS Academy also has the following objectives:

- ACCESS graduates will have higher self-efficacy in their IT and employability skills;
- ACCESS wraparound services will allow students to reduce the administrative and financial burden of navigating the college admissions process;
- ACCESS Academy 11th and 12th grade students will earn 15-30 dual enrollment and IT course credits while being enrolled in 2- or 4-year degrees while working in IT-related fields;
- ACCESS graduates will earn micro-credentials and industry certificates;
- ACCESS graduates will earn 2- and 4-year degrees;
- ACCESS graduates will increase their earning potential;
- Employers will find ACCESS Academy graduates well-prepared for IT careers; and
- ACCESS teachers will be competent in innovative teaching methods, specifically PBL and employability skills.

Summary of Instructional Plan

ACCESS Academy is built upon four key elements aimed at ensuring effectiveness and student success: wraparound support, innovative teaching and learning methods, transdisciplinary collaboration, and a learn-and-earn model. The Academy will be housed at Annandale High School, as part of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Students will be exposed to service-learning opportunities, paid work-based learning experiences, and immersive campus experiences at FUSE at Mason Square, all facilitated by innovative teaching and learning methods. ACCESS Academy's approach to teaching is anchored in a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) framework to provide students with a toolkit that will prepare them to succeed in rapidly evolving fields. To assist students, wraparound services include a range of comprehensive support initiatives designed to equip students with the most forward-looking tech career coaching, near-peer mentoring, academic advising, transportation assistance, and more.

ACCESS Academy is intentionally designed with direct student on-ramps in 11th, and 12th grades, and phased in lab school preparation during 9th and 10th grades. Students in grades 9 and 10 will focus on completion of high school graduation requirements including English, social studies, math, and science. They will begin to develop employability skills through teaching, learning, and curriculum innovations that leverage other existing programs in the student's base school. Students in grades 11 and 12 will be provided with a learning environment that is rich in problem-based learning activities

and high-quality work-based learning experiences co-developed with industry partners. Students will have access to industry-based internships and service learning in local middle and elementary schools to promote the application of content area and employability skills. This exposure will help these students not only to apply innovative problem-based instructional approaches and develop transferable skills such as critical thinking, communication skills, and information literacy, but also increase dual enrollment credits and/or industry certifications earned by graduating seniors. Academy students may also have opportunities to pursue additional dual enrollment, elective, other advanced academic opportunities, and/or an advanced diploma. Potential off ramps for students might include coursework that leads to an AS or BS degree, career certifications, micro credentials, or a job. In addition to developing a program for students, a professional development and technical support program will be developed for teachers.

ACCESS Academy places strong emphasis on transdisciplinary collaboration, highlighting the significance of leveraging diverse expertise in the design and delivery of curriculum. Therefore, a pedagogical partnership among faculty in Mason's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) and NOVA's Department of Education, faculty in STEM and Information Sciences and Technology at Mason, NOVA, FCPS, and business and industry partners will be established so that the ACCESS Academy represents a replicable model school that can serve as a hub for exposing students to a variety of hands-on, experiential learning opportunities.

Mason will also leverage their state-of-the-art infrastructure where researchers and industry partners are working side by side with ACCESS students to establish a Learning Innovation Lab, where teaching and learning innovations will be observed, evaluated, improved, and shared to support scalability. It will become a training ground for innovative teaching practices for current and future educators as teacher candidates, in-service teachers, and Information Technology faculty to develop skills in PBL approaches. Mason's teacher preparation programs will be able to conduct observations and field experiences. Robust professional development and technical assistance related to best practices in STEM instruction, experiential learning, and problem-based learning will be provided so that instructors will employ innovative approaches to teaching in the lab school IT classes.

Sustainability

ACCESS Academy's sustainability will be supported by a multifaceted approach to ensure effectiveness and long-term success. First, strong engagement among Mason, FCPS, NOVA, and industry partners will be continually nurtured to provide a sustainable network of support, resources, and expertise to continually enhance the Academy's offerings and opportunities. Second, the Academy will also engage in continuous program evaluation, implementing a rigorous system for ongoing program assessment and improvement. Regular evaluations will help identify areas where the Academy can adapt to changing educational and industry needs, ensuring its continued relevance and effectiveness. Third, a diversified funding strategy will be developed, including grants, corporate sponsorships, and community support to reduce dependence on any single source of funding. This financial stability will be vital for the long-term sustainability of the Academy. Fourth, ACCESS Academy will continue to invest in ongoing professional development for educators involved in the Academy. This will ensure that teaching practices remain cutting-edge and aligned with industry demands, which is crucial for maintaining the Academy's track record of excellence. Fifth, we will develop a scalable model that can be replicated in other regions, allowing for the expansion of ACCESS Academy's impact. This will not only enhance the sustainability of the Academy, but also increase its reach and influence. Sixth, ACCESS Academy will foster a strong sense of community among ACCESS Academy alumni and their families. Engaged graduates and supportive community can play a significant role in sustaining the academy by sharing their success stories and advocating

for its mission. Lastly, we will use data and feedback from students, industry partners, and educators to inform program enhancements and strategic decisions. This data-driven approach will help ensure that ACCESS Academy remains responsive to the evolving needs of at-risk students and the job market.

In summary, ACCESS Academy represents a model school that empowers high school students to pursue high-demand careers (first in information technology, and later in education, health, and other high-demand fields) by offering various accessible pathways designed considering the needs of students. ACCESS Academy's approach to create pathways to advanced education centers on offering innovative, problem-based learning experiences, forging strong pedagogical partnerships, providing a wealth of hands-on, experiential learning opportunities, and reducing administrative and financial barriers on students and parents. The Academy has the ultimate goal of increasing access to high-demand careers in key industries and improving workforce readiness for at-risk students by offering a range of pathways, including transition to workforce after graduating from high school, two- and four-year degrees, and advanced degrees.

II. Mission and Vision: State the mission and vision of the proposed college partnership laboratory school, including identification of the targeted student population, must be included. The following components must be addressed:

1. A description of the college partnership laboratory school's mission and vision and how it is consistent with the *Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ)*, the *Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL)*, and the *Virginia Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA)*. (See § [22.1-349.3](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.)

The vision of ACCESS Academy is to prepare adaptable lifelong learners that collaboratively and creatively solve complex problems in any setting, as technologies, the nature of work, workers, and the workplace evolve over time.

The mission of ACCESS Academy is to provide new innovative pathways for at-risk students toward high-demand, well-compensated careers, while simultaneously working toward two- and four-year degrees to maximize their earning potential over their work life.

Both the mission and vision of ACCESS Academy is consistent with the Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) and the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs). The school will foster competency-based career and technical education programs that integrate academic outcomes, career guidance, and job seeking skills. The educational program is based upon labor market needs and career guidance will include counseling about available employment opportunities and placement services.

The lab school mission and vision are also aligned with all three collaborative partners' strategic plans. It is aligned with the Fairfax County Public Schools Strategic Plan for 2023-2030, Goal 5: Every student will graduate **ready to thrive in life after high school** and with the skills to navigate, adapt, and innovate for a sustainable future. George Mason University's 2023 Strategic Plan, is aligned through Strategic Action 3.2.2.c: Establish and **execute a plan to enhance K-12 outreach** (e.g., Governor's School, **lab schools**, other college specific programs, dual enrollment, etc.) and engagement activities. Northern Virginia Community College's 2017-2023 Strategic Plan is aligned through Goal 2: Objective 3: Develop comprehensive, fully integrated informed Pathways for every

program to **ensure seamless transitions from high school and other entry points to NOVA and from NOVA to four-year transfer institutions or the workforce.**

2. A description of any specific area of academic concentration.

ACCESS Academy will provide students with high school and dual enrollment core curriculum coursework as well as specialized problem-based learning IT coursework that will prepare students to pursue high-demand careers in computing sciences. Coursework is consistent with Virginia Standards of Quality and aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Courses are further aligned to the Fairfax County Portrait of a Graduate and the Virginia Department of Education's Profile of a Virginia Graduate.

3. The college partnership laboratory school's core philosophy.

ACCESS Academy provides a robust, innovative, and transformative educational experience to at-risk students, who have not historically had access to opportunities and pathways that meet their needs and lead to high-demand and well compensated career opportunities, as they simultaneously work toward two- and four-year college degrees. With multiple pathways and on/off ramps to support student access and workforce readiness for high-demand careers in the Information Technology field, ACCESS Academy utilizes 1) wraparound support, 2) innovative teaching and learning methods, 3) transdisciplinary collaboration, and a 4) learn and earn approach, alongside an assets-based approach to students' strengths and funds of knowledge to create college and employment opportunities. ACCESS Academy's approach to teaching is anchored in a problem-based learning (PBL) framework and essential employability skills to provide students with a skillset that will prepare them to succeed in a rapidly evolving workplace and society.

4. Information about the college partnership laboratory school's targeted student population.

ACCESS Academy will initially serve at-risk students in grades 11 and 12. Programming will be expanded to include students in grades 9 and 10 during 2025-2026 academic year.

ACCESS Academy plans to use a lottery process for admission with students submitting their interest through a lottery application. The only prerequisites to apply would be completion of the prior year grade level and enrollment in the school division. The lottery process will include multiple rounds of offers until program capacity is confirmed, with parents/guardians and students being given approximately two weeks to decide prior to subsequent lottery offers being issued. The initial offers would be extended annually beginning in March.

During the initial pilot year, ACCESS Academy will include students in Fairfax County Public Schools only. After the initial pilot year and any improvements have been implemented, ACCESS Academy will open up opportunities to other school divisions across the Commonwealth based on program capacity.

During the first year (2024-2025), ACCESS Academy will include a total of 60 students from grade 11 (n=30) and grade 12 (n=30). In the following year, there will be an expansion of the school to include grade 9 (n=30) and grade 10 (n=30) students.

Table 1

Proposed Enrollment of Students for ACCESS Academy 2024-2028

	Fairfax County Public Schools		Total N of Students	
	Grade	#	Grade	#
Year 1 (2024-25)	9 th	0	9 th	0
	10 th	0	10 th	0
	11 th	30	11 th	30
	12 th	30	12 th	30
Year 2 (2025-26)	9 th	30	9 th	30
	10 th	30	10 th	30
	11 th	30	11 th	30
	12 th	30	12 th	30
Year 3 (2026-27)	9 th	30	9 th	30
	10 th	30	10 th	30
	11 th	30	11 th	30
	12 th	30	12 th	30
Year 4 (2027-28)	9 th	30	9 th	30
	10 th	30	10 th	30
	11 th	30	11 th	30
	12 th	30	12 th	30

III. Educational Program: State the goals and objectives to be achieved by the college partnership laboratory school, which must meet or exceed the SOL. The following components must be addressed:

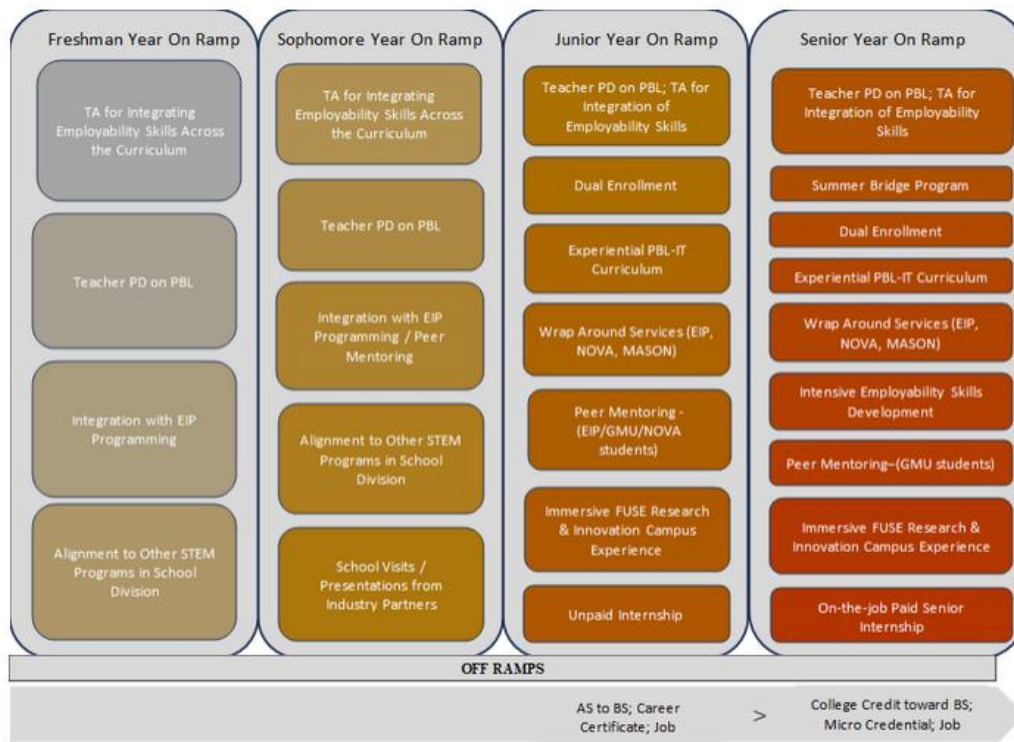
1. A description of the college partnership laboratory school’s academic program and how it is aligned with state standards.

