**Boone County Schools – A District of Innovation**

**Table of Contents**

1. Introduction
2. District Mission Statement
3. Executive Summary
4. Target Issues
5. Imagineering Academy
6. Post Secondary Degree Attainment
   1. Early College
   2. Associates Degrees in High School
   3. Early College-Career Training for “At Risk” students
7. Career-Education/Pathway & Exploration
   1. Boone County School of Design
   2. Robotics and Programming
   3. Homebuilders Program
   4. Career Counseling
   5. Maker Space Interns
8. Improving High School Graduation
   1. Virtual School
   2. “Drop In” Program
   3. Summer Learning
   4. District Diploma
   5. Project Based Learning
9. Major Components
   1. Personalization
   2. Performance based credit
   3. Anywhere Anytime Learning
10. Waivers and Rationale
11. Timeline
12. Students Service Plan
13. Professional Development Plan

**Introduction**

In the 1940s ALOCA coined the term “Imagineering” and defined it as letting your imagination soar and engineering it down to earth. The initiatives in our district represent innovative programs that are being built around an incredibly solid system of education that requires the district to create partnerships, collaborate, and provide opportunities of significance that are showing themselves to be needed on a grander scale. Our students, our community of businesses, graduates and teachers are telling us the students are ready and need expanded educational opportunities. Because of transformational leadership, commitment to best practice by our teachers, and focused effort by our students, our district is ready to take on great challenges district wide.

The district is committed to making these opportunities and addressing the needs of all students through a series of programs underneath the umbrella of the Imagineering Academy. We are taking some of our biggest dreams in education and engineering them into our school district with the hopes of improving post-secondary degree attainment, improving career focus and specialization, and enhancing graduation and education opportunities to all learners including those with the most difficult challenges. Can hundreds of students acquire an Associates Degree before they leave high school? Can our students be ready to enter the workforce in locally needed positions of robotics, automation, design, and construction? Through the use of anywhere/anytime education can we ensure that all children entering Boone County Schools will have a relevant pathway to their diploma? During our Summer Leadership Academy Superintendent Dr. Randy Poe and the Boone County Board of Education challenged us to be a district of “can if”, to remove barriers, dream big, and make great things happen for the students and families in Boone County. The programs listed within the Imagineering Academy, the creative learning environments, and the broader expansion of education opportunities 365 days of the year, as well as the continued support from an expansive list of community partners, show the districts commitment to innovative programs and practices that will have a positive impact on the students and Northern Kentucky Community.

**Boone County Schools’ Vision Statement**

All students will graduate College, Career, and Life Ready

**Boone County Schools’ Mission Statement**

Representing and in partnership with our stakeholders, the Boone County School District recognizes that all children can learn and dedicates itself to providing a challenging educational environment that allows each student to achieve to his or her potential as a learner and citizen.

All learners will demonstrate the 21st century skills and knowledge that will prepare them for success in college, career, and life. They will develop the leadership and character skills needed to become productive, compassionate, thriving global citizens. Students will learn through active engagement, collaboration and exploration of personal interests, talents and ambitions. Teachers and students will use inventive technology and 21st century tools to enhance learning. The district will utilize effective processes and performance management strategies to provide resources and will engage the community in understanding and supporting the plan.

**Executive Summary**

The mission of Boone County School’s will continue to be attained through a rigorous and equitable K-12 system. In the early years of a child’s education the school district has invested significant resources in the elementary schools that allow for smaller class size, as well as, early and continuous intervention for students that are finding challenges with early literacy. Programs that include a variety of interventions are facilitated at multiple levels to make sure no child is left behind. In fact, the Superintendent is so passionate about intervention that he has lead the implementation of some of these interventions and he speaks directly to the impact it has had on his children. In addition, enrichment programs in our elementary schools allow our students to experience technical education in computer programing and gaming, robotics, and the arts, and maker organizations are robust and have large participation. Now our high schools have a wealth of so many focused and interested students in these areas entering the buildings that the high schools and the district are adjusting in great numbers to meet the needs, desires, and dreams of these students. In addition, the necessity for district programs in these areas is showing themselves to be important. This combination of providing intervention work with students that are struggling and offering curriculum/programming that is more relevant and focused to students is helping address the needs of our students that are at risk and keeping them more engaged. This is key to improving graduation attainment and promoting students that are career and college ready.

Boone County has advanced student learning through supporting teachers with professional development in variety of areas over the last five years.  Workshops and immersive learning experiences have occurred in preparing teachers for the Next Generation Science Standards as well as the Common Core. The district was the recipient of major grants from the Gates Foundations that introduced districts to the LDC module of curriculum design as well as the MDC.  Because of our widespread implementation and careful planning in a large district, we were the national focus of this work—influencing not only the implementation in our region but across the country.  Over the last five years the district has worked hard to implement Professional Learning Communities and tackle the new professional growth system based on the Danielson Framework as a pilot district.  The district trainings have included nationally known experts including Young Zhao, Robert Marzano, Ken Kay, Tony Wagner, and still others associated with Learning Tree Solutions and Robert Dufour.

