



COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP LABORATORY SCHOOLS  
STANDING COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
College Partnership Laboratory School Application For:  
Germanna Community College

November 2023  
VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## INTRODUCTION

College Partnership Laboratory Schools (Lab Schools) have fueled innovation and excellence in preK-12 education across the nation. Some of the nation's most prestigious schools were started as Lab Schools. Virginia has identified Lab Schools as a critical part of ensuring a high-quality, innovative, and diverse educational ecosystem in the Commonwealth.

## BACKGROUND OF THE COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP LABORATORY SCHOOL FUND

The College Partnership Laboratory Schools Fund (Fund), set out in § [22.1-349.2](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, was first established in 2010 for the purpose of establishing and supporting College Partnership Laboratory Schools. During its 2022 Session, the General Assembly appropriated \$100,000,000 to the Fund.

The Virginia Board of Education (Board) is authorized to award up to \$5,000,000 from the Fund for planning grants to entities pursuing the creation of new Lab Schools. Additionally, the Board is authorized to award up to \$20,000,000 from the Fund for initial start-up cost funding grants (Start-Up Grants) for entities approved by the Board and awarded a contract to create a new Lab School and to distribute the remaining balance (\$75,000,000 or more) in per-pupil operating funding grants (Per-Pupil Funding Operating Grants) from the Fund for entities with approved Lab Schools.

Section [22.1-349.2](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and [Item 137.C.44](#) of the 2022 Appropriation Act direct the Board to establish criteria and guidelines for the distribution and award of moneys from the Fund prior to disbursement.

## PURPOSE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The Board's College Partnership Laboratory Schools Standing Committee (Standing Committee) is appointed by the Board. The purpose of the Standing Committee is to assist the Board in its approval process of College Partnership Laboratory School Applications (Application) submitted by Eligible Entities (Applicant).

Once received from the Applicant, the Application is reviewed for completeness and compliance by the Virginia Department of Education (Department), who may also secure technical assistance and/or coaching as needed for the Applicant. The Standing Committee receives the complete and compliant Application from the Department, meets with the Applicant(s), provides opportunity for public comment on the Application, and delivers a report on its recommendation to the Board for their decision.

The recommendation report to the Board provides an objective review and assessment of the Applicant's ability to achieve quality student performance through evidence of organizational effectiveness that supports a visionary educational process which promotes a culture of continuous, sustainable learning.

## SUMMARY OF APPLICATION ELEMENTS TO BE REVIEWED

The Standing Committee's review and consideration of Applications includes evaluation of the information found in eight elements of the Application, summarized as follows:

1. **Executive Summary:** Does the Applicant provide the summary and address the need for the Lab School, its goals, and objectives?
2. **Mission and Vision:** Does the Applicant clearly communicate a mission and vision, including identification of the targeted student population, for the proposed Lab School to succeed?
3. **Educational Program:** Does the curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning?
4. **Governance:** Do the organizational structure and the roles and responsibilities enumerated for the governing board demonstrate clear leadership for the successful management and support of the proposed Lab School?
5. **Management Structure:** Does the Applicant address recruiting, staffing, leadership, licensure, employment policies, and performance evaluations sufficiently to demonstrate success for proposed Lab School? In addition, how does the Applicant address parent and community involvement; student recruitment plan, open enrollment and waiting list; student conduct; start-up plan with tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals; co-curricular and extracurricular programs, and partnerships with school divisions?
6. **Financial Operations Information:** Has the Applicant provided and addressed financial assumptions, start-up and five-year budgets, anticipated fundraising contributions, insurance coverage, a sound facilities plan, transportation services, including for students with disabilities, and food service operations to successfully start and maintain operations?
7. **Placement Plan:** Does the Applicant provide a plan for effective communication and placement of school students, teachers, and employees in the event of termination or revocation of the contract, including a plan for student records, student transfers, assistance to employees, and a close-out plan related to financial obligations and audits?
8. **Other Assurances and Requirement:** Does the Applicant demonstrate processes in place to implement and monitor federal and state compliance with regulations and waivers, including compliance with the federal *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*, records retention schedules, and the *Virginia Freedom of Information Act*? Does the Applicant document collaborative partnerships with public school divisions and address conflicts of interest?

**Public Comment:** In addition to the elements found in the Application, the Standing Committee reviews and considers any public comments received when developing its recommendation and report for the Board.