Although ACCESS Academy will initially begin with grades 11 and 12, the endeavor is planned for a grades 9-12 academic program. Students in grades 9 and 10 will pursue Fairfax County graduation requirements including English, social studies, math, science, and others as they prepare to start dual enrollment and specialized IT courses in grade 11. All graduation required courses are aligned to the Standards of Learning, meet the Standards of Quality, and fulfill the FCPS requirements for the standard diploma. Furthermore, students may also have the opportunity to pursue additional dual enrollment, elective, other advanced academic opportunities and/or an advanced diploma.

Students will have access to different on and off ramps for ACCESS Academy. Potential off ramps might include coursework that leads to an AS or BS degree, career certifications, micro credentials, or a job. Additionally, employability skills are integrated across the curriculum at all grade levels, there is integration with existing Mason Early Identification Program (EIP) programming and peer mentoring, and alignment to other STEM programs in the school division. A full breakdown of on and off ramps is below.

Figure 1

Proposed On and Off Ramps - Freshman Year through Senior Year



Core subject teachers in grades 9 and 10 will receive professional learning regarding instructional strategies used in problem-based learning so that they can be integrated into the 9th and 10th grade curriculum. The goal is to build student critical thinking, reflection, problem-solving, collaboration, and research skills to prepare for transdisciplinary learning in the innovative teaching proposed in the lab school and develop college and career readiness. Teachers will be provided with technical assistance for integrating employability skills into the curriculum.

In grade 11, students attending ACCESS Academy will transition to pursuing Fairfax County Public Schools graduation requirements to dual enrollment offerings in collaboration with Northern Virginia Community College. Students will take dual enrollment coursework in English, social studies, math, and science earning up to 13 college credits for those courses in the junior year. Students will also take innovative PBL IT coursework, which will be designed with a problem-based learning approach, in collaboration with industry partners. Students can earn an additional nine credits in that discipline. Faculty at Northern Virginia Community College will teach the junior year dual enrollment and PBL IT coursework.

In grade 12, students attending ACCESS Academy will continue dual enrollment coursework for English and government, the last remaining Fairfax County graduation requirements. They will also continue their PBL IT curriculum. Grade 12 students will also engage in immersive experiential learning at Fuse at Mason Square (<https://construction.gmu.edu/fuse-mason-square>), an innovative space that will house a combination of research and development, education programs, incubators, and technology labs. Students will be able to work side-by-side with researchers, student mentors, and industry partners in a technology incubator setting. They will also pursue a paid internship with industry partners and complete a senior design course as part of the lab school program. Students will work with external organizations to develop technical solutions or assess and propose innovative ways to enhance their current services.

George Mason University's team will work closely with external entities to scaffold levels of problem complexity into their learning experience to strike the right balance between the students' knowledge and capabilities and the organization's expectations. A few examples of projects that students will deliver may include creating a dashboard to help track successful marketing tactics, creating a website for startups, creating an interactive virtual tour experience, creating a series of visualizations to track the firm's policies and their impact on employees, analyzing and reporting on a company's website traffic and marketing strategies, assessing data and providing guidance on appropriate interventions, and creating mobile apps for keeping the community together. During the senior year, students can earn six possible credits for dual enrollment and up to 15 for the PBL IT courses.

While attending ACCESS, all students will be offered wraparound support including the most forward-looking tech career coaching, near peer mentoring, academic advising, writing and language support, disability services liaising (if needed), general guidance about resources, and transportation. Students will also be offered transition support for their completion of ACCESS Academy. The school intends to develop a learn and earn model that includes college credit, industry certifications, and competency-based micro credentialing with multiple on and off ramps to facilitate continued student academic and career advancement, as well as income earning opportunities.

2. An overview of the curriculum and teaching methods to be used at the college partnership laboratory school and a description of the learning environment and instructional strategies to be used at the college partnership laboratory school, including scientifically research-based instructional strategies to ensure that student engagement and achievement are occurring.

ACCESS Academy will transform teaching and learning in information technology and computing science coursework by integrating problem-based learning (PBL) approaches and activities (Shaklee & Horak, 2014; Horak & Shaklee, 2019). Problem-based learning immerses teachers and students together in a cognitive apprenticeship (Collins & Kapur, 2015) that develops critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills through an ill-structured narrative that is based on real scenarios. Although similar to project-based learning, problem-based learning not only promotes active learning in students, but also allows students to connect experiences in the classroom with real-time industry conditions while developing content and employability skills. Students develop knowledge while working through the problem and the focus is on self-directed inquiry to inform decision making.

Coursework will be transdisciplinary with real-world experiences from industry partners integrated into PBL environments and scenarios so that students can connect experiences in the classroom with real-time industry conditions. Learning experiences will be scaffolded so that students attending ACCESS Academy build problem-solving skills and increase the level of complexity each year. Students will also develop and build employability skills as noted in the Top 15 Skills for Employers 2025 (World Economic Forum, 2020). These skills include among others: critical thinking and analysis, technology design and programming, reasoning, problem-solving, and ideation, and systems analysis and evaluation.

Problem-based learning is well-suited for the ACCESS Academy as it teaches students "what questions to ask, how to make predictions from theories, and how theories and rules can be tested" (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows, 2006, p. 4). Additionally, Knuth et al. (2016) found that students who consistently engage in PBL activities have increased enrollment and pass rates in rigorous coursework. Students who participate in PBL activities also demonstrate longer retention (Diggs,

1997) and have more learning gains on measures of conceptual reasoning (Tarhan & Acar-Sesen, 2013) and build data literacy skills (Swan et al., 2013).

At ACCESS Academy, we will adopt problem-based learning methodology in our IT coursework. Problems will be developed throughout the courses in collaboration with industry partners in such a way so that students will be able to integrate and apply knowledge from different disciplines. This allows students to see connections among disciplines and promotes carryover of knowledge from one discipline to another. In this way, problem-based learning facilitates adaptability across disciplines and contexts since students are exposed to a problem that requires them to integrate a range of disciplines and principles to solve the problem. As coursework is completed through tasks, case studies, and real-world scenarios and experiences, the curriculum becomes transdisciplinary in nature since students start from a given problem that is designed in collaboration with employers, researchers, and instructors.

A positive element of problem-based learning is the high degree of social, communication, and cooperation skills among students—skills that are in high demand by employers.

3. A plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report student progress in accordance with the SOL.

All students at ACCESS Academy will receive their core subject instruction from Fairfax County Public Schools. They will be held to the same graduation requirements including SOL testing, as peers not attending ACCESS Academy. Additionally, reports of student progress will be conveyed to the Virginia Department of Education by the Fairfax County Public School System in partnership with the ACCESS Academy Director.

4. A description of plans for identifying, evaluating, and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, students who are academically behind, and gifted students. Such plans must comply with applicable laws and regulations.

Students at ACCESS Academy will retain their home school status. The lab school will work in consultation with Fairfax County Public Schools and other officials to ensure that students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, students who need academic support, and gifted students receive the services outlined in their IEPs, Language Instruction Educational Program, Section 504 plan, and any academic improvement plan agreed upon by the student, family, and district officials. As students will be concurrently enrolled at Mason and NOVA while attending ACCESS Academy, students with documented special educational needs from the K-12 environment including FCPS will need to submit their documentation to Mason's Office of Disability Services (<https://ds.gmu.edu/>) and NOVA's Office of Accommodations and Accessibility Services (<https://www.nvcc.edu/accommodations/index.html>). Each office will review the documentation and ensure all previously approved accommodations will be supported in collaboration with the ACCESS Academy Director. Mason and NOVA faculty teaching dual enrollment and/or PBL IT coursework will be provided with student disability and accommodation plans by the institutional office where the class resides. That office will also serve as the point of contact for ACCESS Academy faculty regarding student services, support, and accommodations while they attend ACCESS Academy. For students that are minors, parent/guardian support may be utilized via a FERPA waiver.

Also, Mason serves as the home base for the VDOE Region 4 Technical Training and Assistance Center (TTAC) which provides support, professional development, and technical assistance to teachers across Northern Virginia to improve learning outcomes for students with disabilities. As a division in Region IV, FCPS broadly, and ACCESS Academy specifically, have access to the resources provided through TTAC. This includes materials for ACCESS Academy teachers such as professional resources on evidenced-based strategies and foundational knowledge and skills, as well as professional learning communities to support teachers' ongoing professional development—all of which prepares teachers to support students with disabilities in the classroom. For example, TTAC provides training on 22 high-leverage practices (HLPs) identified by the CEEDAR Center as essential for building capacity in schools to support students with disabilities in accessing the general curriculum. While designated as effective practices for special education teachers and students, high leverage practices are appropriate and effective improving outcomes for all learners. The 22 HLPs are applicable to any content area and are organized into four categories: collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/behavioral, and instruction. Teachers at ACCESS Academy, regardless of the degree to which they support students with disabilities, will participate in HLP professional development and use the resources of TTAC to enhance instruction for all.

5. An explanation of the procedures for corrective actions needed in the event that pupil performance at the college partnership laboratory school falls below the standards outlined in the SOA. (*See [Part VIII of the SOA.](#)*)

ACCESS Academy will implement the standards by which the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports is in alignment across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the lab school will work closely in consultation with FCPS administration, teachers, and staff to implement Response to Intervention (RtI) as an approach to identify and address students who may struggle with literacy and mathematics. These interventions are in addition to providing professional development for teachers and instructional teams on PBL. The lab school believes that all students can learn and that the entire learning community is essential to support students who might need more support to meet standards.

6. Information regarding the minimum and maximum enrollment per grade for the full term of the contract as well as class size and structure for each grade. (*See § [22.1-253.13:2](#) of the *Code of Virginia.**)

For academic year 2024-25, the goal is to enroll 30 students for the junior and senior classes (total n=60). For academic year 2025-26, an additional 30 students will be added in grades 9, 10, and 11 bringing the total enrollment to 120 students. It is possible that enrollment per grade level can vary per year since ACCESS Academy will be a school of choice for families. Students who un-enroll will be replaced by a student on the waitlist at midyear or the beginning of the academic year. Further, enrollment may be adjusted by the addition of other school district partners and/or other sites.

7. The proposed calendar and sample daily schedule.

Coursework for the ACCESS Academy would be aligned with the current Fairfax County Public Schools calendar. Courses taken as part of FCPS graduation requirements or to fulfill the UCGS will be taken in cooperation with Northern Virginia Community College. Courses would be scheduled according to the block schedule of Annandale High School (<https://annandalehs.fcps.edu/>), the proposed lab school site, selected by FCPS.

Figure 2

ACCESS Academy Draft Calendar 2024-2025

ACCESS ACADEMY DRAFT CALENDAR 2024-2025										
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	Important Dates
August 2024					January 2025					August 2024
			1	2			1	2	3	First Day of School Aug 19
5	6	7	8	9	6	7	8	9	10	Labor Day Break Aug 30
12	13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16	17	October 2024
19	20	21	22	23	20	21	22	23	24	Rosh Hashanah Oct 3
26	27	28	29	30	27	28	29	30	31	November 2024
September 2024					February 2025					Diwali Nov 1
2	3	4	5	6	3	4	5	6	7	PW and Student Nov 4
9	10	11	12	13	10	11	12	13	14	Elections Day Nov 5
16	17	18	19	20	17	18	19	20	21	Veterans Day Nov 11
23	24	25	26	27	24	25	26	27	28	Thanksgiving Break Nov 27
30										December 2024
October 2024					March 2025					Winter Break Dec 23-Jan 3
	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	January 2025
7	8	9	10	11	10	11	12	13	14	Inauguration Day / Jan 20
14	15	16	17	18	17	18	19	20	21	MLK Day Jan 20
21	22	23	24	25	24	25	26	27	28	Student Holiday Jan 29
28	29	30	31		31					February 2025
November 2024					April 2025					Washington's Birthday and Presidents' Day Feb 17
				1		1	2	3	4	March 2025
4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	Eid-al-Fitr March 31
11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	April 2025
18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	PW and Student Apr 1
25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30			Spring Break Apr 14 – Apr 18
December 2024					May 2025					May 2025
2	3	4	5	6				1	2	Last Day of School May 23
9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	Memorial Day May 26
16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	June 2025
23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	Graduation TBD
30	31				26	27	28	29	30	
Color Codes					June 2025					
					2	3	4	5	6	
					9	10	11	12	13	
					16	17	18	19	20	
					23	24	25	26	27	
Quarters										
		End Date	Duration							
Q1		Oct 31	49 days							
Q2		Jan 28	45 days							
Q3		Mar 28	41 days							
Q4		Jun 11	45 days							

Below is a potential daily schedule for students enrolled in ACCESS Academy.