Boone County Schools provides an encompassing structure to support risk taking. Over the last five years the district initiated and supported the Boone County Foundation—a separate non-profit group whose focus is to provide teachers with classroom grants that support innovation in the classroom, especially those that are focused on project based learning. The Boone County Foundation annually holds a luncheon that showcases innovation district wide to the community. Invitations are sent out to community members, business partners, and the media. In addition to showcasing the teacher innovations at the luncheon, the monthly board meetings support the “Breaking the Mold Awards” that highlight teachers that go beyond or incorporate innovative practices in the classroom.

Over the last five years the Board of Education under the leadership of Dr. Randy Poe has specifically allocated funds for innovative proposals. Much of this work has supported programs like Project-Lead-The-Way, which currently is supporting Bio-Medical, Engineering, and IT within the schools. The Innovation Fund, as well as our CTE funding, supported innovative programs in aviation, robotics, and gaming across different schools. In Boone County, if a passionate teacher has an innovative idea that leads to empowerment and engagement they will at least have an audience, and at best the idea will be funded and training provided.

For the second year in a row, Boone County School District was named a distinguished district. Last year all four high schools in the district were named distinguished schools and this year three of the four schools were named distinguished. Part of this ranking comes from the progress that Boone County has made in the area of College and Career Readiness. In 2012, 62% of the students were college and career-ready, in 2014, 81% of the students were college and career ready. Based on KDE’s End of Course examination process, the district data continues to outperform other large and small districts in the areas of Academic Achievement. The College Board placed the Boone County School District on the AP Honor Roll for the high level inclusive AP enrollment.

In 2014 thedistrict led community and teacher conversations, as well as meetings with students and classified staff. We proposed a series of questions to these groups from EdLeader 21 and that led to the development of a list of focus skills for students that are necessary to succeed in the 21st century. From these meetings we developed the 10Cs that represent areas of focus that are the focus of much of our district planning. These 10 Cs are what the curriculum and the skill development should look like in our school system and included the following areas: choice, cultural competency, challenge, compassion, collaboration, creativity, character, critical thinking, community connections, communication. As a district from this information we developed three main objectives that we wanted to do as a district. First we wanted to provide a world-class education in our District across all levels. We also wanted to move from a model of student engagement to student empowerment. We want our students to not just learn, but to take on meaningful work and education that will impact their community. Finally, as a district we wanted to optimize our resources to provide greater offerings in an efficient and effective manner.

One of the important facets of the Imagineering Academies will be resources optimization. Everything we are pursuing as a district in the Imagineering Academy is utilizing resources and opportunities for students in a cost effective manner that allows us to educate large groups of students. When a large group of students are engaged in our early college program it means that we will have more teachers within the school to teach our at risk populations and struggling learners in smaller class size. It is important for our district to take on programs that allow for greater resource optimization. While our population of students may have many advantages we also have many challenges. For example, the district grows by 200 to 300 students each year and while the district contains zip codes that have more affluent families it also has areas in which the mean salaries are far below the poverty level. In fact if you examine the number of students that qualify for free and reduced lunch at just three of our schools they far exceed the combined population of students in Bellevue and Dayton Schools. In addition, the local community businesses have come together to state the numerous workforce needs that they have. These needs are so large, and the organizations are so concerned about having well trained individuals for their fields that they are providing resources from educators, mentors, space, and financial assistance. The Imagineering Academy allows for greater resource optimization so not only can these programs get started but they are all very sustainable and can be improved upon.

**Target Issues**

**Target Issue 1: Affordable Post-Secondary Degree Attainment and Student Loan Debt**

In our meetings with parents, students, and graduates one of the greatest concerns is no longer academic ability, but more affordable degree attainment. Currently, the school with the highest graduation rate in Kentucky is the University of Kentucky (UK), which stands at 57% over 6 years. This means that 43% of the students that start at UK don’t finish. Additionally, both the students that do and don’t graduate accumulate record amounts of student loan debt. The average student graduates with $24,000 in student debt. When you eliminate the students who never took a loan in the first place from the average that amount of debt grows by nearly $10,000. Therefore, the issue it is not academic inability that is keeping students from graduating but rather academic curiosity or the feeling that college course work is relevant.

In Boone County we are graduating roughly 72% of our students which are college ready at graduation based on the ACT Benchmark Tests. As juniors, there are roughly 40% of students that are college ready. As we increase the rigor of our K-12 system those numbers will continue to grow. But it begs the question, “What more can we do with college ready students?” Why is there such a gap between students that we are saying are college ready and those that are actually attaining a post-secondary degree? Again, the unaddressed factors of academic curiosity, lack of career understanding, and lack of college experience all contribute to the abysmal college graduation rates in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

A resolution to the issue of academic curiosity can be seen through research from the state of Texas and Oregon, that have highlighted the effectiveness of students that are taking significant number of dual credit college classes in high school have higher college retention rates. Additionally, independent research from the University of Xavier has shown that freshman entering college with 15 or greater college classes have a higher chance of graduating in four years. One of the latest studies show that students that enter college with 20 credit hours or more are 28% more likely to graduate in four years than their peers entering college with the same ACT scores and no credits.