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The Standing Committee's recommendation report to the Board includes the Report Elements criteria outlined below for the Board's consideration and decision whether to approve a Lab School Application.

- I. **Overall Element Assessment:** The overall recommendation of the Standing Committee for this Element of the Application.
- II. **Element Rubric Rating:** The Standing Committee's recommendation of the degree the Element defines areas of strength and/or opportunities for improvement.

	<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no indication exists for implementation activities
	<b>Emerging/Partial detail</b>	Indicates preliminary stages of implementation for some practices and procedures
	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

- III. **Public Comment Assessment:** The Standing Committee assessment of public comments received on the Application.
- IV. **Areas Requiring VDOE Reinforcement:** The Standing Committee's recommendation for VDOE operational expertise that may be required by the Applicant in various areas of the Lab School's operations.

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

### ELEMENT 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:

Germanna Community College Future Educators Academy (FEA) is an innovative early college academy that focuses on preparing tomorrow's teachers in Culpeper, Orange, Madison, Rappahannock, Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren counties and the City of Winchester. FEA is a collaboration between these school divisions, Germanna Community College, Laurel Ridge Community College, and James Madison University with one shared goal: provide high-quality, accelerated teacher education to produce exceptional teachers for the region.

FEA's goal is to address Central Virginia's critical teacher shortage problem in two ways:

1. Reinvigorate the current teacher cadre with innovative opportunities to include FEA learners in the classroom through observations and hands-on practicums.
2. Streamline the pathway to teacher licensure and work for current FEA students, who can complete their bachelor's degree in as little as two years after high school graduation. Students in FEA will complete an associate degree while concurrently completing the requirements designated in the profile of a Virginia graduate to complete an advanced studies diploma.

As FEA grows, it promotes a virtuous cycle, with FEA alumni teaching in the region with a two-year minimum teaching contract and hosting new FEA students for observations and practicums.

With solid academic curriculum theory proposed and a state-of-the-art facility in place, the Standing Committee highly recommends Germanna Community College Laboratory School to the Board.

#### ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:

	<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no indication exists for implementation activities
	<b>Emerging/Partial detail</b>	Indicates preliminary stages of implementation for some practices and procedures
<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

#### PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

#### AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:

VDOE will support the applicant through the development of the contract with the Board and will provide technical assistance as needed as the school begins operations.



## ELEMENT 2: MISSION AND VISION

### OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:

The mission of FEA is to produce well-prepared future educators by providing accessible, supportive, and innovative learning experiences. The vision for FEA will provide an accelerated, high-quality teacher education and licensure pathway to a diverse group of high school juniors and seniors through collaborative partnerships among community colleges, universities, and public school divisions.

The Applicant's Mission and Vision addresses the future of education in Central Virginia, a future that is technological, agile, and diverse. FEA embeds training in educational technology, classroom management and problem-solving, and diversity and inclusion within the Academy. Because FEA students will potentially start their teaching careers when they are only 20 or 21 years old, FEA also builds in industry and business-led professional development and soft skills training.

Students in FEA will complete an associate degree while concurrently completing the requirements designated in the profile of a Virginia graduate to complete an advanced studies diploma. While the FEA curriculum is rigorous and accelerated, the Academy is designed to be accessible to all students who have a passion for teaching, including at-risk student groups and students with pandemic-related learning loss. Tutoring, intrusive advising, and substantial hands-on learning create the support network necessary to bolster enrolled students from admission to graduation.

FEA has proposed the ability to operate an innovative program within the confines of the SOQ and SOA, utilizing the current assessment program to determine student achievement on the SOL assessment. The needs of all students are met through personalized learning methodologies. The school is open to all students of the Commonwealth from multiple backgrounds, and recruits from among the following school districts:

Culpeper, Orange, Madison, Rappahannock, Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren counties and the City of Winchester

The Applicant's mission and vision clearly outlines the level of innovation anticipated and the targeted student. With completed planning and proposed programs and processes in place, the Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

### ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:

	<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no indication exists for implementation activities
	<b>Emerging/Partial detail</b>	Indicates preliminary stages of implementation for some practices and procedures



## Lab School Application for Germanna Community College

<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement
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### **PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### **AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:**

VDOE will support the applicant through the development of the contract with the Board and will provide technical assistance as needed as the school begins operations.