ODD DAY

8:10 – 9:35 1st Period
 9:35 – 9:50 Breakfast
 9:50 - 11:15 3rd Period
 11:22 – 1:22 5th Period/Lunch
 1:29 – 2:55 7th Period

EVEN DAY

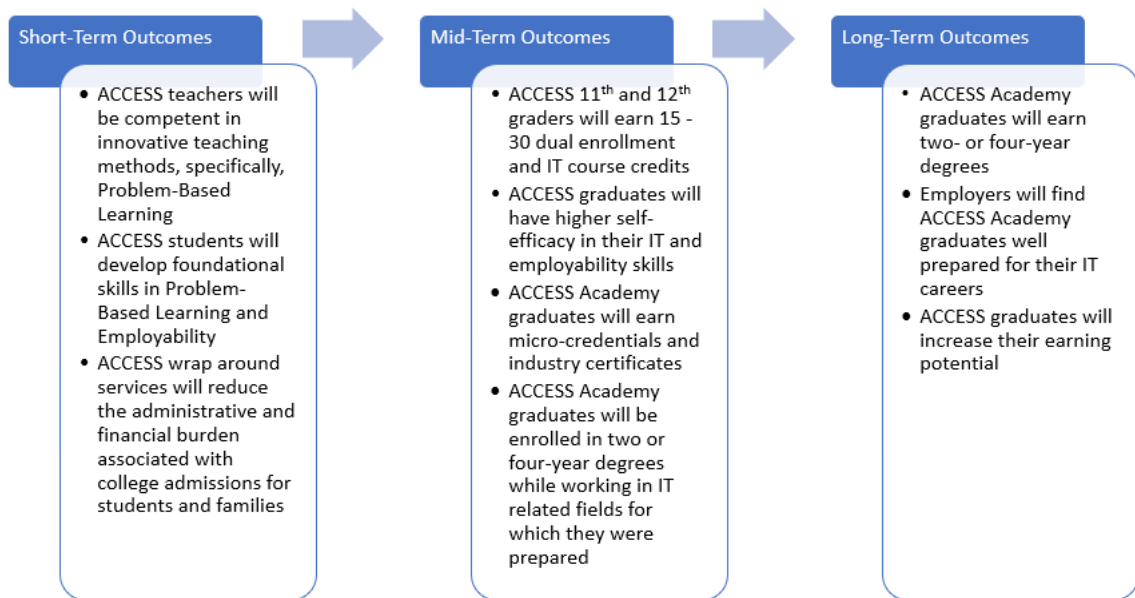
8:10 – 9:35 2nd Period
 9:35 – 9:50 Breakfast
 9:50 - 11:15 4th Period
 11:22 – 1:22 6th Period/Lunch
 1:29 – 2:55 8th Period

8. A description of the performance-based goals and related measurable educational objectives to be achieved by the school. (See § [22.1-253.13:1](#) B of the *Code of Virginia*.)

The performance-based goals and outcomes of ACCESS Academy are in alignment with § 22.1-253.13:1, and the Standards of Learning will be measured and assessed. Programming has been designed with short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes as defined below. These outcomes will be measured through both formative and summative evaluations which will be used to ensure effective design, development, implementation, as well continually improve as we work on a scalable model.

Figure 3

Performance-Based Goals and Outcomes



9. For each grade or course in the college partnership laboratory school, please provide a detailed description of how the SOL and the corresponding SOL Curriculum Framework will be used as the foundation for curricula to be implemented. Include within the description how the goals and objectives of the curricula will meet or exceed the SOL, address student performance standards, relate to state and federal assessment standards, and include measurable student outcomes. (See <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml> on the Department’s website for more information about the SOL.)

ACCESS Academy students in grades 9 and 10 will focus on completion of high school graduation requirements and begin to develop employability skills through teaching, learning, and curriculum innovations that leverage existing programs in the student's base school. The core curriculum design will include activities that provide an opportunity to practice and continue to develop employability skills and 9th and 10th graders will build the foundation to succeed during 11th and 12th grade of the lab school, in turn developing college and career readiness. As ACCESS Academy will be based at Annandale High School, courses have been aligned with FCPS graduation requirements and the Program of Studies. An alignment to the Virginia Standards of Learning and relevant curriculum frameworks is provided below.

Table 2*Alignment of Courses to Standards of Learning/Frameworks*

Lab School Subject	Standard of Learning & Curriculum Frameworks	Courses Covered
English	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/english-reading-literacy/standards-of-learning	English 9-12
Social Studies	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/history-and-social-science/standards-of-learning	World History & Geography to 1500 Virginia & US History Virginia & US Government
Math	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/mathematics/standards-of-learning/2023-mathematics-sol	Algebra 1 Algebra 2 Geometry
Science	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/science/standards-of-learning	Biology Chemistry Physics Earth Science
Economics & Personal Finance	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/economics-personal-finance	Economics & Personal Finance
Physical Education	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/physical-education	Physical Education Grades 9 & 10
World Language	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/world-language/standards-of-learning	Spanish French Arabic
Fine Arts	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/fine-arts	Visual Arts Music Theatre Arts
Career & Technical Education	https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/computer-science	Computer Science Foundations Computer Science Principles Computer Science Programming

In addition to the coursework listed above, students will take innovative PBL-IT coursework during the 11th and 12th grades. Problem-based learning scenarios constructed in collaboration with industry

partners will be woven through each course allowing students to build employability and technical skills, fostering collaboration, communication, problem solving, reflection, flexibility, and leadership. Students will solve real-world problems and address real-world workplace conditions. A sampling of these courses is provided below.

Discrete Structures - This course introduces high-level program design and discrete structures. It focuses on problem solving supporting abstraction and modeling providing the foundation needed for programming and Python. Students also learn probability and algorithms.

Introductory Calculus with Business Applications - This course provides a firm understanding of introductory calculus with a view towards applications in business and other disciplines. Students will learn how to interpret quantitative information and use appropriate algebraic, arithmetic and/or statistical methods to solve a problem.

Introduction to Computing - This course introduces students to basic computer concepts in hardware, software, networking, computer security, programming, databases, e-commerce, and decision-support systems. Students also examine social, legal, and ethical issues including privacy, intellectual property, health concerns, green computing, and accessibility. Hands-on activities include spreadsheets, databases, presentations, HTML 5, CSS, cybersecurity, blogs, wiki, and mobile app development.

IT Architecture Fundamentals - This course focuses on fundamental hardware and software concepts of information technology. Students will learn a computer systems' essential components, component interdependence, and binary functions, factoring in performance data communication models, telecommunication basics, and information security. Recent trends and advancements in mobile computing, telecommunications and IT infrastructures are also explored.

Multimedia and Web Design - This course focuses on the design and development of attractive and accessible websites with multimedia components. Students will be introduced and discussed technological, aesthetic, and human factors.

Database Fundamentals - This course covers relational database management systems and their use in business environments. Topics include database classifications, data models, normalization, and Structured Query Language (SQL) programming. Students will design and implement a real-world relational database and create SQL complex queries to retrieve data.

Information Security Fundamentals – This course covers information security and discusses the need for organizational policy to define required services such as confidentiality, authentication, integrity, nonrepudiation, access control, and availability, and mechanisms to implement those services. It also covers different types of security including physical security, computer security, and network security, common threats to and attacks against information systems, including accidental damage, identity theft, malicious software, "spam", and defensive measures.

Senior Design and Internship – This course will provide students with the opportunity to work on a capstone design project that will bring together the knowledge learned in the lab school experience. Students will also engage with industry partners through a paid internship and industry partners will assist students with their capstone projects.

The above courses prepare students to apply IT to support business processes. Graduates will have strong problem-solving, communication, and writing skills and can compete for technical

employment or complete advanced study. The BSIT is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET (<https://www.abet.org/>).

10. A description of the school's assessment plan to obtain student performance data, which would include how these data will be used to monitor and improve achievement and how program effectiveness will be measured. The applicant must also provide benchmark data for how student achievement will be measured over a specified period of time. The applicant must address how these data will be established and documented in the first year of operation and how the data will be measured over the successive four-year period before the contract of such school is renewed by the Board. The benchmark data should address targets for student improvement to be met in each year.

Assessments for ACCESS Academy will be aligned with VDOE guidelines and be developed with the intention to provide benchmark data for student progress and to monitor progress over time. Performance assessments may serve as both a formative and summative means of determining student mastery of content and skills. As performance assessments are developed, ACCESS Academy will use the Quality Criteria Tool offered by VDOE to ensure that assessments enhance instruction, promote deeper learning of content and skills, and foster student development of the 5 C's outlined in the Profile of a Virginia Graduate.

Student achievement and success will be documented and measured in the following ways:

- GPA data for lab school coursework
- Number of standard and advanced diplomas
- Feedback from industry partners
- Performance on industry certification examinations
- Attainment of industry certificates and micro-credentials
- Performance on SOL examinations
- Student satisfaction/graduation surveys
- Pre-and post-student engagement and motivation surveys (AES/SEM, Reeve, 2013; Reeve & Lee, 2013)
- Job placement information

11. A description of any assessment other than the SOL that may be used to measure progress during the academic year.

Student learning at the ACCESS Academy will be transdisciplinary. Assessments to measure progress will be derived from multiple data points and may include the following:

- Student projects (formative/summative)
- Student writing (formative/summative)
- Anecdotal notes (formative)

The following components should be addressed if applicable to the college partnership laboratory school:

12. A detailed description of any alternative accreditation plan, in accordance with the SOA ([8VAC20-131-420](#)), for which the college partnership laboratory school will request approval from the Board.

At the present time, there is no plan to request alternative accreditation for the ACCESS Academy. Mason and NOVA will continue to follow SACS-COC accreditation guidelines.

13. A general description of any incentives/partnerships that the college partnership laboratory school intends to have with school divisions to enhance both the educational program of the college partnership laboratory school and the partnering school division(s).

ACCESS Academy is a collaborative effort between George Mason University (Mason), Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Additionally, the lab school will engage in partnerships with business and industry to provide expertise, mentoring, and internships to students enrolled in lab school programs. Regional representatives from companies including Google, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, Northrop Grumman, Intel, Leidos, Verizon, and others have been engaged in the planning process to determine their level of interest and possible collaboration opportunities.

Students in the 11th grade will have opportunities to enroll in dual enrollment programs through NOVA. They will also have the opportunity to earn job experience through unpaid internships. Students in the 12th grade will also have dual enrollment opportunities through NOVA but will get on the job experience through paid internships.

FCPS teachers who participate in professional development and engage through technical assistance to develop problem-based learning skills and curriculum will receive stipends and micro-credentials.

14. If the college partnership laboratory school plans to use virtual learning in its educational program, a description of how virtual learning will be used and estimates of how many students will participate.

Although virtual learning is not a defining feature of the proposed lab school project, students will not be restricted from pursuing any virtual learning opportunities offered either at the school site, through Fairfax County Public Schools, or through Northern Virginia Community College.

IV. Governance: The following components must be addressed:

1. Background information on the proposed founding governing board members and, if identified, the proposed school leadership and management team. (*See § [22.1-299.2](#) B of the Code of Virginia.*)

An Advisory Board for the lab school will report to the Virginia Department of Education. The proposed board will consist of the following members:

Mason Representative: Dr. Ingrid Guerra-López, Dean, College of Education and Human Development, George Mason University. Dr. Guerra-López joined George Mason University in July 2022. She previously served as the interim Dean of the College of Education, as well as the interim Dean of the Graduate school at Wayne State University. She is also a Professor of Learning Systems Design and Technology and has served as Special Advisor for Digital Learning Strategy and Innovation. Dr. Guerra-López will provide holistic oversight of ACCESS, including the supervision of the ACCESS Director, and the innovative instructional aspects of the lab school, including the

Learning Innovations Lab). She will also work collaboratively with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer at Northern Virginia Community College and the Chief Academic Officer of Fairfax County Public Schools. Dr. Guerra-López will also secure University resources and facilitate partnerships with other school divisions and industry partners.

NOVA Representative: Dr. Eun-Woo Chang, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, Northern Virginia Community College. Dr. Chang joined Northern Virginia Community College in July 2021. Prior to this role, he held academic leadership positions at Ashland University and Mercer County Community College. Dr. Chang also served as a program director in the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation. He will provide oversight of instructional programming related to dual enrollment processes at the community college level and also provide oversight on some of the pre-professional pathways offered.

FCPS Representative: Dr. Sloan Presidio, Chief Academic Officer, Fairfax County Public Schools. Dr. Presidio became Chief Academic Officer of Fairfax County Public Schools in November 2020 after serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services since 2012. He will provide oversight of the operational aspects of the lab school, including staffing and facilities. This will include supervision of the school principal at the lab school site.

The following board members are to be named later:

- Industry representatives or chamber stakeholders - 2
- Parent representatives - 2
- Community representatives - 2

Additionally, ACCESS Academy will be led by a management team that includes the following roles: Director, Administrative Assistant, and Career Coach.

The **Director** of the lab school will be an administrative faculty member of the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development (CEHD). They will report directly to the Dean of CEHD and provide oversight of the instructional programming in the operational aspects of the lab school, working collaboratively with the principal of Annandale High School. The director will serve as a liaison between ACCESS Academy, Fairfax County Public Schools, and Northern Virginia Community College. The Director will also be responsible for organizing professional learning opportunities for ACCESS instructors.

An **Administrative Assistant** will be employed by the lab school to assist in the operational aspects of the lab school including but not limited to recruitment, marketing, outreach, assessment data collection, and student services. They will report to the Director.

