

Special Committee on FAMU Developmental Research School (DRS) Charter Document
Dr. Jamal Brown, Chair

I. Purpose

The Special Committee on the FAMU Developmental Research School (“DRS or “School”) is established by the Florida A&M University Board of Trustees (“Board”) to review, evaluate, and recommend policies, structures, and strategies that strengthen the School academic performance, operational integrity, financial stability, and long-term alignment with the mission of Florida A&M University (“FAMU”).

The Committee functions in an advisory and oversight capacity, consistent with the regulations, policies and procedures of the Board, and shall not engage in day-to-day school operations. Its work is intended to support the President, Board Chair, and University Administration by providing informed recommendations that improve governance, accountability, and institutional alignment.

The Committee’s core purposes include:

1. Strengthening Governance and Organizational Structure

Reviewing the organizational and structural model of DRS and recommending strategies to ensure alignment with best practices used by other state developmental research schools, university-affiliated laboratory schools, charter schools, and high-performing educational institutions as appropriate.

2. Improving Academic Quality and Student Outcomes

Reviewing academic performance, instructional quality, and student achievement data and recommending policy-level strategies to improve learning outcomes and the overall school grade.

3. Advancing College and Career Pathways

Recommending a clear policy framework to support dual enrollment, early college, workforce certification, and other academic programs that create structured pathways for DRS students into collegiate opportunities and high-demand careers.

4. Developing and Strengthening Pipeline Partnerships

Reviewing and recommending strategies for structured academic pipelines between DRS and FAMU colleges, departments, and workforce partners to strengthen recruitment, retention, and long-term student success.

5. Supporting Research and Innovation

Encouraging and reviewing the development of research and innovation

partnerships between DRS and FAMU colleges, centers, and faculty, consistent with the mission of a university-affiliated developmental research school.

6. Reviewing Facilities and Capital Needs

Reviewing information on facilities and capital improvement needs and recommending priorities that support safety, instructional quality, and modern educational standards.

7. Enhancing Community Engagement

Recommending strategies to strengthen collaboration with parents, alumni, community partners, and local agencies.

8. Consultant Support

Recommending the engagement of consultants or technical experts, as appropriate, to provide benchmarking, structural reviews, or financial analyses to inform Board decision-making.

II. Primary Responsibilities

The Special Committee is charged with performing the following responsibilities in a review and recommendation capacity:

1. Review Organizational Structure and Governance Models

Evaluate the current governance and administrative structure of DRS and recommend improvements that strengthen accountability, communication, and alignment with University and State expectations.

2. Conduct Informational Benchmarking Visits

Conduct informational benchmarking visits to other state or national developmental research or laboratory schools to observe best practices and prepare recommendations that enhance DRS's governance, instructional model, and technological needs.

3. Support University Integration and Academic Alignment

Recommend strategies that support a coherent K-12 to college pipeline and strengthen academic and institutional integration between DRS and Florida A&M University.

4. Review and Recommend Pipeline Partnerships and Pathways

Review and recommend policies that expand dual enrollment, early-college, workforce-credential, and academic bridge programs. Also to recommend GPA-based incentives, admissions recognitions, and other structures that encourage DRS graduates to matriculate at Florida A&M University. Also, recommend the creation of formal MOUs and program agreements that define clear academic and career pathways for DRS students.

5. Review Operational, Financial, and Capital Information

Review financial reports, facility assessments, operational audits, and capital planning documents and recommend strategies that strengthen the School's fiscal and operational foundation.

6. Conduct Informational Walkthroughs

In coordination with University leadership, conduct informational on-site campus walkthroughs and environmental assessments for the purpose of observing conditions related to safety, functionality, and instructional quality and informing recommendations to the President and Board Chair.

7. Review and Recommend Accountability Metrics

Review and recommend clear performance metrics for monitoring academic achievement, school grade outcomes, fiscal health, organizational capacity, and stakeholder engagement. Also to request and review regular performance reports and recommend policy responses to address areas of need.

8. Recommend Use of Consultants

Recommend that the University engage consultants, evaluators, or technical experts to perform independent analyses, benchmarking studies, or structural reviews in support of the Committee's oversight work.

9. Recommend Community Engagement Strategies

Recommend strategies to enhance collaboration with parents, alumni, local organizations, partner agencies, and community stakeholders to strengthen shared commitment to the mission of DRS.

III. Powers and Duties

The Special Committee shall have authority to perform the following advisory and oversight functions, consistent with the Board's governing documents:

1. Advisory Authority

Provide policy-level guidance and recommendations to the President and Board Chair on matters related to governance, academic performance, school structure, and long-term planning for DRS.

2. Review of Evaluation Systems

Review summaries of evaluation systems and aggregate performance outcomes for school administrators, including the Superintendent/Director, to assess alignment with institutional goals and accountability expectations. *The Committee will not conduct individual personnel evaluations.*

3. Access to Reports and Data

Request and receive reports, data, audits, or analyses necessary to fulfill its oversight responsibilities.

4. Informational Site Visits

Conduct informational site visits to DRS and benchmarking visits to other lab schools, in collaboration with University leadership, solely for purposes of oversight, policy development, and best-practice review—not for day-to-day supervision or operational direction.

5. Consultant Recommendations

Recommend that the University engage qualified consultants, evaluators, or technical experts to support independent review or benchmarking of academic, operational, or financial systems.

6. Reporting to the Board

Provide interim and final reports summarizing findings and recommendations to the Board Chair, President, and the full Board of Trustees.

IV. Period of Service

The Special Committee on the FAMU Developmental Research School shall remain active through December 2026, unless extended or concluded earlier by action of the Board Chair. At the conclusion of its service period, the Committee shall submit a comprehensive summary of findings and recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Board may determine whether the Committee should continue, transition into another structure, or conclude with its recommendations incorporated into University operations.