World War II

- President Franklin D. Roosevelt
In August 2011, the James Graham Brown Foundation provided a $532,418 matching grant to the University of Kentucky (UK) to help launch the Kentucky P20 Innovation Lab’s Next Generation Leadership Academy (NxGLA). Now beginning its fifth year in operation, the Academy connects P-12 schools and districts in all regions of the commonwealth with UK faculty, regional university partners, and state and national leaders to help Kentucky school districts build new systems for learning. These new designs are based on the six critical attributes of Next Generation Learning as defined by the UK Center for Innovation in Education in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO):

- **Clear, High Expectations**, which require achievement goals to sufficiently encompass the content knowledge and skills required for success in a globally-oriented world;

- **Competency-based learning**, which puts students at the center of the learning process by enabling the demonstration of mastery based on high, clear, and commonly-shared expectations;

- **Customized Pathways**, which calls for a personal learning plan and profile for every learner and an opportunity to experience learning not bound by place, age, pace, or time;

- **Anytime, anywhere learning**, which provides constructive learning experiences in all aspects of a child’s life, through both the geographic and the Internet-connected community;

- **Comprehensive Supports**, which address social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development along a continuum of services to ensure the success of all students; and,

- **Student Agency**, which is the deep engagement of students in directing and owning their individual learning and shaping the nature of the education experience among their peers.
The James Graham Brown Foundation grant supported four annual cohorts of P12 district and school leaders to participate in the Next Generation Leadership Academy, beginning in 2011-2012 and continuing through 2014-2015. With internal funds, the University of Kentucky launched a pilot cohort during the 2011-2012 school year to pave the way for outreach efforts that have now expanded across the Commonwealth. The first group of 60 leaders representing 14 districts across Kentucky came together with the goal of redesigning new and improved systems for transforming education as we know it. During the 2012-2013 school year Cohort 2, made up of 78 leaders representing 13 additional districts, joined the Academy. In the 2013-14 school year Cohort 3 with 110 leaders joined the Academy, representing 15 new districts and three returning districts.

Cohort 4 Leadership Academy was launched in July 2014 with 115 leaders, representing 11 districts ready to begin a journey to bring about transformational change. Figure 1 displays the number of participants and districts represented in each cohort.

Next Generation Leadership Academy Structure

During Next Generation Leadership Academy sessions, leaders work closely with the UK College of Education faculty in seven face-to-face meetings each year with follow-up consultation and virtual meetings to support transformational initiatives focused on increasing the number of students ready for successful transition into college and career. Additionally, site visits are arranged for leaders to explore new school models at work. Examples from outside Kentucky include Mooresville School System in North Carolina; the Metro Early College High School in Columbus, Ohio; and the Reynoldsburg
City School System in Ohio. In-state school and district site visits have included Danville Independent, Trigg County Schools, and Eminence Independent.

A critically important goal of the Next Generation Leadership Academy is the implementation of new models in Kentucky schools that represent a sharp contrast to schools designed for the Industrial Age.

Cohort 5 convened for the first time in July 2015, expanding the community of Next Generation Leadership Academy districts to 53 of Kentucky’s 173 school districts. Cohort 5 includes 80 participants from three new KY districts, eight returning KY districts, and one district from Ohio, bringing the total number of NxGLA participants over five years to 443.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of districts and leaders participating in each cohort</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2011-2012</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2013-2014</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2014-2015</strong></td>
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* In some cases districts are duplicated because leaders from the district engaged in more than one cohort.
DISTRICTS BY FIRST YEAR OF PARTICIPATION
Independent School Districts in Northern Kentucky

Prepared by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics
EXPANDING PARTNERSHIP IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

During the 2013-2014 Next Generation Leadership Academy, a strong and powerful partnership developed between the UK College of Education and the Kentucky Valley Education Cooperative (KVEC). KVEC, one of eight regional cooperatives in Kentucky, is a consortium of public school districts in the Kentucky Valley region. KVEC provides professional learning and other coordinated support services to eighteen districts in the heart of Appalachia. This partnership led to the successful application of a federal Race to the Top District grant. This Race to the Top initiative, called the Appalachian Renaissance Initiative (ARI), provides $30,000,000 to support improving educational outcomes for students in the KVEC districts of eastern Kentucky, which are some of the poorest school districts in the nation. Over the four-year award period, the University of Kentucky will provide professional development to 400 leaders and teachers through a Next Generation Leadership Academy designed specifically for the seventeen KVEC districts participating in ARI. This work is supported by a sub-grant award of $1,760,000 from KVEC to the UK College of Education.
Additionally, the evaluation team is seeking to learn more about districts’ journeys to remove barriers that stand in the way of learning as they move from legacy practices designed for the Industrial Age to next generation practices designed to customize learning for each child.