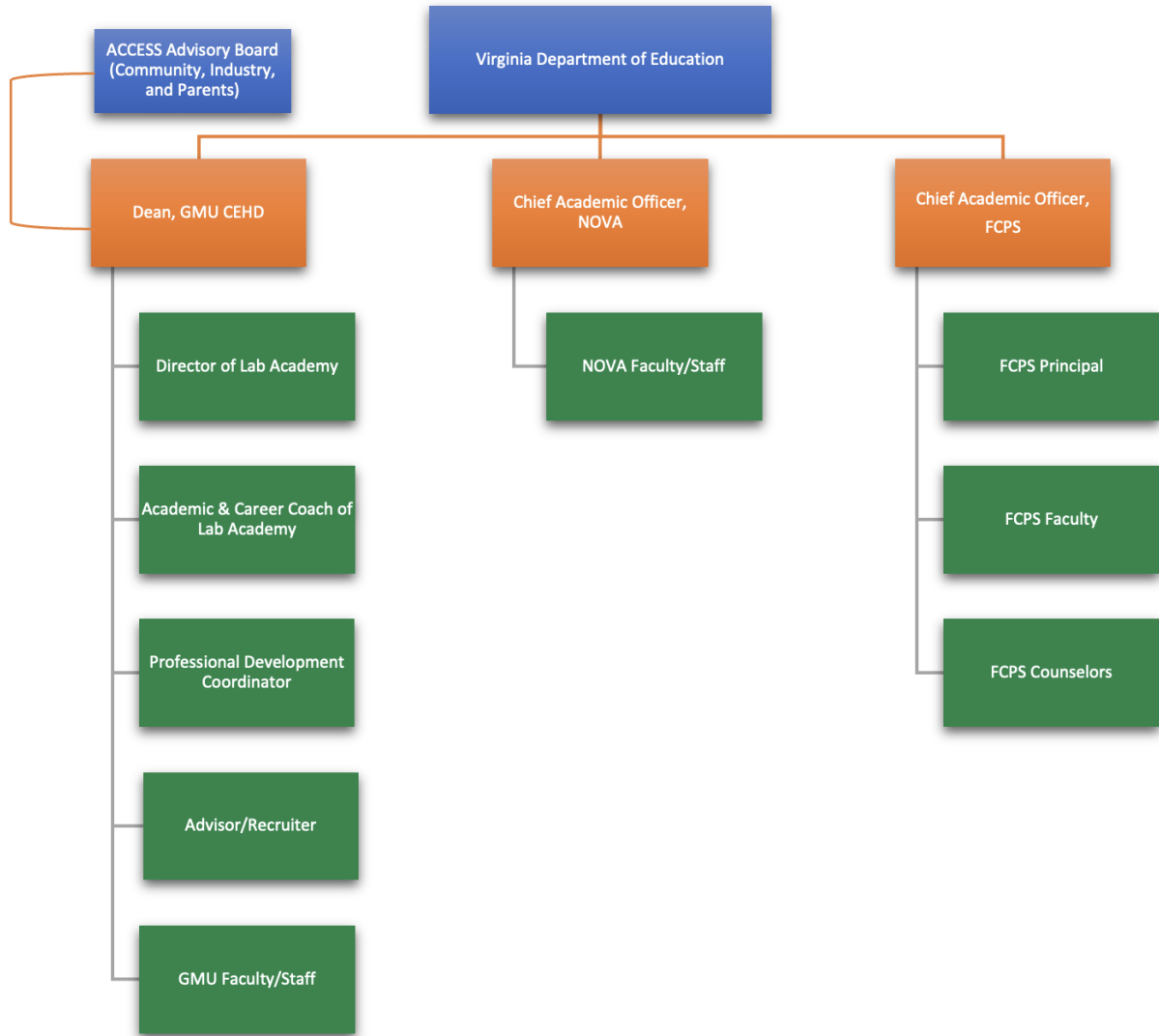
A **Career Coach** will be responsible for providing students with specific IT career advising. This coach will work cooperatively with students and instructors at Mason and NOVA and also conduct outreach to industry partners. The career coach will also help facilitate internships, mentorships, and other opportunities.

2. A chart that clearly presents the school's organizational structure, including lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, staff, any related bodies such as advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, the Board, and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.

Please see Figure 4 below for the general organizational structure of ACCESS Academy.

Figure 4

General Organizational Structure – ACCESS Academy



The Advisory Board will be integrated with community, industry, and parent representatives and will provide input to the Mason CEHD Dean, NOVA CAO, and FCPS CAO.

3. A clear description of the roles and responsibilities for the governing board, the school’s leadership and management team, and any other entities shown in the organization chart. This includes a description of the functions, roles, and duties of the governing board and its proposed composition and bylaws. The description must detail the specific role of the governing board in the operation and oversight of the college partnership laboratory school.

An Advisory Board will represent voices from stakeholders associated with the lab school. The Board will provide shared governance of the lab school, including the establishment and revision of school policies and recommend significant and strategic decisions for the school. The Board will be the authority to which school leadership is accountable for the instructional and operational aspects of ACCESS Academy.

The **Dean** of the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University will provide oversight of the instructional aspects of the lab school, including supervision of the school Director. The Dean will serve as liaison between Mason, Chief Academic Officer of Fairfax County Public Schools, and Chief Academic Officer of Northern Virginia Community College. The Dean will secure university resources and facilitate partnerships with other university colleges/divisions. The Dean will report progress/updates to the lab school Advisory Board.

The **Chief Academic Officer** (CAO) of Fairfax County Public Schools will provide oversight of the operational aspects of the lab school, including fiscal, staffing, and facilities. The CAO will provide supervision of the school principal where the lab school functions.

The **Chief Academic Officer** of Northern Virginia Community College will provide oversight of instructional programming related to dual enrollment processes at the community college.

The **Director** of the lab school will be an administrative employee of the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, reporting directly to the Dean of the CEHD. The Director will provide oversight of the instructional programming and operational aspects of the lab school, working directly with the school principal of the FCPS school housing the lab school. The Director will provide supervision of faculty work at the lab school and any school staff employed by the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development.

The **School Principal** at the high school where the lab school (Annandale High School) functions will provide recommendations and guidance to the lab school Director. The School Principal will provide supervision of all school staff employed by Fairfax County Public Schools.

The **Professional Development Coordinator** will be an administrative employee of the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, reporting directly to the Dean of CEHD. The Professional Development Coordinator will create the lab school's professional learning program for core classroom teachers and PBL IT faculty. The professional development coordinator will also be responsible for overseeing technical support provided to classroom teachers.

The **Career Coach** will be a professional employee of the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, reporting directly to the Dean of CEHD. The Career Coach will provide specialized career support to lab school students and be a liaison between the lab school and industry partners.

The **Advisor/Recruiter** will be a professional employee of the George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, reporting directly to the Dean of CEHD. The Advisor/Recruiter will be responsible for information sessions each year about the lab school, recruitment, and the admissions timeline as well as outreach to potential families and students.

4. A description of the governing board's relationship with the affiliated public or private institution of higher education and its Board of Visitors, any local school boards, parents, and community organizations.

The Advisory Board represents the voice of a range of stakeholders including parents, community, and industry representatives. Two parent members will be appointed by the Fairfax County School Board. George Mason University in consultation with Northern Virginia Community College, and Fairfax County Public Schools will appoint two industry or chamber stakeholder and two community members.

V. Management Structure: The following components must be addressed:

1. A staffing chart for the school’s first year and a staffing plan for the term of the contract.

While Figure 4 presented earlier provides an organizational chart, Table 3 below demonstrates the staffing plan for Year 1 (2024-25), with a plan for 30 11th grade students and 30 12th grade students. Some support positions might need to be increased in Year 2 when additional students in 9th and 10th grade will be added; 60 students in total for both grade levels, which will total 120 students for all four grade levels, 9th through 12th grade.

Table 3

Staffing Plan – Year 1 (2024-2025)

Position	Number	Employed By
Director	1	Mason
Career Coach	1	Mason
Admin Support	1	Mason
PD Coordinator	1	Mason
Grants/Finance Admin	1	Mason
Advisor/Recruiter	1	Mason
Paraprofessional	2	FCPS
Industry Experts	4-6	Industry
Mason Faculty	3	Mason
NOVA Faculty	2	NOVA
Graduate Assistants	2	Mason
School Counselor	1	FCPS
Social Worker	1	FCPS

2. Plans for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff.

The Director position will be advertised by Mason no later than December 2023. The Mason CEHD Dean will select a candidate with input from a search committee that will include stakeholders from Mason, FCPS, and NOVA. The Director will be hired no later than February 2024.

The Professional Development Coordinator position will be advertised by Mason no later than December 2023. The Mason CEHD Dean will select a candidate with input from a search committee that will include stakeholders from Mason, FCPS, and NOVA. The Coordinator will be hired no later than February 2024.

The Career Coach and Advisor/Recruiter positions will be advertised by Mason no later than January 2024. The Mason CEHD Dean will select a candidate with input from a search committee that will include the Director and stakeholders from Mason, FCPS, and NOVA. The Career Coach & Advisor/Recruiter positions will be hired no later than March 2024.

The Administrative Assistant and Grants/Finance Administrator positions will be advertised by Mason by January 2024 and hired no later than March 2024.

Mason and NOVA Faculty will be identified within the university and community college. Course reassignments will be provided to Mason and NOVA Faculty by the George Mason University ACCESS Academy budget.

Paraprofessionals will be assigned by the School Principal at Annandale High School in consultation with FCPS CAO and the ACCESS Director. Paraprofessionals will be identified no later than June 2024. A stipend will be provided to each paraprofessional by the lab school budget.

Industry experts (4-6 in total) will be recruited by Mason, aligned with the community project needs, as determined no later than August 2024. Industry experts will be paid from the lab school budget.

Graduate Assistants will be recruited through the Mason Graduate School and CEHD and identified no later than June 2024.

The School Counselor and Social Worker assigned to Annandale High School will interface with the lab school and serve students as applicable.

Instructional staff (Director, Career Coach, Mason Faculty, NOVA Faculty, Industry Experts) will begin work on curriculum development in June 2024, including identifying community and industry needs for the problem-based learning focus. Mason faculty will lead professional learning opportunities for all instructional staff. Professional learning and training will begin no later than July 2024. Stipends will be provided to NOVA faculty and Industry Experts for developing training. All members of the educational team will engage in July training as applicable.

3. A description of the academic/professional experience/qualifications of the college partnership laboratory school's leadership and proposed faculty who will teach at the school.

The ACCESS Academy Director will possess the following qualifications:

- Minimum of a master's degree in Education Leadership
- Professional Virginia educator's license with endorsement in Administration/Supervision
- 3 years of successful teaching experience
- Demonstrated record of significant leadership experience, preferably in the P-12 setting
- Demonstrated knowledge/experience in working with higher education partners
- Demonstrated commitment to improving school quality, teacher effectiveness, and equitable student success

The Professional Development Coordinator will possess the following qualifications:

- Minimum of a master's degree in Education
- Professional Virginia educator's license with at least 3 years of successful teaching experience
- Knowledge of adult learning theory

- Demonstrated record of delivering and creating professional development programs for teachers and faculty
- Demonstrated record of significant leadership experience, preferably in the P-12 setting
- Demonstrated commitment to improving school quality, teacher effectiveness, and equitable student success

Industry Experts will possess the following qualifications:

- Education, experience, and credentialing in the field of expertise, as recognized by industry standards
- Demonstrated ability to effectively work with children
- At least 3 years of experience in the field of expertise
- Ability to work well as a team member
- Willingness to receive, reflect on, and apply feedback

Mason/NOVA faculty will possess the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in related field; doctoral degree preferred
- Demonstrated successful record of teaching in public schools
- Significant contributions to teaching, scholarship, and service in the areas of professional expertise
- Strong background in curriculum development
- Ability to work well with teams
- Ability to create and provide high-quality professional learning for educators
- Willingness to receive, reflect on, and apply feedback

The Career Coach will possess the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in related field; doctoral degree preferred
- Previous coaching/advising experience or formal coaching training
- Demonstrated successful record of coaching in public schools
- Ability to establish and maintain connections with industry
- Ability to stay up to date with current trends in career development
- Ability to work well with teams
- Willingness to receive, reflect on, and apply feedback

The Advisor/Recruiter will possess the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in related field; doctoral degree preferred
- Previous advising/coaching experience or formal advising/coaching training
- Previous work in public schools or admissions
- Successful record of working with parent or student programs
- Ability to work well with teams
- Willingness to receive, reflect on, and apply feedback

4. An assurance that the applicant will meet the conditions in § [22.1-349.9](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, which states that “teachers who work in a college partnership laboratory school shall hold a license issued by the Board or, in the case of an instructor in the Board-approved teacher education program of the institution of higher education, be eligible to hold a Virginia teaching license. Teachers working in a college partnership laboratory school shall be subject to the requirements of §§ [22.1-296.1](#), [22.1-296.2](#), and [22.1-296.4](#) that are applicable to teachers employed by a local school board.”

High school teachers who work for ACCESS Academy will be required to hold a license issued by the Board or be eligible to hold a Virginia teaching license. Teachers working at ACCESS Academy will be subject to the requirements of §§ 22.1-296.1, 22.1-296.2, and 22.1-296.4 applicable to teachers employed by Fairfax County Public Schools. College faculty who teach PBL IT courses will be required to meet licensure requirements for teachers of CTE courses as required by VDOE.

ACCESS Academy will comply with all federal, state, and local laws regarding background checks for those adults in direct contact with students enrolled in the lab school. Background checks will be monitored through the College of Education and Human Development for those who work directly for Mason. Northern Virginia Community College will monitor background checks for those faculty who work directly for NOVA. Teachers who work for Fairfax County Public Schools will undergo background checks through FCPS.

5. The school's leadership and teacher employment policies, including performance evaluation plans. Such performance evaluation plans must be consistent with the policies of the institution of higher education.

The director of the lab school, career coach, professional development coordinator, and advisor/recruiter will adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Mason Administrative/Professional Faculty Handbook, as per the policies established by Mason (<https://hr.gmu.edu/updated-administrative-professional-faculty-handbook/>).