**Target Issue 2: Career and Technical Education and Exploration**

The district has targeted career education and exploration in the innovation plan. Currently much of our career pathways that are offered to students are restricted to CTE departments and ATC departments. While many students in the district are receiving career ready status, there is a disconnect to the value of the pathways and what the local industry tells us, that is needed in high schools to foster interest. Jobs in the areas of design, robotics, construction, automation, and programing are readily available and are going unfilled. In addition, employers are constantly telling the schools that the young adults are lacking many “soft skills” that need to be taught. These soft skills are referred to as employability traits that are often taken for granted, as they are not measured in schools accountability.

Our guidance counselors district wide have reported that they only spend about 30% of their actual work time counseling. This leaves large gaps in career counseling that even our districts top and most focused students are not receiving. Not only must we provide better career tracks for our students but we need to provide professionals that will create job exploration programs and events, as well as, career guidance and exploration.

**Target Issue 3: Improving High School Graduation Attainment**

The high school graduation rates in Boone County School are reflective of some of the best graduation rates in the state of Kentucky. Collectively Boone County Schools has 92.5% of its students graduate in four year. While this is a number to be celebrated it still means that 116 students in our county each year do not attain a diploma. Over four years of high school nearly 500 students across grades 9-12 are in desperate need of support and intervention so that they may be able to find a way to graduate. There is a large variety of reasons students do not graduate but skill deficits, relevance of curriculum, economic, social-emotional health, and a variety of home problems all have presented themselves as contributing factors. Through a variety of tools and innovative practices Boone County Schools are working on addressing this issue. Imagine a district where not only were students graduating, but students were leaving other districts and in some cases even their state to attain a diploma? In addition, imagine if we could combine our resources in early college, career and technical education, and virtual school to service high school students in danger of dropping out.

**The Program: Imagineering Academy**

The Imagineering Academy is the name of the district programs and functions that help us meet the needs of the target issues. These programs are a group of tertiary district programs that students enter through meeting and developing an individualized learning pathway, that addresses needs and is based on personal interests. In addition the programs are not housed at individual schools for a variety of reasons, but the programs do allow for dual enrollment in both there high school of residence and the associated program. The Imagineering Academy utilizes district teachers, a series of community partners and spaces to meet the needs of the students in way that further allows us to better utilize district resources for younger and also struggling students.

**Post-Secondary Degree Attainment**

Deeper examination of the trending research suggests further reflection that asks: if our students are ready for college in high school, can we provide them access to significant college course work and what will that coursework be? Furthermore, what would be some of the positive pieces of such a program? In our pursuit of a district of innovation status we have sought partnerships with Thomas More College, Gateway Community and Technical College, and Northern Kentucky University. All colleges are in support of the expansion of dual credit programs. Through our partnership we will be able to offer over 100 students dual credit coursework in the second year of early college, and this program could expand to address the needs of even more students in the years to come—perhaps as many as 500 students could be graduating with 24 to 36 college credits.

**Early College:** One of the backbone programs of the Imagineering Academy is **Early College**. Early College allows high school juniors and seniors to take 24 college credit hours over the course of a year. Initially the program focuses on the general education classes required of most majors in the public schools in Kentucky. By working with Thomas More, Northern Kentucky University, and Gateway Technical and Community College the Boone County Early College program pilot year started with 48 students attending class together at Gateway Technical and Community College in Florence, Kentucky. This program will look to grow to 100 students the following year with the ultimate goal of offering the opportunity to 350-500 students each year.

Early College offers the opportunity for the high school students to return to their high school campus for the second half of the school day to participate in high school classes like Band and Choir. By students essentially completing their freshman year of college in one year of high school the hope is that students will have a schedule in college that allows them to change majors if necessary and not set back significant time. The program will also allow students to graduate from college early saving their families significant income. Another important part of Early College is the exposure to the college standards and schedules that require more self-initiative than high school course work.

**Associates Degrees:** This year we also had a student from Ryle High School graduate with an associates degree in Science. As our work in the different program areas continues we are currently working on pathways at each of the high schools that would allow students to earn various associates degrees. In fact a number of juniors that are enrolled in early college this year are pursuing this pathway. As we look at full implementation of early college across the district that within five years we could have 100 students annually graduating with an Associates Degree.

**Early College/Dual Credit Track for “At-Risk” students.**

The end of the 2014/2015 school year and the start of the 2015/2016 school year has brought many interesting changes and opportunities. With the passage of the state law that changes the drop out age to 18 there has been an influx of students that either had dropped out of school or were planning to drop out of school. The use of anywhere/anytime educational delivery methods, the district diploma, and an education center are tools that have been used in conjunction to help find a pathway for many of these severely academically behind students to graduate. Among the numerous reasons why these students drop out of school or were planning to drop out was the fact that they didn’t see the relevance in education to them and what they wanted to do in their lives. During this work we realized the potential for these students to attend college was something they would work towards. We began laying out a pathway for some of these students to enroll at Gateway Community and Technical College after they completed their mandatory high school coursework. Interestingly all of these students are surpassing the credit completion and grade completion expectations that we set for them and we believe they will be enrolled next semester. After reviewing students across the district we believe this type of plan may be appropriate for an even larger audience of students.

**Career Education and Career Pathways**

Through a series of programs and initiatives the Imagineering Academy will grow career pathways that are both supported and desired by students and the local community. These programs represent high growth and creative class jobs, and in many cases will develop lifetime skills that will help students become more self-sufficient. Our hope is not only are they ready to enter or explore a career but also gain lifetime skills that will allow them to become entrepreneurs.