### **ELEMENT 3: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

#### **OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The Applicant's curriculum committee developed an outline of the prescriptive course sequence necessary during the first two years of the dual-enrollment education program. The committee aligned elementary and special education curricula to transfer seamlessly to James Madison University and other four-year institutions for education/teaching program completion. For students seeking to teach middle grades and high school disciplines, advising will be provided based on the intended transfer institution and major. All FEA students will meet junior and senior year high school graduation requirements.

The Applicant strives to develop a cadre of professional educators within the school divisions served through new approaches, methods, and processes to train young people to be classroom teachers. FEA believes all students have the ability to succeed in an accelerated, targeted teacher training program when provided excellent educational opportunities, holistic support, and high-quality experiential learning.

The Applicant has implemented the Standards of Learning or objectives specifically designed for the school division that are equivalent to or exceed the Board of Education's requirements. FEA expects students to achieve the educational objectives established by the school division at appropriate age or grade levels. In collaboration with local school boards, FEA proposes to develop and implement a program of instruction for grades 11 and 12 that is aligned to the Standards of Learning and meets or exceeds the requirements of the Board of Education.

FEA will provide tracks for elementary and special education educators. All students will benefit from an educator-specific programmatic focus and a well-rounded curriculum. Students also participate in pre-professional and career-related experiential learning opportunities required of successful classroom teachers.

The Applicant provided historical performance metrics of their existing dual enrollment program successes. The Applicant has also expressed a willingness to collaborate with VDOE if student performance dips below expected levels in the future and work together to create a plan for improvement.

The student population will be self-identified future teachers who demonstrate college readiness and the motivation and dedication to complete a rigorous co-enrollment program. Recruiting materials and communication from high school counselors will emphasize that FEA values a diverse student body and welcomes students from at-risk groups, with unique learning needs, and from all identity groups in the region. For consideration in the lottery, students will apply, meet dual enrollment criteria, and be on track for high school graduation with documented verified credits.

The Applicant's proposed curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices ensures teacher effectiveness and student learning. With the proposed curriculum and operations ready for implementation, the Standing Committee highly recommends Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

**ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:**

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	<b>Emerging/Partial detail</b>	Indicates preliminary stages of implementation for some practices and procedures
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**PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

**AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:**

The Applicant has proposed a solid, theoretical curriculum/instructional approach. VDOE can provide guidance on any additional statutory requirements.

## ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE

### OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:

The Applicant has proposed a governing board composed of leaders from the participating institutions of higher education and school divisions. These leaders have been providing executive guidance to the lab school as members of the steering committee since the concept of the Academy was established.

The governing board will receive insight and recommendations from the advisory board and the FEA director. The governing board will work collaboratively to create or make changes to Academy policy, establish annual goals for FEA, and make strategic decisions for the Academy. The governing board will receive regular and substantive reports on the Academy's operations and metrics and will enact policy or implementation changes as necessary to support the Academy's success.

Overall, each entity with a vested interest in the school will be actively involved in the governance of this proposed Lab School.

The Applicant's organizational structure and the roles and responsibilities enumerated for the governing board demonstrate clear leadership for the successful management and support of the proposed Lab School. The Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

### ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:

	<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no indication exists for implementation activities
	<b>Emerging/Partial detail</b>	Indicates preliminary stages of implementation for some practices and procedures
<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

### PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:

Germanna FEA has provided organizational charts as well as a draft document for governance. VDOE can provide guidance on any requirements related to the confines of the state statute that may be required.

## ELEMENT 5: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

### OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:

The Applicant will work collectively with the Governing Board to identify a FEA director. Teaching faculty and advisors in FEA will be employees of the community colleges and will be hired according to Virginia Community College System policy. Academic deans with oversight of the education program and humanities at the community college will be responsible for hiring faculty that teach in FEA.

Applicant management and staff recruiting process will follow state best practices hiring process to find diverse, qualified candidates. Student support services will be jointly provided by the community college sites and the base high schools for each student. These support staff will be hired following best practices and will be vetted via a thorough search and review process.

The Applicant's faculty and administrators at the lab school will be in compliance with VCCS and SACSCOC regulations. For positions that require licensure and endorsement areas, community college faculty and staff will be monitored by the colleges' Education Program Lead.

All faculty and staff will follow policies in accordance with the human resources policies outlined by Germanna and Laurel Ridge Community Colleges.