Teacher recruitment for 9th and 10th grade courses will abide by the established guidelines and personnel policies set forth by FCPS, which can be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/departments-of-human-resources> https://insys.fcps.edu/schoolboardapps/report_policy/cache/numeric-4000.htm

For 11th and 12th grade dual enrollment courses, recruitment will also be handled by FCPS as noted above. Dual enrollment teachers must also meet criteria established by NOVA to teach dual enrollment coursework. For 11th and 12th grade PBL IT courses, recruitment will be handled by NOVA and Mason, as per the policies established by each (<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/recruitment-and-hiring-of-university-employees/> and <https://go.boarddocs.com/va/vccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CB55Z812A23F>).

6. A plan that addresses the qualifications of the teachers and administrators at the college partnership laboratory school, including compliance with state law and regulations regarding Board licenses and endorsements. (See § [22.1-349.9](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.)

The lab school will ensure that the educational and professional qualifications of its teachers and administrators meet VDOE requirements for licensing and/or endorsement areas, FCPS will ensure compliance with its human resources policies, which are available at [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/C23GYE46122B/\\$file/R4130.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/C23GYE46122B/$file/R4130.pdf)

7. A plan to provide high-quality professional development programs (See § [22.1-253.13:5](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.)

High-quality professional development programming will be provided to all faculty associated with ACCESS Academy. Professional development will be focused on employability skills and innovative problem-based learning pedagogical practices and methodology. Professional development will be

aligned to the Standards of Quality, Standard 5 concerning classroom instruction and educational leadership. Professional development will be immersive and will allow teachers and faculty to reflect, integrate skills into current practice and lessons, and create sound assessments.

While traditional professional development focuses on discrete skills or techniques for high interest activities, it can often lead to shallow lessons. Yet, Leinhardt et al. (1995) discussed teaching practice as a coherent whole that cannot be separated into discrete skills or techniques. Further, Ermeling & Graff-Ermeling (2016) suggest an emphasis on lesson planning with a focus on a coherent story line. Transformative understanding then, requires an innovative approach. Professional development will focus on teaching as a coherent whole and will be grounded in a coherent story line. Teachers will be supported in not only learn the skill of how to teach problem-based learning but also in developing a transformative understanding of why this type of curriculum is useful, important, and effective (Donnell, 2007; Harrell-Levy & Kerpelman, 2010).

In addition to professional development, ACCESS Academy faculty will receive ongoing technical assistance concerning employability skills and innovative problem-based learning pedagogical practices. Faculty may engage and/or partner with faculty and staff at Mason and NOVA to ensure fidelity to the teaching model and alignment with wraparound support for students. The Director will also receive coaching support aligned with the guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Principals. Instructional faculty/staff in the school director will also work collaboratively in the analysis of formative and summative assessments to determine patterns and trends in teaching and learning. This will further inform adjustments to ongoing professional development programs and technical assistance.

8. Provisions for the evaluation of staff at regular intervals.

All ACCESS Academy faculty and staff will be formally evaluated annually. Official performance evaluations will be conducted in accordance with George Mason University, Northern Virginia Community College, and Fairfax County Public Schools policies. Additionally, ongoing constructive feedback will be a normal part of the culture of the lab school. Those working with and for ACCESS Academy will receive formative, anecdotal, and formal feedback with the ultimate goal of feedback serving as the impetus for professional growth and improving how students are served. Evaluation will also always include multiple data points rather than snapshots in time. Data points may include the following:

- Instructional coaching
- Peer observations
- Assignment analyses
- Equity audits
- Self-evaluations
- Formal performance evaluations

The following policies and resources guide George Mason University, Northern Virginia Community College, and Fairfax County Public Schools concerning the evaluation of faculty and staff:

Mason Policies:

Evaluating, Documenting, and Justifying Faculty Qualifications and Credentials -

<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/faculty-credential-evaluation-and-documentation/>

Performance Evaluation Resources - <https://hr.gmu.edu/performance-evaluations/performance-evaluation-resources/>

Evaluation of Adjunct Faculty - <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/evaluation-of-adjunct-faculty/>

NOVA and VCCS Policies:

Faculty Qualifications for Academic Rank - <https://go.boarddocs.com/va/vccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CTXS9B719206>

Qualifications of Faculty - <https://go.boarddocs.com/va/vccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CHESSEG72532B>

Development and Evaluation – Teaching Faculty - <https://www.nvcc.edu/policies/files/419-Faculty-Development-and-Evaluation.pdf>

FCPS Policies:

State Licensure Requirements – Educational Personnel - <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=867SCQ2A7316>

Performance Assessments and Evaluations – <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=867SDC2A757C>

9. Provisions for a human resource policy for the school that is consistent with state and federal law.

All individuals appointed to positions at ACCESS Academy will ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, while also adhering to the personnel policies outlined by George Mason University (Mason), Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS).

The human resource policies for each institutional partner are provided below.

Mason - <https://hr.gmu.edu/policies-and-handbooks/>

NOVA - <https://www.nvcc.edu/policies/Default.aspx?cat=Human%20Resources>

FCPS - <https://www.fcps.edu/department-of-human-resources>

10. An explanation of any partnerships or contractual relationships central to the college partnership laboratory school's operations or mission, including information regarding any partnerships with school divisions to provide educational or ancillary services. Contractual relationships include procuring the services of an education management organization, food services, transportation, school health services, custodial services, and security services. (See § [22.1-349.3](#) C of the *Code of Virginia*.)

As ACCESS Academy will operate at Annandale High School, a Fairfax County Public Schools division site, services provided for students will be part of those provided to any other student in the division, including food services, transportation, school health, custodial, and security services. Services will be provided in alignment with § 22.1-349.3. George Mason University will initiate the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with Fairfax County Public Schools once funding is awarded.

11. Notification to all school employees of the terms and conditions of employment.

The ACCESS Academy Director, Professional Development Coordinator, Career Coach, and Advisor/Recruiter will be hired as Administrative/Professional Faculty. Those faculty members will adhere to the terms and condition of current George Mason University Administrative/Professional Faculty position employment. The Administrative Assistant will be hired as a Classified Staff position and that staff member will adhere to the terms and conditions of employment as outlined in George Mason University current policies.

Teachers employed for non-IT courses will adhere to the terms and conditions of employment as outlined in Fairfax County Public Schools policies. Faculty employed for IT courses at NOVA and Mason would adhere to the terms and conditions of employment as outlined by Adjunct Faculty contracts at Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University.

12. Information and materials indicating how parents, the community, and other stakeholders were involved in developing the application for the college partnership laboratory school. A description of how parental involvement will be used to support the educational needs of the students, the school's mission and philosophy, and its educational focus.

Feedback from families, community members, and stakeholders informed the development of ACCESS Academy and will guide the mission, philosophy and educational focus once established. In early February 2023, we hosted a roundtable discussion with leading industry partners in Northern Virginia, including representatives from Google, Amazon World Services (AWS), Microsoft, and Northrup Grumman among others, to gather feedback on the conceptual framework of ACCESS Academy. Industry stakeholders provided insights into the general curriculum, learn and earn approach, and opportunities to expand real-world experiences (e.g., internships) with high school students. In late February 2023, a group of stakeholders from Mason, Northern Virginia Community College, and Fairfax County Public Schools was convened to build upon the feedback provided by industry partners. This session engaged stakeholders from the partnering institutions in collaborative dialogue clarifying the vision for the educational program and governance structures.

Also, in early June 2023, the ACCESS Academy team collaborated with colleagues from the Early Intervention Program (EIP) partnership between Fairfax County Public Schools and George Mason University to host a family and student summit at Annandale High School. Summit invitations were extended through EIP communication avenues, as well as AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination Program), College Success Programs, and the Annandale High School principal. The summit explicitly focused on understand family members' and future students' perspectives on the ACCESS Academy' offerings. Feedback gathered during the summit guided decision making, specifically in regards to the learn and earn structure, potential locations, curriculum, and scheduling.

Stakeholder, family, and community member feedback will be critical to ACCESS Academy during the transition from conceptualization to implementation. Families will be engaged through

opportunities to serve on the governance board and engagement and listening sessions. Feedback will be collected in an intentional and systematic manner from stakeholders, students, families, educators, and community members through formative and summative evaluation, and used as a means for guiding continuous improvement.

13. Plans and timelines for student recruitment and an open enrollment process for any child who is a resident of the Commonwealth, including lottery procedures if sufficient space is unavailable. Please include a description of the lottery process to be used to determine school enrollment on a space-available basis and a time line for when the lottery process will begin for the first academic year of enrollment and when parents will be notified of the outcome of the lottery process. (See § [22.1-349.3](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.)

ACCESS Academy student recruitment and enrollment process will begin as early as January 2024. Cooperating partners from Mason, NOVA, and FCPS will begin marketing and publicizing the opening of the lab school in September 2024. An application will be developed in collaboration with partners in Mason's Early Identification Program (EIP) and the NOVA/Mason ADVANCE partnership. Information sessions for parents and students will be held at Annandale High School. Interested parents and students will be sent information about the lab school and invited to apply. For the 2024-25 academic year, enrollment will be limited to 30 students in 11th grade and 30 students and 12th grade. In 2025-26, the school will expand to include 9th and 10th grade students with 30 per grade level.

Applications for ACCESS Academy will be through a personalized electronic link in spring 2024. In addition to requiring current grades and courses taken, the lab school may request recommendations and/or a writing sample. Applications will be reviewed and scored according to a rubric with reviewers selected from all three partners (Mason, NOVA, and FCPS). From that point, students meeting the criteria set by the lab school will be entered into a lottery according to FCPS Regulation 3312 ([https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BN2GRS451990/\\$file/R3312.2.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BN2GRS451990/$file/R3312.2.pdf)) to fill the available spaces per grade level. The current regulations will be updated to include the lab school should funding be approved. Students who are enrolled in the lab school will automatically be admitted the subsequent year unless they wish to give up their seat and return to their base school. This must be done in writing by a parent or guardian and confirmed by the Director. When students enroll in the lab school in 11th grade, this will also initiate the process for concurrent enrollment in Mason and NOVA as they may take classes offered by both institutions for college credit.

Students who are not initially accepted to ACCESS Academy will be put on a wait list and parents/guardians will be informed of the student's position on the waitlist for their grade level. Because of requirements for credit-bearing courses, if a slot opens, students may be admitted to the lab school at the beginning of the academic year or at the beginning of a new semester only.

14. Any enrollment-related policies and procedures that address special situations, such as the enrollment of siblings and children of faculty and founders and the enrollment of nonresident students, if applicable. Consistent with a college partnership laboratory school's mission and purpose that may address special populations of students, the applicant must indicate how to ensure that community outreach has been undertaken so that special populations are aware of the formation of the college partnership laboratory school and that enrollment is open

to all students residing in the Commonwealth. Pursuant to § [22.1-349.3](#) B of the Code of Virginia, enrollment in a college partnership laboratory school “shall be open through a lottery process on a space-available basis to any student who is deemed to reside within the Commonwealth. A waiting list shall be established if adequate space is not available to accommodate all students whose parents have requested to be entered in the lottery process. Such waiting list shall also be prioritized through a lottery process, and parents shall be informed of their student's position on the list.”

All enrollment-related policies and procedures will be consistent at the lab school and aligned with § 22.1-349.3. Additionally, policies of the lab school concerning admission will be consistent with those already in place in Fairfax County Public Schools.

15. A model *Student Code of Conduct* policy that addresses student behavior, discipline, and participation in school activities. The plan should identify the role of teachers and administrators in discipline and mentoring. The plan must also identify disciplinary policies for special education students.

When ACCESS Academy students are at Annandale High School, they will be subject to the policies established by the Fairfax County Public School District (FCPS) in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (<https://www.fcps.edu/system/files/forms/2023-08/srr-2023-24.pdf>). This handbook, updated annually, details all FCPS expectations in relation to student behavior, discipline, and participation in school activities. The SR&R also explains adult responses to enhance school safety and to create a fair, equitable, and supportive school environment. The role of teachers and administrators in discipline, mentoring, and student support is included. Principals receive annual professional development concerning updates to the SR&R, work through discipline scenarios to foster division-side consistent implementation, and review processes for data reporting. The FCPS Equity Office, including the Equity and Student Conduct Team, is responsible for reporting the data to VDOE. The SR&R also includes disciplinary policies and procedures for students who currently have IEPs and Section 504 plans. From page 17 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook - Participation in student activities is linked to school becoming more meaningful for students. Students who participate in activities are expected to maintain good grades and behavior.

At any time ACCESS Academy students are on Mason properties, they will be subject to the policies established by George Mason University in the current Code of Student Conduct (<https://studentconduct.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Code-of-Student-Conduct-2023-2024-pdf.pdf>). This Code applies to all Mason students. The purpose is to foster a safe, secure, and fair learning environment by establishing expectations for student behavior and identifying a process for discipline and resolving incidents. Student activity participation is included in the Code. If there is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and the ACCESS Academy student is a minor, a FERPA waiver may be utilized to allow the assistance of a parent/guardian. The Student Conduct Office refers cases to a professional staff member who is a point of contact and hearing officer. Cases can be heard by a hearing officer or by student request, the Community Adjudication Board (<https://studentconduct.gmu.edu/student-boards/community-adjudication-board-2/>). If a student discloses in the process that they have special education accommodations that need to be considered, the hearing officer will connect with Disability Services to confirm the approved accommodations and how to best incorporate them within the resolution process. ACCESS Academy students taking courses for Mason credit shall be bound, insofar as those courses are concerned, by the Mason Honor Code and all student requirements stated in the Mason Catalog, in addition to the conduct code of the school division. In cases where it is not clear which set of policies apply, the ACCESS Academy

Director and FCPS building principal will make a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development whose decision will be final.