Four datasets are currently collected and analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Next Generation Leadership Academy in meeting the overarching goals:

1. Data collected through the state longitudinal data system related to college- and career-readiness percentages, graduation rates, college-going rates, and Advanced Placement data (Appendix A);

2. Case studies of implementation efforts in representative districts (Appendix B);

3. Follow-up Interviews with representative superintendents/designees addressing specific research questions (Appendix C);

4. Perception surveys that gauge participants’ perceptions about their learning experiences and the impact of the Next Generation Leadership Academy on their own practice (Appendix D).
While the Academy is still in its early stages of development and implementation, initial findings reveal steady improvement across the districts involved in Cohorts 1, 2 and 3. Furthermore, NxGLA participants continue to request ongoing networking and support. Many districts have chosen to continue their participation in the Leadership Academy by sending new teams to subsequent cohorts to engage a critical mass of leaders to implement emerging transformational plans.

In the first year of the NxGLA, for example, Boone County sent only two district leaders who worked diligently to deliver the professional development back in their district. Deciding that they needed more leaders with direct training from UK College of Education faculty, they registered expanded teams to participate in cohorts 4 and 5. Many other districts have participated in multiple cohorts including: Carroll County, Clark County, Eminence Independent, Fayette County, Graves County, Jefferson County, Jessamine County, Mason County, Mercer County, Paris Independent, Paducah Independent, and Trigg County.
The UK College of Education is building an evaluation framework that addresses two overarching goals of the NxGLA:
1. Improve and deepen learning for all students; and
2. Increase the percentage of graduates ready for college and career.

Goal 1

Improved student college-/career-readiness outcomes as measured by college/career-readiness rates (tied to ACT scores), graduation rates, college-going rates, and Advanced Placement exam passing rates - Appendix A;

Goal 2

District development of new systems for learning illustrated through case studies in Appendix B and superintendent/designee interviews in Appendix C;

Goal 3

Leader access to tools and supports for implementing redesigned systems of learning as well as their perceptions of the impact of Academy participation on their learning systems revealed in responses to perception surveys found in Appendix D (and can also be traced through case studies in Appendix B).
STUDENT OUTCOMES

College/Career-Ready Graduates

The number of graduates who reached KY’s college-/career readiness (CCR) benchmarks in NxGLA districts rose from 6,093 in 2012 to 8,133 in 2014; that represents an increase of +16.1% from 48.8% to 64.9%. See chart in Appendix A.

Graduation Rates

Because of the change from Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) calculation to Cohort Graduation Rate in 2012, we have limited data available for comparison purposes at this time. The number of graduates in NxGLA districts rose from 12,300 in 2012 to 12,524 in 2013; that represents an increase of 1.9%. The Graduation Rate chart in Appendix A illustrates that all KY districts (NxGLA and non-NxGLA) are experiencing similar trajectories toward increased graduation rates.

College-going Rates

Counterintuitively, as Kentucky high school graduation rates have increased, the state has seen a slight decline in college-going rates – down 1.1% from a rate of 61.4% in 2010 to a rate of 60.3% in 2013. Most analysts believe that the decline is due, in part, to a steadily increasing number of high school graduates, many of whom would have been drop-outs in the past and some of whom have no desire to pursue college. Increasing college tuition rates are also a likely contributing factor. Fortunately, because graduation rates have increased, the actual number of KY students enrolling in college directly from high school each year is on the rise.

Advanced Placement Exam Passing Rates

An analysis of AP exam results from the 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years (the only data currently available statewide) shows that NxGLA districts have improved their AP exam passing rates. In 2012-13, NxGLA districts posted a passing rate of 56.8%, which increased 0.9% to 57.7% in 2013-14.
Sample case studies, illustrating the wide variety of new systems for learning that are emerging across NxGLA districts, are included in Appendix B. Superintendent interviews (Appendix C) indicate an extremely high-level of satisfaction with the Academy experience and with the impact participation in the Academy has had on their schools and districts. Lastly, participant perception surveys indicate equally high-levels of satisfaction with the overall Academy experience and the related tools and resources that support participants with ongoing implementation efforts back in their schools and districts.

