

§ 116-239.7. The Board of Governors' Subcommittee on Laboratory Schools; selection of laboratory schools; creation of a laboratory school; dissolution.

(a) The Board of Governors' Subcommittee on Laboratory Schools. – The Board of Governors shall establish the Subcommittee on Laboratory Schools to oversee the establishment and operation of laboratory schools in accordance with this Article. The President of The University of North Carolina shall serve on the Subcommittee. Within the funds appropriated each fiscal year to the Board of Governors to be used to support the operations of the Board, the Board may establish a full-time equivalent position to coordinate and support the work of the Subcommittee.

(a1) Approval of Laboratory Schools. – The Board of Governors, upon the recommendation of the President, shall designate constituent institutions to establish and operate a total of at least eight laboratory schools. The chancellor of each constituent institution shall adopt and submit to the Subcommittee a proposal to operate one or more laboratory schools in one or more local school administrative units that meet the minimum threshold for the number of low-performing schools located in a unit under G.S. 116-239.6(4). The proposal shall include the governance structure of the laboratory school. The Subcommittee shall evaluate the proposals for approval or disapproval by considering the design components and the strategic focus of the laboratory school and any other standards developed by the Subcommittee to be applicable to all laboratory schools. The Subcommittee shall also consider the location of each laboratory school so that, to the extent possible, there is a geographically diverse distribution of the laboratory schools throughout the State. From the proposals submitted to the Subcommittee, the Subcommittee shall approve the establishment of at least eight laboratory schools.

(a2) Waiver for Certain Local School Administrative Units. – Notwithstanding subsection (a1) of this section, a chancellor may submit a proposal to the Subcommittee to locate a laboratory school in a local school administrative unit that does not meet the minimum threshold for the number of low-performing schools located in the unit under G.S. 116-239.6(4) if the proposal demonstrates that the laboratory school shall primarily serve students who did not meet expected growth in the prior school year in accordance with G.S. 116-239.9(c1). The Subcommittee may waive the requirement for the number of low-performing schools in a local school administrative unit for the location of a laboratory school, for up to a total of six laboratory schools established under this Article, only if both of the following conditions are met for the laboratory school:

- (1) The proposal has been submitted jointly by the chancellor and the local school administrative unit in which the laboratory school will be located.
- (2) The Subcommittee determines that the proposed location would satisfy the purposes set forth in G.S. 116-239.5.

(b) Resolution by the Subcommittee to Approve a Laboratory School. – The Subcommittee shall adopt a resolution upon the approval of each laboratory school, which shall include the following:

- (1) Name of the laboratory school.
- (2) The local school administrative unit in which the laboratory school shall be located.
- (3) A term of operation for the laboratory school of five years from the date of initial operation. At the end of the initial five years of operation, the Subcommittee shall renew the term of operation for additional five-year periods under the resolution if the laboratory school is still located in a local school administrative unit that has twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the schools located in the unit identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37, or if the Subcommittee renews a waiver of this requirement under subsection (a2) of this section. If the laboratory school is no

longer (i) located in a qualifying local school administrative unit or (ii) meeting the purposes of this Article under a waiver at the end of five years, the Subcommittee may renew the term of operation for additional five-year periods under the resolution if the Subcommittee finds the school is successfully meeting its mission to improve student performance and provide valuable exposure and training for teachers and principals in the constituent institution's educator preparation program. The Subcommittee may terminate operation of any laboratory school during the initial term of operation or during a five-year renewal period if the Subcommittee finds it is failing to meet expected progress toward meeting the mission of the school consistent with the requirements of this Article. The Subcommittee shall notify the Board of Governors of the end of the term of operation of a laboratory school and request designation of additional constituent institutions with educator preparation programs to establish a laboratory school in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

(c) Recognition of a Laboratory School. – The Subcommittee shall file a copy of each resolution to approve a laboratory school with the Department of Public Instruction. Upon receipt of a resolution from the Subcommittee and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education shall approve the creation of the laboratory school.

(d) Dissolution or Assumption of a Laboratory School. – In the event of the potential dissolution of a laboratory school at the end of the term of the school's operation or due to the termination of an educator preparation program at the constituent institution, the chancellor shall propose a plan in conjunction with the local school administrative unit in which the laboratory school is located for the dissolution or the assumption of the laboratory school by a new entity and shall submit the plan to the Subcommittee for prior approval. The Board of Governors and the Department of Public Instruction shall be notified in the event of the dissolution or assumption of a laboratory school, including the identity of the entity assuming operation of the school. (2016-94, s. 11.6(a); 2017-117, s. 1; 2020-56, s. 2(c); 2023-134, s. 8.6(b).)