If at any time ACCESS Academy students are on NOVA properties, they will be subject to the policies established in the Student Code of Conduct (<https://www.nvcc.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>). NOVA's policy establishes guidelines for the above and identifies the roles of students and administration. The Student Integrity and Conduct staff (<https://www.nvcc.edu/student-rights/SIC/index.html>) supports students, faculty, and staff on all NOVA campuses. Similar to Mason, if a student discloses during the hearing process for a possible violation of the Student Code of Conduct that they have special education accommodations that need to be considered, the hearing officer will connect with NOVA's Office of Accommodations and Accessibility Services to confirm the approved accommodations and how to best incorporate them within the resolution process. A FERPA waiver may also be utilized.

Mason and NOVA both collect and report school safety and student discipline as required under The Clery Act. This includes an annual fire security and safety report, daily crime and fire log, emergency notifications, and cooperative work with local and campus police, and other resources. Both institutions have a Clery Compliance Coordinator that can assist with information and reporting. Reporting information for Mason and NOVA is provided in more detail through the links provided below.

Mason - https://police.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Clery-Act-101_with-embedded-links_083118.pdf

NOVA - <https://www.nvcc.edu/police/clery/index.html>

16. A detailed school start-up plan that identifies tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

The start-up plan for ACCESS Academy is provided below.

Table 4

Start-Up Plan for ACCESS Academy

Timeline	Task	Responsible
Dec 2023	Inception of ACCESS	CEHD Dean; CAO, FCPS; CAO NOVA
Dec 2023	Advisory Board established	CEHD Dean; CAO, FCPS; CAO NOVA
Jan-Feb 2024	ACCESS director hired	CEHD Dean
Jan-Feb 2024	Supporting positions hired	CEHD Dean
Jan-Feb 2024	Supporting faculty positions identified and course reassignments provided as appropriated	CEHD Dean, NOVA CAO
Jan-Feb 2024	Application and enrollment procedures established	Director and Recruitment Team
Feb-Mar 2024	Evaluation framework and plan developed	Evaluator
Feb-Mar 2024	Marketing planning and launch	Recruitment team
Mar 2024	Evaluation Framework presented to Board	Director & CEHD Dean
Mar-April 2024	Graduate Assistants recruited	CEHD Dean
Mar-April 2024	PBL curriculum assessment and development	CEHD & NOVA Faculty
Mar -May 2024	11 th and 12 th grade cohorts identified and scheduled accordingly	Director
April-May	Develop data collection and monitoring tools based on evaluation plan	Evaluator
May 2024	Paraprofessionals assigned	School Principal/FCPS CAO
May-June 2024	Professional development	ACCESS PD Coordinator
July 2024	ACCESS Academy officially opens	Director
July-August 2024	Senior Summer Bridge Program offered	Director
August 2024	Launch new school year	Director
August 2024	Deploy data collection and monitoring tools	Director
Oct-Dec 2024	Formative evaluation of Year 1 conducted	Evaluator
Jan 2025	Presentation of formative evaluation: Early lessons learned, Opportunities for improvement, and next steps	Director and CEHD Dean

17 A description of co-curricular and extracurricular programs and how these programs will be funded and delivered.

Co-curricular and extracurricular programs will be offered to students through Fairfax County Public Schools. Students attending ACCESS Academy will be able to participate in regularly scheduled athletic programs, and interest clubs and groups. Additionally, students will have opportunities for co-curricular opportunities at George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College. These may include coding, cybersecurity, and/or industry-related clubs. Funding will come from startup funds, community grants, and industry collaboration and cooperation.

- 18 A general description of any operational incentives/partnerships that the college partnership laboratory school intends to have with school divisions to enhance both the educational program of the college partnership laboratory school and the partnering school division(s).

In addition to the partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools, ACCESS Academy intends to have partnerships with industry experts who will provide mentoring, internship opportunities, technical support regarding scenarios for the problem-based learning IT curriculum, field trips, and other assistance. Outreach to industry partners has already begun and response has been positive. Additionally, there will be opportunities for collaboration across disciplines between industry experts and university and FCPS faculty. ACCESS Academy also intends to provide stipends for professional development and funding for technical assistance. There is also a plan to develop micro credentials for teachers will who complete professional development programming in problem-based learning instruction.

Financial and Operations Information: The following components must be addressed:

1. A description of the college partnership laboratory school's financial plan and policies, including financial controls and audit requirements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

George Mason University will serve as the fiscal agent for this project. As a non-federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more in federal award funds during its fiscal year, Mason is required to obtain a Single Audit or Program Specific Audit each year that complies with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Mason's audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2022 can be found at <https://www.apa.virginia.gov/reports/GeorgeMasonUniversity2022.pdf>.

In order to maintain proper financial controls, Mason uses the Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards (ARMICS) which is a mandate of the Commonwealth of Virginia and requires State Agencies to implement internal control standards and best practices. The Department of Accounts ARMIC Standards may be found at https://www.doa.virginia.gov/reference/ARMICS/ARMICS_Standards.pdf.

Other specific Mason Financial Policies and Procedures that ensure compliance with ARMIC Standards may be found at <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/university-policies/financial/>

2. Start-up and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions and information regarding projected revenues and expenditures.

Over the 5-year grant, the cost of the Lab School is estimated to be \$6,814,972 of which we are requesting funding support in the amount of \$6,073,589. George Mason University's cost share budget includes \$741,383. Table 5 illustrates the five-year projected budget below.

Table 5*ACCESS Academy 5-Year Projected Budget*

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Projected Totals
-VDOE Start Up Grant Funds	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000
-Estimated VDOE per-pupil Operating Grant Funds based on FY24 cost per pupil of \$9,578 (per student x projected enrollment of 60 students in year 1 and 120 in years 2-5)	\$574,680	\$1,149,360	\$1,149,360	\$1,149,360	\$1,149,360	\$5,172,120
-Mason In-Kind Contributions	\$134,751	\$141,184	\$147,938	\$155,031	\$162,479	\$741,383
Total Projected Revenue	\$1,709,431	\$1,290,544	\$1,297,298	\$1,304,391	\$1,311,839	\$6,913,504
Salary Support	\$657,017	\$664,668	\$642,039	\$674,141	\$707,849	\$3,345,714
Fringe Benefits	\$193,559	\$195,147	\$194,264	\$203,978	\$214,176	\$1,001,124
Materials & Supplies	\$195,000	\$22,500	\$32,500	\$17,500	\$7,500	\$275,000
Travel	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
Consulting/Professional Services	\$170,000	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$400,000
Participant Support & Incentives	\$51,060	\$51,060	\$51,060	\$51,060	\$51,060	\$255,300
Other General Costs	\$356,459	\$281,273	\$282,428	\$283,643	\$284,031	\$1,487,834
Total Projected Expenditures	\$1,633,095	\$1,284,648	\$1,292,291	\$1,300,322	\$1,304,616	\$6,814,972

PO# Start: 7/1/2024
 End: 6/30/2025

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

PP00011881/VOICE LAB SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

FINAL

								2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	TOTAL
PERSONNEL COSTS													
Staff Member (Faculty, Post-Docs, Admin Faculty, Classified Staff) Unhide to use more lines													
	is Key?	Role	Appointment	Input 9 (AY) or 12 mo. (CAL) Salary	3 mo Summer Salary (Auto-generated)	Effort %	Person Months						
Director TBD	NO	Faculty	Calendar	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	100.00%	12.00	\$120,000	\$126,000	\$132,300	\$138,915	\$145,961	\$663,076
PD Coordinator	NO	Faculty	Calendar	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	50.00%	6.00	\$60,000	\$63,000	\$66,150	\$69,458	\$72,938	\$331,538
Career Counselor/Coach	NO	Faculty	Calendar	\$80,000.00	\$0.00	100.00%	12.00	\$80,000	\$84,000	\$88,200	\$92,610	\$97,241	\$442,051
Advisor/Recruiter	NO	Faculty	Calendar	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	100.00%	12.00	\$75,000	\$78,750	\$82,688	\$86,802	\$91,168	\$414,432
Program/Administrative Assistant	NO		Classified	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	100.00%	12.00	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$55,125	\$57,881	\$60,775	\$276,282
Faculty TBD	NO	Faculty	Calendar	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	20.00%	2.40	\$24,000	\$25,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$49,200
Faculty TBD	NO	Faculty	Academic	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	20.00%	1.80	\$24,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$24,000
Faculty TBD	NO	Faculty	Summer	\$120,000.00	\$40,000.00	66.67%	2.00	\$26,668	\$28,001	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$54,669
Grants/Finance Administrator	NO		Classified	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	80.00%	9.60	\$60,000	\$63,000	\$66,150	\$69,458	\$72,938	\$331,538
Graduate Research Assistants Unhide to use more lines													
Doctoral Academic			1 at 20 hours per week					\$25,000	\$26,250	\$27,563	\$28,941	\$30,388	\$138,141
Doctoral Summer			2 at 20 hours per week					\$16,667	\$17,500	\$18,175	\$19,294	\$20,299	\$92,096
SUBTOTAL SALARIES & WAGES								\$661,335	\$684,202	\$719,510	\$741,378	\$761,547	\$3,217,022
FRINGE BENEFITS													
Faculty, Academic & Calendar						32.10%		\$122,943	\$121,001	\$118,557	\$124,485	\$130,709	\$617,695
FICA Only (Adjuncts, Summer Faculty and Wage)						7.30%		\$1,947	\$2,044	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,991
Student Wages						6.80%		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Classified Staff						41.80%		\$45,980	\$48,279	\$50,693	\$53,228	\$55,889	\$254,069
SUBTOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS								\$170,870	\$171,324	\$169,250	\$177,713	\$186,598	\$875,753
SUBTOTAL PERSONNEL								\$732,205	\$755,526	\$788,760	\$741,091	\$778,145	\$3,692,767
TRAVEL (see optional worksheet)													
Domestic Travel								\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
SUBTOTAL TRAVEL								\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
GENERAL COSTS													
Consultant Services													
Consultant Services: Instructional design development								\$60,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$110,000
Consultant Services: Training Facilitation & Mentoring								\$50,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$100,000
Consultant Services: Research & Evaluation								\$50,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$120,000
Consultant Services: School Coordinators								\$20,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$70,000
SUBTOTAL CONSULTANT SERVICES								\$170,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$400,000
GRA Health Insurance & Institutional Allowances													
GRA Health Insurance		No. Enter Number of GRAs: 1	Rate: Annual \$3,294	Fall Only \$1,246	Spring/Summer \$2,048			\$3,294	\$3,294	\$3,294	\$3,294	\$3,294	\$16,470
Tuition & Fees:		Credits	\$ per credit										
- In State Tuition		18	\$572					\$10,296	\$10,811	\$11,351	\$11,919	\$12,515	\$56,892
- Out of State, if applicable		0	\$0					\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
- Mandatory Student Fee		18	\$155.00					\$2,790	\$2,790	\$2,790	\$2,790	\$2,790	\$13,950
SUBTOTAL GRA TUITION, FEES, & HEALTH SUBSIDY								\$16,380	\$16,895	\$17,435	\$18,003	\$18,599	\$87,312
Materials & Supplies													
Materials & Supplies			Instructional Design Development	\$60,000	\$5,000			\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$85,000
Materials & Supplies			Training Facilitation & Mentoring Costs	\$60,000	\$5,000			\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$80,000
Materials & Supplies			Marketing, Recruitment & Outreach	\$60,000	\$10,000			\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$85,000
Computers/Laptops			\$2,500 for 4 staff members	\$10,000	\$0			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
Project Supplies			Software, Subscriptions, Supplies	\$5,000	\$2,500			\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$15,000
SUBTOTAL MATERIALS & SUPPLIES								\$195,000	\$22,500	\$25,500	\$17,500	\$17,500	\$275,000
Other General Costs													
Catering			Meals for Workshops	\$10,000	\$10,000			\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
Events Support			Facility & AV Rentals	\$5,000	\$5,000			\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Substitute Teacher Payments			\$152/day x 30 teachers	\$4,560	\$4,560			\$4,560	\$4,560	\$4,560	\$4,560	\$4,560	\$22,800
SUBTOTAL OTHER GENERAL COSTS								\$19,560	\$19,560	\$19,560	\$19,560	\$19,560	\$97,800
Research Subject Payments													
Recruitment Incentives			\$200/teacher	\$6,000	\$6,000			\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$30,000
Survey/Focus Group Feedback Incentives			\$100/teacher	\$3,000	\$3,000			\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$15,000
SUBTOTAL RESEARCH SUBJECT PAYMENTS								\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$45,000
Participant/Trainee Support (click for guidance)													
Stipend			Teacher Stipend - \$1,000 each	\$30,000	\$30,000			\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$150,000
Micro credentialing costs			Fees for licenses, certifications, test registration, etc. - \$250/teacher	\$7,500	\$7,500			\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$37,500
SUBTOTAL PARTICIPANT SUPPORT								\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$187,500
SUBTOTAL GENERAL COSTS								\$447,440	\$165,455	\$195,995	\$161,563	\$122,159	\$1,092,612
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS													
Subtotal Personnel (Salaries & Wages + Fringe)								\$732,205	\$755,526	\$788,760	\$741,091	\$778,145	\$3,692,767
Subtotal Travel Costs								\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
Subtotal General Costs								\$447,440	\$165,455	\$195,995	\$161,563	\$122,159	\$1,092,612
Subtotal Subaward/Subcontract Costs								\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS								\$1,189,645	\$980,981	\$981,755	\$912,654	\$910,304	\$4,835,379
F&A (INDIRECT) COSTS													
OSA Off-Campus Adjacent		Rate 27.3%	Rate Type MTDC					\$308,699	\$292,483	\$282,558	\$282,637	\$281,833	\$1,238,210
TOTAL COSTS								\$1,498,344	\$1,143,464	\$1,144,313	\$1,145,291	\$1,142,137	\$6,073,589
Facilities & Administrative Costs Base								\$1,130,765	\$851,586	\$851,859	\$852,151	\$849,205	\$4,535,566

George Mason University
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

PERSONNEL COSTS

A Lab School Director will be hired into a full time Administrative/Professional Faculty position in year 1 at a base salary of \$120,000 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$663,076.