The Applicant will use the Lab School Standing Committee's Best Practices on Administration of Lotteries for College Partnership Laboratory Schools to develop a fully operational lottery process.

The Applicant provided detailed information on overall school management including personnel management that sufficiently demonstrates success for the proposed Lab School. The Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEAI Laboratory School to the Board.

### ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:

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### PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:

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VDOE may need to provide guidance memorandums between school districts and the Lab School as well as guidance on the proposed school lottery process.

## **ELEMENT 6: FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

### **OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The Applicant has provided and addressed financial assumptions, start-up, and five-year budgets. The Applicant is requesting a total of \$5,069,434 in per pupil operational funding support over a five-year period. The budget indicates the annual funding amount requested decreases each year as other funding sources are secured and the Lab School becomes self-sustaining, thereby maximizing the return on investment of public funds.

The Applicant's current operations complies with all fiscal policies and procedures as agencies of the Commonwealth of Virginia and maintain financial processes in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the Virginia Department of Accounts (DOA) and the laws of the Commonwealth. As members of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), the Applicants also comply with the policies established by VCCS. The Applicants utilize a fund accounting system typical of institutions of higher education in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The fund accounting system is conducive to the rigorous administration of grant funding. The Applicants are routinely audited by the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts (APA).

As state agencies, the Applicants are insured through the Division of Risk Management which is part of the Virginia Department of the Treasury. This includes general liability, auto, and property.

The Applicant provided detailed budget and financial assumption information as well as its processes to provide successful operational requirements. The Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

### **ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:**

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<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

### **PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### **AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:**

VDOE may need to assist with fiscal agent status change and resultant Memorandums of Understanding between Germanna, Laurel Ridge and the participating school districts.

## **ELEMENT 7: PLACEMENT PLAN**

### **OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The Applicant's Lab School placement plan includes the current process for students to return to their home school division and/or move to another division out of state, etc. would have their records transferred electronically using the secure VDOE Dropbox process or other secure Student Information Systems procedures.

The Applicant's proposed governing Board's Constitution and Bylaws address the details of the close out plan related to financial obligations and audits by the partnering school boards. The Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

### **ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:**

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<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

### **PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### **AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:**

In the unlikely event the Lab School is terminated, VDOE may need to audit/identify unused funds requiring return to the State.



## **ELEMENT 8: OTHER ASSURANCES AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **OVERALL ELEMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The Applicant demonstrates and currently operates in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. The Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.

### **ELEMENT RUBRIC RATING:**

	<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no indication exists for implementation activities
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<b>X</b>	<b>Operational/ Ready to implement</b>	Indicates practices and procedures fully described and ready to implement

### **PUBLIC COMMENT ASSESSMENT:**

The application received one public comment and numerous institutional endorsements that supported the application.

### **AREAS REQUIRING VDOE REINFORCEMENT:**

VDOE may need to assist with approving additional waivers or assisting with review of Memorandums of Understanding to guard against conflicts of interest if future participation of school divisions is expanded.

## **CONCLUDING REPORT COMMENTS**

Germanna Community College Future Educators Academy (FEA) is an innovative early college academy that focuses on preparing tomorrow's early and special education teachers in participating school divisions. FEA's main objective is to provide high-quality, accelerated teacher education to produce exceptional teachers for the region.

FEA's goal is to address Central Virginia's critical teacher shortage problem in two ways:

1. Reinvigorate the current teacher cadre with innovative opportunities to include FEA learners in the classroom through observations and hands-on practicums.
2. Streamline the pathway to teacher licensure and work for current FEA students, who can complete their bachelor's degree in as little as two years after high school graduation. Students in FEA will complete an associate degree while concurrently completing the requirements designated in the profile of a Virginia graduate to complete an advanced studies diploma.

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The Applicant strives to develop a cadre of professional educators within the school divisions served through new approaches, methods, and processes to train young people to be classroom teachers.

As this College Laboratory School Application is in the operational development stages, the Standing Committee has noted the areas where the VDOE may be required to provide operational assistance as the Applicant's Lab School begins to fully develop and grow.

After completing an objective review and thorough assessment of the Applicant's ability to achieve quality student performance through evidence of organizational effectiveness that supports a visionary educational process which promotes a culture of continuous, sustainable learning, the Standing Committee highly recommends the Germanna FEA Laboratory School to the Board.