Another area that is important to career education and career pathways concerns consulting students and providing career experiences at important times in students lives. The Imagineering Academy through the District of Innovation Status will work to have students experience stem through workshops and consultations.

**School of Design:** One of the most needed skill sets in Greater Cincinnati, but least developed in the NKY K-12 system is design.  Over the course of the next five years the School of Design, within the Imagineering Academy will grow to educate 120-180 students a year, and will include significant dual credit opportunities. The program will begin with Interactive Media, and move into the areas of gaming, graphic design, and animation. The School of Design will begin with the interactive media design program. This program will allow students to earn industry certifications in design, while sharpening skills and exploring the lucrative industries that rapidly need interactive designers. Roughly 3.5 million jobs are expected to be added to the economy in the creative design fields, with greater Cincinnati being poised to be the city that will capitalize the most on this expansion. Cincinnati has over 700 branding, marketing, and consumer product companies and a venture capital system that is the seventh largest in the world that heavily recruits and needs digital designers. Students enrolling in this program will develop a portfolio, and work with local clients on design needs. The program is centered around project based learning and students will work towards adobe certifications in Photoshop, Illustrator, and Dreamweaver.

**Robotics, Programing, and Automation Programs:** Locally advanced manufacturing has become a major economic power. Bosch employee’s include 1250 people in Florence alone and within the next 8 months will add another 250 employees. Bosch is not even one of the largest employers in advanced manufacturing. Over 30 other companies in Northern Kentucky need specialists in robotics, automation, and programing. The district has robust programs in the primary and middle schools but because the high schools are more classic focused many of the tech programs do not get developed. In addition, these programs often rest outside of AP and dual credit classes. Through the Innovation status the Imagineering Academy will find ways that students can pursue AP and dual credit opportunities as well as enter career pathways that prepare and expose students to this field. Through the program students will not only have access to course work in automation and program during and outside of the normal school day, but will also have access to labs, competitions, and passion projects. Locally manufacturers have held numerous meetings to build larger interest and participation in programs that can lead to careers in automation, robotics, and computer programming.

**Homebuilders/Entrepreneurship Program:** In Northern Kentucky growth in the areas of construction is slowed due to the availability of skilled labor. The Chamber of Commerce, Florence City Counsel, and numerous educators have recognized that fewer and fewer students are exposed construction trades. High school students generally do not have access to carpentry, plumbing, HVAC, and general property maintenance education. Many of these programs in the past have been criticized nationally for their lack of rigor. However, a person’s ability to be able to construct and build is important because it offers a viable and lucrative career choice. It also allows students to greater engage in the creative process and significantly improve their ability to be an entrepreneur or to add solid economic value to their own homes. Although we recognize Microsoft Office certifications in Word, PowerPoint, and Excel that are so widely attained in secondary schools across the state have value, we certainly believe that the ability to renovate a home through skills in carpentry, general property maintenance, and plumbing are just as, if not, more valuable. In addition, it would be a very unique case to find a high school student that didn’t have a basic understanding of the various programs in the Microsoft certifications areas, but it would not be all together rare to find students in high school that haven’t so much as painted a room or cut and finished a piece of drywall to repair a wall. Working with the NKY Homebuilders Association, local contractors and builders, Gateway Community College, and teachers in the district, we will embark on an ambitious program to develop builders and entrepreneurs. This group of students will embark on state curriculum and attain career readiness through state pathways in property maintenance and other areas. As a part of this curriculum the students will be heavily engaged in service work with the local non-profits.

**Career Counseling**: Boone County Schools receives some of the lowest funding per student in the state. With 87% of the schools income going toward salaries there is little room to hire extra positions. Recognizing though that our counselors are not able to meet the demand for significant career counseling and programming the Board of Education and the community gathered in August to increase the local taxes to support these needs. Through the District of Innovation status the Imagineering Academy will work with high schools in the district to employee Career Counselors. This group of individuals will also help plan honors seminars and community experiences for the students attending early college.

**Maker Space and Maker Space Interns:** In the 1970s Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, and several other large tech founders were able to explore coding and computing through libraries and community centers. These community resources largely influenced the tech revolutions that completely disrupted industries while creating others that are more efficient or never thought possible. The NKY Maker Space housed in Boone County’s School District will house a significant number of interns that will have access to 3D printing, Robotics, drones, aerial equipment, video and audio production labs, and several other tools. Giving students access to these tools and materials is comparable to what libraries were providing the community with in the 1960s and 1970s. The interns will also work to introduce other students in the district to lessons in Science in Engineering. When not leading field trips the interns will be working on both passion projects and challenges. In the first weeks of the pilot program the seven interns have already begun the process of building a prosthetic limb and 3D printed bike pieces to repair a bikes for needy children. Through the District of Innovation status the district will try to add 40 interns next year, and perhaps over 100 in the future.

**Improving High School Graduation Attainment**

Boone County Schools have over 22000 students it is responsible for educating. While the district has maintained a distinguished status, we always recognize that there are students whose needs are not being met as well as we could. With roughly 120 students in each graduating class not expecting to graduate, we estimate the number of students that could be better served through different programs at around 400-500 during any given year district wide. Although many of the students that would likely dropout in the past now have to wait until they are 18 years old, a combination of inability to enforce the statute, unique family circumstances, and other issues likely wont’ improve the graduation outcomes alone. However, as we review the number of students that need an alternative route to achieving a diploma a variety of programs are being developed and piloted.