A Professional Development Coordinator will dedicate 50% of their time in all years of the project with a year 1 base salary of \$60,000 and annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$331,538.

A Career Counselor/Coach will be hired into a full time Professional Faculty position in year 1 at a base salary of \$80,000 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$442,051.

An Advisor/Recruiter will be hired into a full time Professional Faculty position in year 1 at a base salary of \$75,000 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$414,422.

A Program/Administrative Assistant will be hired into a full time Classified Staff position in year 1 at a base salary of \$50,000 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$276,282.

A Grants Administrator will be hired into a .80 FTE Classified Staff position in year 1 at a base salary of \$60,000 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$331,538. This position will provide the necessary financial and grants administration support for this project. Specific responsibilities will include processing requests for purchases, contracts, stipends, honoraria, new hires, etc. They will also perform the required monthly reconciliations and ensure financial documentation, receipts and approvals are on file for all transactions and assist with preparation of reports and other related requests.

Salary Support in the amount of \$48,000 is budgeted for GMU Faculty Academic & Calendar Year Effort and Course Releases in year 1 and \$25,200 in year 2. Summer Salary support in the amount of \$26,668 in year 1 and \$28,001 in year 2 is also requested for GMU Faculty. Total Salary Support requested is \$127,869.

Funds are requested to provide \$25,000 of Academic Year salary support in year 1 for a 20 hour per week Graduate Research Assistant with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$138,141. Summer GRA Salary support in the amount of \$16,667 is requested in year 1 for two 20 hour per week GRAs with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$92,095.

Mason provides annual merit increases to Faculty and Staff. An escalation factor of 5% has been included for all personnel each year.

Total Salary Support requested from VDOE funds: \$2,817,012

GMU Project Leadership and Additional Faculty will provide in-kind salary support for their time in the amount of \$70,682 in year 1 with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total of \$390,561.

GMU will also provide \$25,000 of in-kind salary support in year 1 for a 20 hour per week Graduate Research Assistant to work on the project during the Academic Year with annual increases included in years 2-5 for a total in-kind commitment of \$138,141.

Total Salary Support from GMU In-Kind Contributions: \$528,702

Projected Salary Support totals \$3,345,714 for years 1-5 with \$2,817,012 requested from VDOE and \$528,702 provided in-kind from GMU.

FRINGE BENEFITS

George Mason University's negotiated fringe benefit rates for Fiscal Year 2024 are applied as follows:

Faculty (Admin, Teaching, & Post-Docs)	32.1%
Classified Staff	41.8%
FICA Only (summer, adjunct, non-student wages)	7.3%

The Faculty Fringe rate of 32.1% has been applied to \$1,924,286 of Academic and Calendar Year Salary Support for a total of \$617,695. The Classified Staff rate of 41.8% has been applied to \$607,820 of salary support for a total of \$254,069 and the 7.3% Summer Fringe rate has been applied to \$54,669 of Faculty Summer Salary for a total of \$3,991.

Total Fringe Benefits Support Requested from VDOE Funds: \$875,755

In-kind: the Faculty Fringe rate of 32.1% has been applied to \$390,561 of Academic and Calendar Year Salary Support for a total of \$125,369.

Total Fringe Benefits Support Provided in-kind from GMU: \$125,369

Projected Fringe Benefits Support totals \$1,001,124 for years 1-5 with \$875,755 requested from VDOE and \$125,369 provided in-kind from GMU.

The rates quoted above shall, at the time of funding be subject to adjustment, if superseding Government approved rates have been established. Salaries, wages and fringe benefits are estimates only and will be paid and billed in accordance with University policy.

MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

Funds are requested for supplies. The requested support from VDOE is \$275,000 for years 1-5. These funds would be used for educational and recruitment supplies. Necessary supplies for this project are markers, chart paper, professional development books, and classroom supplies. Funds are also requested for printing curriculum materials, resources, and recruitment and promotional materials, instructional design development, training facilitation and mentoring costs, marketing, recruitment and outreach, laptops for 4 staff members, software and subscriptions.

TRAVEL

Domestic Travel

All travel will be in accordance with University travel regulations and mileage will be charged at the current rate on the date of travel. Travel estimates are based on costs that were incurred on previous projects of a similar nature for federal and state agencies. Funds in the amount of \$10,000 per year are requested from VDOE for a total of \$50,000 over the five-year project period. Travel estimates include costs for transportation, lodging, per diem, and other related expenses. Travel may be incurred by lab school leadership, researchers, or staff to attend conferences or symposium, visit or collaborate with other lab schools, participate in meetings, or engage with potential partners. Funds will be spent according to GSA rate guidelines for hotel, M&E, and other related expenses.

CONSULTING/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Consultant/Professional Services

Funds are requested from VDOE for industry expert, instructional design, and evaluation consultants. The requested support from VDOE is \$400,000 with \$170,000 requested during year 1. Consultants will be selected initially from the computing sciences industry but as the lab school scales up may also be selected from the education or healthcare industries. Consultants will have current industry experience and will assist on the following tasks including curriculum consultation and development, micro credential development, internship placement facilitation, mentorship, or arranging/facilitating site visits for lab school students. Consultants will be selected, and hourly rates determined after this proposal is funded. Hourly rates will be determined based on expertise and specific tasks agreed upon.

OTHER DIRECT COSTS

Participant/Trainee Support

Funds are requested from VDOE for stipends for teachers to attend professional learning and technical support sessions as well as microcredentialing costs. Teacher stipends are budgeted for 30 teachers/year with a \$1,000 stipend (\$30,000 per year) and a 5 year total of \$150,000. Microcredentialing costs are budgeted for \$250 each for 30 teachers/year (\$7,500 per year) with a 5 year total of \$37,500. When possible, professional learning will also be offered in the summer. Core subject teachers as well as teachers/faculty who teach PBL IT coursework will be included in this category.

Substitute Teacher Payments

When appropriate and in some cases, this will be paid directly to the district for reimbursement of substitute teachers. When calculating the rate for substitutes, Mason will use the rate of pay currently used by Fairfax County Public Schools (approximately \$152/day) for 30 teachers/year (\$4,560 per year) with a 5 year total of \$22,800.

Research Subject Payments – for Recruitment & Feedback

Funds are requested from VDOE for \$45,000 over 5 years for recruitment and feedback incentive payments. \$200/teacher for 30 teachers each year (\$6,000 per year) will be used as recruitment incentives while \$100/teacher for 30 teachers each year (\$3,000 per year) will be used for survey and focus group feedback incentives.

Projected Participant Support, Incentives & Substitute Teacher Payments total \$255,300 for years 1-5 requested from VDOE.

Workshop & Professional Development Event Support - Funds in the amount of \$10,000 per year are requested to support catered meals for workshops and professional development events for a total of \$50,000. Funds in the amount of \$5,000 per year are requested for Facility and AV Equipment Rentals for a total of \$25,000. Total Funds requested from VDOE to support professional development events \$75,000.

GRA Health Insurance & Institutional (Tuition) Allowances

Tuition is requested for each student during the academic year for 18 credits each at a rate of \$572/credit for a total of \$10,296 per student in year 1. A 5% escalation rate will apply each year to tuition for a total of \$56,892. Funds in the amount of \$56,892 are requested from VDOE to support tuition for one Academic Year GRA and GMU will provide \$56,892 of in-kind funds to support one Academic Year GRA. Total GRA Tuition Support \$113,784.

A mandatory student fee of \$155 per credit hour is also included for 18 credits per student each year for a total of \$2,790 per year and \$13,950 over the five-year period for each student. Funds in the amount of

\$13,950 are requested from VDOE to support the fees for one GRA and GMU will provide in kind funds to support the \$13,950 of fees for one Academic Year GRA. Total GRA Fees \$27,900.

Full-Time Graduate Student Health Benefits are budgeted at \$3,294/year for students who meet the minimum requirements for a total of \$16,470 for five years. Funds in the amount of \$16,470 are requested from VDOE for one GRA and \$16,470 will be provided in-kind by GMU to support one GRA. Total GSHI \$32,940.

FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS (F&A)

George Mason University has a predetermined F&A rate of 27.3%, Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC), approved by the Office of Naval Research for off campus adjacent other sponsored activities. Participant support costs, rental of Facilities and AV equipment, graduate student tuition and health insurance have all been excluded from the MTDC base. A total of \$1,238,210 is requested from VDOE over the five year project period to cover costs associated with the operations of the lab school that include the use of university resources such as legal counsel, human resources and payroll, technology support services, server space and equipment, facilities, utilities, risk management and insurance, sponsored programs administration, etc. With GMU using a MTDC base, the \$1,238,210 of facilities and administrative costs will be roughly 18% of the \$6,814,972 total budget.

Projected General & Administrative Support Costs total \$1,487,834 for years 1-5 with \$1,400,522 requested from VDOE and \$87,312 provided in-kind from GMU.

Total Funds Requested from VDOE: \$6,073,589

Total In-Kind Funds from GMU: \$741,383

Total Lab School Partnership Budget for 5 years: \$6,814,972

2. Start-up and five-year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions and indications of short- and long-term sources of revenue.

The ACCESS Academy will be offered at Annandale High School, part of Fairfax County Public Schools, with the corresponding FY24 cost per pupil of \$9,578, which covers all services provided to students by Fairfax County Public Schools. Dual enrollment courses will be offered through NOVA Community College, which has a reimbursement agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

3. Evidence of anticipated fundraising contributions, if applicable.

George Mason University has a robust and highly professional fundraising team generating over \$100 million in gifts and pledges in each of the last five years. A diversified, yet coordinated, fundraising program ensures that each College is a leading participant in this annual production. Philanthropic support will be sought for the lab school to enhance programming, to support advanced research and evaluation necessary to demonstrate effectiveness and the ability to scale, and to ensure high quality internships for students. Quantitative and qualitative research funding will also be sought as part of our sponsored research agenda and strategy. The college has already begun conversations with potential donors. Google, Inc has expressed interest in support for evaluation and best practices that will be necessary to scale the lab school project. Similarly, we are in discussions with Arnold

Ventures who have strong interest in the lab school concept combined with Mason's ADVANCE and EIP programs.

4. A description of the insurance coverage that the school will obtain. Types of insurance include general liability, health, and property.

George Mason University is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia and is self-insured by the Commonwealth of Virginia Risk Management Plan for all claims up to the maximum provided by the Code of Virginia for general liability and property. The Commonwealth of Virginia provides health insurance coverage to George Mason University employees.

5. A justification for each type of insurance coverage sought and evidence that the applicant has consulted with the affiliated public or private institution of higher education to ensure that the level of coverage is satisfactory.

Existing liability and property coverage provided under the Commonwealth of Virginia Risk Management is extended to support ACCESS Academy operations. Evidence of coverage is provided via a Certificate of Liability Coverage memorandum.

6. A sound facilities plan, including backup or contingency plans. Facilities information includes (1) the provision of suitable instructional space; (2) provisions for library services; (3) provisions for the safe administration and storage of student records and medications; (4) information regarding compliance with building and fire codes and compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act; (5) general information on emergency evacuation plans; (6) information regarding site location and preparation; (7) the structure of operation and maintenance services; and (8) financial arrangements for facilities, including any lease arrangements with school divisions or other entities and whether debt will be incurred.

Students attending ACCESS Academy will be enrolled at and will attend Annandale High School. This includes access to all required components that students in FCPS access. When lab school students attend courses at NOVA or Mason, they will continue to have access to all the resources at their base high school. At this time, it is not anticipated that there will be a need for financial agreements for facilities, including any lease agreements.

The annual capacity assessment of Annandale High School and program capacity utilization was 87% for the 2022-23 school year. Detailed evaluation of classroom use and the school's master schedule identify four (4) available classrooms to launch ACCESS Academy and provide suitable instructional space to support courses across content areas.

According to Fairfax County Public Schools Information Technology, Secondary Class Size Average Report, October 2022, average class sizes for Annandale High School for the 2022-23 school year were as follows:

- English 21.2
- Social Studies 22.4
- Math 21.7
- Science 21.8

Annandale High School receives staffing based on the FY24 Approved Budget (<https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/FY-2024-Approved-Budget.pdf>).