**Virtual School:** Boone County Schools has dozens of award winning teachers and generally those teachers provide one of the best learning experiences a student can receive. However, there are those with medical issues, family issues, and personal problems that are not able to attend during the regular school day. In a district of 20,500 students we find students living alone, or in some other unique circumstance. These students need compassion and access to education at different times and through a different means. In addition, there are many students that do better in a virtual environment and learn better through online study than in the regular classroom. Last year the district piloted the virtual school and blended learning with 22 students. Through Imagineering Academy and the status as a district of Innovation we will look to expand the virtual program. This year 50 students want to enroll in virtual school and with our new status we will look to add possible 100 students to the program. A closer examination of students in the district on the high school level includes another possible 100 students that could benefit from virtual options.

The virtual school has also shown itself to be valuable in supporting early college. With the program being new many students had to finish graduation requirements at their high schools and could not enroll in early college program. However, the students instead enrolled in virtual school to take the necessary classes. This allows a great deal of flexibility in scheduling.

Over the last several years Boone County Students have expressed interest in virtual schools. There are many merits of these programs and one only has to look at the explosion of Ohio’s K12 charter, and Kentucky’s Bavel to understand there is a significant part of the population that wants to earn their education virtually. Many studies however, are showing us that virtual learning still needs to incorporate a teacher and access to school resources. During the next three years the district will expand the number of virtual classes exponentially. Like the early college program, this should not only allow for a better and more rigorous consistent experience in classes, but should also free up teachers in greater number to work with students in the traditional classroom that need closer direct instruction.

**“Drop In” Program**: The Drop In program has existed in Boone County for the last four years. However, the program is adjusting to provide several services that will support students that are in danger of dropping out. First, the program will provide direct instruction to students that struggle with online learning. It will also provide the in school portion of the blended learning environment. The program will strongly focus on building bother literacy and writing skills through ThinkCerca and Read180. However, the foundation of the program will be Project-Based Learning. This type of empowerment learning is highly engaging and provides a relevant curriculum to students and has been shown to be especially effective with struggling learners.

**District Diploma:** Through the District of Innovation status Boone County Schools will formalize the District Diploma. This diploma eliminates the extra, and sometimes burdensome, graduation requirements at the high school. This year if District of Innovation status is attained, we will work to reward and graduate 36-50 students from the Drop In program and the Virtual School.

**Summer Learning:** Summer Learning opportunities will move from just being a source of credit recovery. During the summer through the Imagineering Academy classes that not only move a student towards graduation, but are more enriching and empowering will be offered. Students in need of graduation credits will have access to the needed classes but will also be paired with mentors and teachers and engage project based learning.

**Project Based Learning:** Through the District of Innovation planning process the district has worked with Children’s Inc. to support project and service based learning. This type of teaching method allows students to gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. The best projects are those that support a community need. As part of keeping students on a pathway to graduation we will use project based learning to better engage students so they learn the value of perseverance and gain empowerment along the way.

While project based learning and professional development is occurring through the district, credit competition through project-based work will be accomplished in Robotics, Design Programs, and as well in summer school programs across several curriculum.

**Major Components: Personalization, Time & Place, and Performance:**

**Personalization:** When working with gifted students and academically at-risk students the need for personalized learning that includes components of place and time, as well as interest, becomes important. One factor to the Imagineering Academy that is so important for all programs includes ILP (Individual Learning Plan) and ILPA (Individual Learning Plan Addendum). Meeting with students to understand what they are passionate about, what they need assistance with, and any restraints to their education is incredibly important in creating a unique pathway for each child. For each student and each program we will have detailed meetings to discuss these needs and we have regular follow ups to make sure that the plan is working. We currently are doing this work in our pilot years of the virtual school, “Drop In” program, and Early College

**Performance Based Credit:** Most pieces of this program require the use of performance based credit and move away from mandatory seat time requirements. Performance-based credits are established throughout each school in the district for a number of different classes. In addition, established within much of the curriculum of the Virtual platform, School of Design, Early College, and homebuilders program. Using a series of rigorous assessments before and during a particular class students are able to work on curriculum that they do not know and less time doing work in subject matter that they are proficient. In addition, the use of project-based learning in the area of robotics allows us to grant credit for students demonstrating their knowledge through the completion of high level engineering work that is best captured through a project.

**Anywhere Any Time Education & Innovative Learning Environments**

Students that have a desire to learn should have access to learning 365 days of the year 24 hours a day. In order to better accomplish the major tasks and to better focus resources the Imagineering Academy will work with Community Partners. Virtual School will be offered year round in the district with specific starting and ending points for terms, but students can enroll in classes for enrichment as well as to progress towards graduation. Students who are significantly behind in their education will have pathways that include attending school and the online curriculum in the Summer, Winter, Spring, and Fall. By attending classes at different times of the year, as well as, by attending classes at Gateway Community and Technical College, the homebuilders campus, the Maker space, and 99 center street we can reach more students and keep expenses for such programs affordable.