Library services will be available onsite at Annandale High School as part of the typical school day and staffed by two librarians. The library is easily accessible from all learning areas and provides opportunities for individual and group study and research. Resources included in the library include reading/browsing stacks, computer areas, multimedia storage, meeting areas, and electronic resource areas.

Annandale High School includes a records vault, as required by the Fairfax County Public Schools Educational Specifications for the safe storage of student records. Storage facilities are also built into appropriate classrooms and departmental areas of the building for safe storage of testing and instructional materials. The facility is also equipped with a Health Clinic as required by the Educational Specifications. Health Clinics are available for safe administration and storage of medications. Each Health Clinic in Fairfax County Public Schools is staffed with a public health nurse and a school health assistant to provide services to students.

Last renovated in 2005, Annandale High School is in compliance with building and fire codes as a high school in FCPS. Regular fire safety inspections are performed by the Fairfax County Fire Marshall to ensure safety compliance.

Annandale High School is located approximately one mile from Interstate 495 (Capital Beltway) in Fairfax County. This allows for convenient access to students within Fairfax County and surrounding jurisdictions. The high school is located on approximately 28 acres and includes several athletics playing fields and football stadium. The school is also co-located next to Ossian Hall Park which includes additional athletic fields and an amphitheater.

FCPS is organized into six regions, in which each school reports to a Region Assistant Superintendent. The Region Assistant Superintendent and Executive principals support school operations and are responsible for hiring school administration. Central offices support schools for instructional services, special services, professional development, human resources, information technology, and facilities. The Office of Facilities Management is responsible for routine preventive and corrective building & grounds maintenance services, facilities infrastructure repair & replacement, and energy conservation in the design and operation of FCPS facilities. Maintenance and repair of all mechanical, electrical, and structural equipment and systems is provided by technicians located in four decentralized satellite maintenance facilities. Annandale High School is supported by the Southeast Support Center located approximately 7 miles away.

Annandale High School operates as one of the division's high schools, and it is not anticipated that there will be debt incurred as a result of adding this program to the high school. Annandale High School was last renovated in 2005 and is not currently identified for a future capital project. Capital projects in FCPS are funded by General Obligation Bonds that are used for new construction, capacity enhancements, and site acquisitions. Facilities management are funded by several county transfers allocated for infrastructure replacement, capital asset replacement, and maintenance repair.

Annandale High School's diverse student population and central location with proximity to NOVA and Mason make it an ideal location to begin ACCESS Academy. Additionally, the desire to expand dual enrollment offerings and increase college matriculation and completion rates for students are a match with the vision for ACCESS Academy. The school is currently operating under facility

program capacity with room to add additional students to efficiently utilize capacity at the school and house ACCESS Academy. The FCPS School Board has been informed of the planning grant application.

7. A description of whether transportation services will be provided. If transportation is to be provided, please indicate whether the school will contract for transportation with the local education agency or another entity. Please indicate whether transportation will be provided to all students attending the school.

Fairfax County Public Schools will provide transportation services consistent with transportation services available to all students in the division.

8. A description of transportation services for students with disabilities. (Section [22.1-221](#) A of the *Code of Virginia* states that “[e]ach disabled child enrolled in and attending a special education program provided by the school division pursuant to any of the provisions of § [22.1-216](#) or § [22.1-218](#) shall be entitled to transportation to and from such school or class at no cost if such transportation is necessary to enable such child to obtain the benefit of educational programs and opportunities.”)

Fairfax County Public Schools will provide transportation services consistent with transportation services available to all students, including students with disabilities, in the division and in accordance with local, state, and federal guidance and laws including the provisions of § 22.1-216 or § 22.1-218.

9. A description of food service operations and all other significant operational or ancillary services to be provided.

Fairfax County Public Schools will provide food services to ACCESS Academy students consistent with food services available to all students in the division.

VI. Placement Plan: The following components must be addressed:

1. Identification of a member of the school’s leadership who will serve as a single point of contact for all activities that may need to take place in order for the school to close, including but not limited to the transfer of students to another school, the management of student records, and the settlement of financial obligations. Please include contact’s name, title, email address, and phone number.

Ingrid Guerra-López, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education and Human Development
George Mason University
iguerral@gmu.edu
703-993-2004

2. A notification process for parents/guardians of students attending the school and teachers and administrators of the termination or revocation of the contract.

A systemized notification process will be used if ACCESS Academy should close. After official notification to the Virginia Department of Education, a phone call will be made to each parent/guardian with a child enrolled in the school. This call will be followed by an official letter from the Director of ACCESS Academy.

3. A notification process to parents/guardians of students attending the college partnership laboratory school of alternative public school placements within a set time period from the date of termination or revocation of the contract.

In addition to the process described above, a letter will be sent to the principal of the ACCESS Academy school site, copied to the Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent.

4. Provisions for ensuring that student records are provided to the parent or guardian or another school identified by the parent or guardian within a set time period. If the student transfers to another school division, provisions for the transfer of the student's record to the school division to which the student transfers upon the request of that school division. (See § [22.1-289](#) of the *Code of Virginia*).

In accordance with § [22.1-289](#) of the Code of Virginia, student records will be available to parents upon request, and records will be transferred upon request to another school division within two weeks. Fairfax County Public Schools staff will handle transcript requests in the transfer records to requesting school divisions.

5. A placement plan for school employees that details the level of assistance to be provided within a set period of time from the termination or revocation of the contract.

In the event that a decision is made to end the lab school program and close ACCESS Academy, students and their families, faculty, and staff will be notified of the closure and arrangements made to allow students to complete their course of study at Mason. Dependent upon the type of employment contract and/or category personnel are hired under for the lab school, there is the possibility of reassignment to another unit within the University, based upon University needs and the qualifications and experience of said personnel.

6. A close-out plan related to financial obligations and audits, the termination of contracts and leases, and the sale and disposition of assets within a set period of time from the termination or revocation of the contract. The plan shall include the disposition of the schools' records and financial accounts upon closure.

Mason will follow the standard procedure as required by SCHEV for the closure of a program. George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College will follow the standard procedure as required by SCHEV and SACS-COC for closure of a program. SACS-COC requires a teach out for programs that are closing. There are no other agreements that will require dissolution.

The Code of Virginia, §42.1-85, requires that Mason establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of records. George Mason University is required to adhere to all schedules published by the Library of Virginia. Employees of Mason are responsible for ensuring that University Records are preserved, maintained, and accessible throughout their lifecycle. Virginia records laws and retention schedules are applicable to all public officers and employees with the goal to promote and ensure that the procedures used to manage and preserve public records will be consistent throughout all state agencies. Information on records retention and disposition schedules especially pertinent to colleges and universities in the Commonwealth are found in General Schedule GS-111 (https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/sched_state/GS-111.pdf).

VIII. Other Assurances and Requirements: The following components should be addressed:

1. A description of the college partnership laboratory school's policies and procedures for compliance with the federal *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* and records retention schedules consistent with guidance issued by the Library of Virginia.

ACCESS Academy will operate under George Mason University Policy 1122 (<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/ferpa-compliance/>) which outlines records retention and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The lab school will also follow the regulations set forth in the policies of the Library of Virginia.

2. Evidence that the proposed college partnership laboratory school programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including the *Virginia Freedom of Information Act*.

Mason, NOVA, and FCPS currently operate in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations including the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Mason's policy for responding freedom of information requests is University Policy 1117 (<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responding-to-virginia-freedom-of-information-act-foia-requests-for-records/>) and those wishing to obtain public records can obtain additional information through this link: <https://www.gmu.edu/about/integrity-and-standards/FOIA>.

The relevant links for NOVA and FCPS concerning FOIA and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act are also provided below.

NOVA FOIA Policy and Record Request Information - <https://www.nvcc.edu/foia/#:~:text=NOVA%20provides%20some%20of%20the,the%20remainder%20of%20the%20record>

FCPS FOIA and VFOIA Information - <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/policies-regulations-and-notices/virginia-freedom-information-act-vfoia>

3. A listing of all waivers to state regulations needed for the college partnership laboratory school at the time of its opening. This does not preclude a college partnership laboratory school from requesting additional waivers once the school is operational.

At the current time, ACCESS Academy does not intend to apply for any waivers.

4. A description of any collaborative partnerships that may be made with public school divisions to enhance opportunities for all Virginia students, from preschool to postsecondary. An educational program provided to students enrolled in a public school division pursuant to a collaborative partnership between the college partnership laboratory school and the public school division shall be considered to be the educational program of the public school division for purposes of the SOA. (See § [22.1-349.3](#) G of the *Code of Virginia*.)

George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College currently partner with Fairfax County Public Schools to provide academic programming opportunities to their students. Fairfax County Public schools offers many dual enrollment pathways and students are able to take college courses that apply to transferable credits, certificates, and degrees in a variety of subject areas. These programs are listed in the Fairfax County Public Schools Program of Studies and currently open to all qualified students. ACCESS Academy will offer specialized on and off ramps combining dual enrollment and information technology coursework with innovative pedagogical practices.

5. A description of all agreements that the applicant may need in the contract with the Board related to the release of the college partnership laboratory school from state regulations, consistent with the requirements in § [22.1-349.3](#) B of the *Code of Virginia*, including the approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan. Section [22.1-349.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia* states that “[i]f the college partnership laboratory school application proposes a program to increase the educational opportunities for at-risk students, the Board of Education may approve an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of the school.”

n/a

6. A description of how the applicant and members of the governing board will disclose any conflicts of interest, which would include a personal interest in any transactions involving the college partnership laboratory school, including information regarding the frequency with which such disclosures will be made. (See § [2.2-3114](#) of the *Code of Virginia*.)

The board will be required to submit all disclosures regarding financial conflicts of interest on an annual basis. ACCESS Academy will comply with federal regulations and utilize policies and procedures already established by George Mason’s Office of Research Integrity and Assurance and according to University Policy Number 4001 (<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/financial-conflicts-of-interest-in-university-contracts-with-businesses-under-virginia-law/>).

7. Conflict of interest disclosure(s) by the applicant and/or members of the governing board in the proposed school. This includes any relationships that parties may have with vendors performing services at the school.

There are no conflicts of interest to disclose at this time.

Part C: Assurances

Assurances in the Code of Virginia: The assurances in the *Code of Virginia* represent the policies and procedures that must be developed and addressed in the application by the college partnership laboratory school to carry out the provisions of the law. By signing and submitting this application for a college partnership laboratory school, the applicant expressly assures the Board of the following:

No tuition will be charged to students attending the college partnership laboratory school, except as described in subsection E of § [22.1-349.3](#) of the *Code of Virginia*. The school will be nonreligious in its admission policies, employment practices, instruction, and all other operations.

The proposed college partnership laboratory school programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations (including the federal *Americans with Disabilities Act*, the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act*, Section 504 of the federal *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, and the *Virginia Freedom of Information Act*) and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services.

The applicant will take all actions necessary to enter into a contract with the Board no later than nine (9) months prior to the opening date of the college partnership laboratory school.

The school leadership of the college partnership laboratory school will be retained on contract no later than six (6) months prior to the opening date of the school.

An assurance that the applicant will meet the condition in § [22.1-349.9](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, which state that “teachers who work in a college partnership laboratory school shall hold a license issued by the Board or, in the case of an instructor in the Board-approved teacher education program of the institution of higher education, be eligible to hold a Virginia teaching license. Teachers working in a college partnership laboratory school shall be subject to the requirements of §§ [22.1-296.1](#), [22.1-296.2](#), and [22.1-296.4](#) applicable to teachers employed by a local school board.”

All initial requests for waivers from the Board will be made no later than six (6) months prior to the opening date of the school. (This does not preclude a college partnership laboratory school from working with the local school board to request additional waivers once the school is operational.)

The applicant must assure knowledge of the *Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act* (§ [2.2-3100 et seq.](#) of the *Code of Virginia*) and the applicable Virginia public procurement law (§ [23.1-1017](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and Chapters 76 and 77 of the Acts of Assembly of 2021, Special Session 1).

Assurances approved by the Virginia Board of Education: By signing and submitting this application for a college partnership laboratory school, the applicant expressly assures the Board of the following:

If this application is approved, the applicant will take all actions necessary to enter into a contract with the Board not later than nine (9) months prior to the opening date of the college partnership laboratory school.

If the application is approved, the leadership of the college partnership laboratory school will be retained on contract no later than six (6) months prior to the opening date of the school.

All initial requests for waivers from the Board will be made by the local school board, on behalf of the applicant, no later than six (6) months prior to the opening date of the school. (This does not preclude a college partnership laboratory school from working with the Board to request additional waivers once the school is operational.)

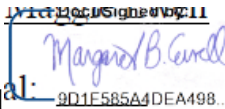
The applicant assures knowledge of the *Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act* (§ [2.2-3100 et seq.](#) of the *Code of Virginia*) and the applicable Virginia public procurement law (§ [23.1-1017](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and Chapters 76 and 77 of the Acts of Assembly of 2021, Special Session 1).

Pursuant to the requirements, I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct; the applicant has addressed all application elements that pertain to the proposed college partnership laboratory school; and that the applicant understands and will comply with the assurances listed above.

Name of Authorized Official: Maggie Ewell

Title: Director, Pre-Award

Signature of Authorized Official

A digital signature box containing a blue ink signature that reads "Maggie Ewell". Above the signature is the text "Digitally signed by Maggie Ewell" and below it is a partially visible alphanumeric string "9D1E585A4DEA498...".

Date: _____