**Student Scenarios**

One of the key pieces to the Imagineering Academy is how the school and variety of programs work within a student’s host school and how they work with each other. It is easy to understand how the programs like Early College and the Design School work with a student that just wants one of those programs, but the situation is a bit more complex when you throw in a picture of each individual students and how we can service each one with a combination of these programs. Each program is meant to allow for system flexibility so that students’ needs can be better met and we can truly achieve a system in which we have personalized learning pathways for each child.

To better understand how the programs work in the district consider the following student scenarios.

**Scenario 1:** Megan is a 16 year-old junior. She plans to attend college and is college ready in the area of reading and English but not Math. Megan needs credits in English and Math to graduate, also, because she transferred into the district as a sophomore Megan needs an integrated Social Studies course and a course in digital literacy to be able to graduate. Megan’s career goal is to be a designer

**Plan 1:** After meeting with the Megan and reviewing the above data, the advisory team works with Megan to enroll in early college. In early college she will take four classes each semester. In addition, Megan will want to attend the School of Design for half the day. To address the course work that she needs to graduate Megan will take a performance test in digital literacy, which will be accompanied by strategic work if she were not to pass in the areas that she has deficits. Megan will also enroll in the high schools virtual program to take a class in integrated social studies to fulfill her graduation requirements.

**Scenario 2:** Brett is the high school quarterback and is also in the choir. He is college ready in all areas and wants to go to college when he graduates. He is from a family that qualifies for free and reduced lunch. He is not able to drive himself to the college campus to take classes as his family doesn’t have a car. In addition he doesn’t want to miss practice or his choir classes as they are both areas he is passionate about. He is not sure what he wants to major in college but is looking into becoming a teacher or being an accountant.

**Plan 2:** After meeting with Brett the advisory team enrolled Brett into early college. The district will provide transportation for him to the Gateway Campus in Boone where he will attend 4 college classes a semester with 100 other students from Boone County Schools. Brett return to Conner High School for the second half of the day where he will participate in choir and be ready for football practice at 2:30 each day. Brett will graduate with 24 Dual-Credit College Classes earned as well as credits from 2 AP tests he passed. He can now double major when enters college and explore both career fields he is interested in without any danger of not graduating within four years.

**Scenario 3:** Stephanie is returning to school from dropout status. She was a student that struggled academically but due to family issues and an early pregnancy Stephanie had to stay home from school. Stephanie is not college ready in any area, but according to assessment results Stephanie has a 9th grade reading level and passed her math courses. Stephanie wants to support her family and has a big interest in cosmetology. Stephanie has a hard time attending school regularly because of her home situation, but can commit to coming to school two three days a week.

**Plan 3:** After meeting with Stephanie the advisory team developed a plan that would allow Stephanie to attend virtual school but attend school in the “Drop In” program two days a week to get needed assistance. She was placed on an aggressive plan that started in the summer so that she can attain the necessary credits to graduate using the district diploma. Stephanie will work to get her core classes out of the way by Christmas of this year. After Christmas she will enroll in Gateway Community College and Technical Schools classes to take some in the field she wants to work. Since Stephanie is currently working at a fast-food restaurant, the team will work to help Stephanie find a position that is closer to her desired career in Cosmetology where she can also earn “co-op” credit. During the second semester of her senior year, the teachers within the Imagineering Academy will continue to work with Stephanie in math and reading intervention so she can reach her college readiness goals.

**Scenario 4:** Marcus wants to go to a college out of state. He is a high achieving student and has been college ready since the end of his freshman year. He wants to do something in robotics and dreams of attending MIT.

**Plan 4:** After meeting with the advisory team Marcus decides he wants to earn an Associates Degree in Science before he graduates. The team enrolls him as a junior Early College. Marcus takes a combination of general education courses and specific classes in Robotics for the first half of each day. During the second half of the day he returns to the Maker Space where is working as a “Maker Intern” in the robotics lab on a passion project in which he is completing high level challenges and curriculum that was established by his advisory team which included a robotics professor.

**Scenario 5:** Janice is a sophomore that is eligible for free and reduced lunch. She is college ready in Math but not reading and English. She is not sure what she wants to do when she gets older, but she has always had an interest in housing and construction. She is obsessed with “do-it-yourself” television. Janice also is in the choir at her school and maintains good grades. While she wants to go to college, she wants to learn skills that could lead to a career in construction or at the very least teacher how to maintain and renovate a home.

**Plan 5:** The team meets with Janice and enrolls her into the NKY Homebuilders program. Janice needs extra help in reading and English and so the team makes sure that she is taking a reading course her first semester at her host high school. Three days a week Janice receives instruction in course work for property maintenance pathway, and during the two days the class doesn’t meet with an instructor she and her classmates are working on service-learning projects in the community that include building playgrounds and working with a local non-profit organization that helps install wheel chair ramps and other home needs of the elderly and disabled. After becoming career-ready in this field the second year she enrolls in a co-op program and goes to work for Drees Homebuilders.

**Waivers** **and Rationale**

1. KRS 157.420

The per pupil capital outlay allotment for each district from the public school fund and from local sources shall be kept in a separate account and may be used by the district only for capital outlay projects approved by the commissioner of education in accordance with requirements of law, and based on a survey made in accordance with administrative regulations of the Kentucky Board of Education. These funds shall be used for the following capital outlay purposes:

1. For direct payment of construction costs;
2. For debt service on voted and funding bonds;
3. For payment or lease-rental agreements under which the board eventually will acquire ownership of a school plant;
4. For the retirement of any deficit resulting from over expenditure for capital construction, if such deficit resulted from an emergency declared by the Kentucky Board of Education under KRS 160.550; and
5. As a reserve fund for the above-named purposes, to be carried forward in ensuing budgets

Waiver Request: The district is expanding at a pace of 200 to 300 students per year and that increase will likely continue for the next decade at a greater pace. Flexibility in the capital outlay will allow us to spend in a more prudent fashion to reach support the innovative initiatives we are taking in the district. These waivers will allow us to cut through some simple red tape on items that otherwise difficult to commit to in the first year of opening a school or expansion.

1. 704 KAR 3:305. Minimum requirements for high school graduation

Section 2. Beginning with the graduating class of 2012, each student in a common school shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22) credits for high school graduation. Those credits shall include the content standards as provided in the program of studies, 704 KAR 3:303. Additional standards-based learning experiences shall align to the student’s individual learning plan and shall consist of standards-based content. The required credits and demonstrated competencies shall include the following minimum requirements:

(1) Language arts - four (4) credits (English I, II, III, and IV) to include the content strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, inquiry, conventions, analysis, and using technology as a communication tool. **Language arts shall be taken each year of high school**;

Waiver Request: We would like to request waiver to the section 1 in specifically the area of the yearly requirement. Currently we have juniors taking two semesters of college English and will end the year with four English credits. We would like the flexibility for the student to be able to pursue higher level classes without taking another high school class in the senior year.

1. 704 KAR 3:305. Minimum requirements for high school graduation

Section 2. Beginning with the graduating class of 2012, each student in a common school shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22) credits for high school graduation. Those credits shall include the content standards as provided in the program of studies, 704 KAR 3:303. Additional standards-based learning experiences shall align to the student’s individual learning plan and shall consist of standards-based content. The required credits and demonstrated competencies shall include the following minimum requirements:

(3) Mathematics - three (3) credits to include the content strands of number property and operation, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability, and algebraic thinking, and including the following minimum requirements: (a) **One (1) mathematics course taken each year of high school** to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or the workforce based on the student's individual learning plan;

Waiver Request: We would like to request waiver to the section 1 in specifically the area of the yearly requirement. We have sophomores that complete Algebra II and are scoring 24 on their ACT. We would like to waive the fourth year requirement and allowed flexibility in adding course work that uses math skills to count as a math credit. Classes can include dual credit programs or high school course work in robotics, circuits, physics, accounting, computer programing, informatics, computer science, gaming, and a variety of other coursework. IN addition we would like to allow a performance score on either the KYOTE or the ACT to count as math credit.

1. 704 KAR 3:305. Minimum requirements for high school graduation

Section 5. (1) A board of education may award credit toward high school graduation for satisfactory demonstration of learning based on content standards described in the program of studies, 704 KAR 3:303, and a rigorous performance standards policy established by the board of education. A school shall establish performance descriptors and evaluation procedures to determine if the content and performance standards have been met. (2) A board of education shall award credit toward high school graduation based on: (a) A standards-based Carnegie unit credit that shall consist of at least 120 hours of instructional time in one subject;

Waiver Request: We would like to request a waiver to Section 5.2.A. to reduce the amount of time of instructional time as defined by the Carnegie unit from 120 hours of instructional time to be 80 hours of instructional time per year, or 40 hours of instructional time per semester. This allotment of in-class instructional time mimic college scheduling and allow for a greater use of teachers in intervention for at risk students.

1. 161.020 Certificates required of school employees -- Filing requirements -- Validity and terms for renewal.
   1. No person shall be eligible to hold the position of superintendent, principal, teacher, supervisor, director of pupil personnel, or other public school position for which certificates may be issued, or receive salary for services rendered in the position, unless he or she holds a certificate of legal qualifications for the position, issued by the Education Professional Standards Board.
   2. No person shall enter upon the duties of a position requiring certification qualifications until his or her certificate has been filed or credentials registered with the local district employer.
   3. The validity and terms for the renewal of any certificate shall be determined by the laws and regulations in effect at the time the certificate was issued.

Waiver Request: We would like to request that a certified teacher be able to teach outside of their certification area. We would like to use the highly qualified status calculator to allow teachers that have collaboration models in certain course work, or in some cases have significant credit hours or real-word experience to teach outside of their certification.

1. 161.010 (5) "Teacher's aide" means an adult school employee who works under the direction of the professional administrative and teaching staff in performing, within the limitations of his or her training and competency, certain instructional and noninstructional functions in the school program including, but not limited to, clerical duties, tutoring individual pupils, leading pupils in recreational activities, conducting pupils from place to place, assisting with classroom instruction as directed by the teacher, aiding the school librarian, and preparing and organizing instructional materials and equipment.

Waiver Request: We would like to waive this definition to allow teachers aid the ability to oversee digital curriculum and to allow them levels of instruction and supervision.

1. **158.070 School term** -- Professional development -- Suicide prevention -- Holidays and days closed -- Continuing education for certain students’ Instructional days and their equivalents in school term -- Breakfast program -- Scheduling of athletic competitions -- Missed school days due to emergencies and service credit.

(1) The minimum school term shall be one hundred eighty-five (185) days, including no less than the equivalent of one hundred seventy-five (175) six (6) hour instructional days. A board of education may extend its term beyond the minimum term.

(2) The local board of education, upon recommendation of the local school district superintendent, shall adopt a school calendar for the upcoming school year that establishes the opening and closing dates of the school term, beginning and ending dates of each school month, instructional days, and days on which schools shall be dismissed. The local board may schedule days for breaks in the school calendar that shall not be counted as a part of the minimum school term

Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, the following provisions shall apply to a school district that misses school days due to emergencies, including weather-related emergencies: (a) A certified school employee shall be considered to have fulfilled the minimum one hundred eighty-five (185) day contract with a school district under KRS 157.350 and shall be given credit for the purpose of calculating service credit for retirement under KRS 161.500 for certified school personnel if: 1. State and local requirements under this section are met regarding the equivalent of the number and length of instructional days, professional development days, holidays, and days for planning activities without the presence of pupils; and 2. The provisions of the district's school calendar to make up school days missed due to any emergency, as approved by the Kentucky Department of Education, including but not limited to a provision for additional instructional time per day, are met.

Waiver Request: The district would like to request a flexible schedule in the schools of innovation to include 60 hours of virtual instruction or performance based instruction that would replace 10 days of seat and direct instruction time. In addition, the accumulation of qualified summer credits from dual credit institutions, performance-based programs, or virtual program would count towards credits during the school year and be included in the ADA calculation the same as performance based credit is awarded via ADA calculation.

1. KRS 164.7881 Eligibility for educational excellence scholarship and supplemental awards -- Time limits for receiving aid -- Adjustment of amounts and loss of award -- Extension of time limits -- Senator Jeff Green Scholars. (1) Eligible high school students who have graduated from high school and eligible postsecondary students who have earned a Kentucky educational excellence scholarship, a Kentucky educational excellence scholarship and a supplemental award, or a supplemental award only pursuant to KRS 164.7879(3)(e), shall be eligible to receive the Kentucky educational excellence scholarship, the Kentucky educational excellence scholarship and the supplemental award, or a supplemental award only for a maximum of eight (8) academic terms in an undergraduate or other postsecondary program of study at a participating institution, except as provided in subsections (5) and (6) of this section. (2) To receive the Kentucky educational excellence scholarship, a Kentucky educational excellence scholarship and supplemental award, or a supplemental award only, an eligible high school or postsecondary student shall: (a) Enroll in and attend a participating institution as a full-time student or a parttime student; and (b) Maintain eligibility as provided in subsection (3) of this section

Waiver Request: the district would like to request that juniors and seniors are eligible to use their KEES award money to pay for dual-credit classes. We ask that they are allowed to use the maximum reward received per year with a proportionate reduction in the later years.

1. 160.345 Definitions -- Required adoption of school councils for school-based decision making -- Composition -- Responsibilities -- Professional development -- Exemption -- Formula for allocation of school district funds -- Intentionally engaging in conduct detrimental to school-based decision making by board member, superintendent, district employee, or school council member -- Complaint procedure -- Disciplinary action -- Rescission of right to establish and powers of council -- Wellness policy.

(1) For the purpose of this section: (a) "Minority" means American Indian; Alaskan native; African-American; Hispanic, including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Central or South American origin; Pacific islander; or other ethnic group underrepresented in the school; (b) "School" means an elementary or secondary educational institution that is under the administrative control of a principal and is not a program or part of another school. The term "school" does not include district-operated schools that are: 1. Exclusively vocational-technical, special education, or preschool programs;

2. Instructional programs operated in institutions or schools outside of the district; or

3. Alternative schools designed to provide services to at-risk populations with unique needs; (c) "Teacher" means any person for whom certification is required as a basis of employment in the public schools of the state, with the exception of principals and assistant principals; and (d) "Parent" means: 1. A parent, stepparent, or foster parent of a student; or 2. A person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.

Waiver Request: Currently this program does not require a site-based council, as it is a district alternative school or alternative program. However, should the program move become an A1 school then we would like to have the flexibility to add an elected student representative as a voting member of the SBDM council. The student would have authentic voting rights on all issues other than closed session and personnel. For personnel issues the student member will not be involved.

**Imagineering Academy Timeline:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Early College** | **Program** | **Program** | **Program** | **Program** | **Program** |
| **Pilot Year** | Early enrollment 24 credit hours | School of Design:  Interactive media (40 students) | Virtual School 21 students | “Drop In” reform |  |  |
| **2016/2017** | Early College  100 students | School of Design:  Interactive Media (50 students) | Virtual School Expansion 100 students | “Drop In” 80 students | Robotics  30 students | Homebuilders  40 students |
| **2017/2018** | Early college  300 students  30 earning Associate degrees | School of Design:  Interactive Media, Graphic Design, Animation  (150 students) | Virtual School 200 students | Drop In  80 Students | Robotics  80 students | Homebuilders  80 students |
| **2018/2019** | Early College  350 students  60 early associates degrees | School of Design:  Interactive Media, Graphic Design, Animation  (150 students) | Virtual School 200 students | Drop In  80 students | Robotics  200 students | Homebuilders  160 students |