In specific areas, respondents indicated that their leadership skills, knowledge, and dispositions were somewhat to significantly enhanced as follows:

- 87% for Personalized Learning
- 83% for Comprehensive Systems of Learning Support
- 100% for Performance-based Learning
- 91% for Anytime, Anywhere Learning
- 95% for Authentic Student Voice

65% of respondents rated their NxGLA experience as Superior to other professional learning experiences; 30% of respondents rated their experience as Good.

Regarding the helpfulness of the various NxGLA components:

- 100% of respondents found the face-to-face convenings to be helpful or most helpful.
- 86% found the Networking opportunity with other NxGLA schools and districts to be helpful or most helpful.
- 86% found the networking opportunity and support from UK NxGLA faculty to be helpful or most helpful.

(continued on page 16)
A synthesis of these findings clearly indicates that the investment in the Next Generation Leadership Academy is reaping dividends in P-12 schools and districts across the Commonwealth. Demand for enrollment in the Academy remains high and the Academy design team continues to be responsive to the needs and feedback of participants to ensure high-quality program offerings that target deeper learning and redesigned systems for learning to improve outcomes for all students. Additionally, this investment is now beginning to impact higher education. The University of Kentucky’s College of Education is embarking on a redesign of teacher preparation programs around the principles and critical attributes of Next Generation Learning. When this effort is completed, Kentucky will be the first College of Education in the nation to implement this new design and next gen preparation continuum. The College’s Department of Education Leadership Studies has also reframed its principal preparation program to incorporate the work and experiences of annual NxGLA cohorts with required coursework toward KY principal licensure. This authentic, job-embedded clinical approach to principal preparation is a cutting edge design that promises to revitalize the College’s principal preparation pathway.
CONCLUSION

The Next Generation Leadership Academy is positively impacting participating districts, schools, and leaders in a number of ways. Participation in the academy has spurred innovation around next generation learning across the state. The Academy was developed to help leaders in school districts who were ready for the shift to new models of learning, but who needed help with the “how to.” The leaders who have participated in the four initial cohorts of the Academy overwhelmingly credit their participation with helping them move forward in creating student-centered innovations in their schools and districts. In addition to improved student outcomes, NxGLA districts, students, teachers, and leaders are more engaged as a result of their work.

The Next Generation Leadership Academy has also made a lasting impact on UK’s College of Education resulting in several exciting spinoffs:

- A teacher preparation redesign which includes next generation learning at its core, utilizing a clinical model that leverages UK’s work in districts across the state;
- A redesigned principal preparation program in the UK College of Education’s Department of Education Leadership Studies; and
- Enhanced outreach efforts on the part of the College to provide ongoing and deeper professional development offerings for Kentucky schools and districts including:
  - summer institute on mastery learning and standards-based grading,
  - a four-day summer institute on project-based learning,
  - technology boot camps for school administrators,
  - just-in-time support for individual schools and districts around NxGLA concepts; and
  - development of a clearinghouse of trainers and consultants who can augment the availability and expertise of Next Generation Leadership faculty to customize support for schools and districts.

Funding for the Next Generation Leadership Academy has also leveraged additional financial investments in next generation learning in Kentucky including:

- Over $533,000 in matching funds raised toward this project;
- $450,000 Planning and Challenge Grant from the Next Generation Learning Challenges for development of the STEAM Academy in partnership with Fayette County Public Schools;
- $1,760,000 sub-award from the KY Valley Education Cooperative to support next generation training as part of their $30,000,000 Race to the Top District Grant called the Appalachian Renaissance Initiative;
- Over $4,200,000 in support to date from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to launch and sustain UK’s National Center for Innovation in Education which is facilitating shifts to next generation learning across 13 states.
I. **College-/Career-Readiness Percentages.** Kentucky has adopted specific guidelines that equate to being “college- and career-ready” for state accountability purposes. To be counted as college-/career-ready, high school students must score at a particular level on designated tests or reach career and technical benchmarks. The scores that qualify a student as college-ready include an ACT score of at least 20 in reading, 19 in math, and 18 in English (36 is the highest ACT score possible); a benchmark score on COMPASS, which includes college placement tests that evaluate reading, writing, and math skills; and/or benchmark score on the Kentucky online testing system, or KYOTE, which is a web-based placement program that uses standardized tests to measure college-preparedness. Tests that indicate career-readiness include the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or ASVAB, a multiple-choice test to determine qualifications for enlistment in the armed forces; the ACT Work Keys, an assessment that measures real-world skills in applied math, reading for information, and locating information; the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (KOSSA); and/or particular industry-based certifications.

The percentage of seniors who reach college- and career-readiness benchmarks is included in each high school’s state accountability score and reported in the annual School Report Card. Figure 3 shows how college-/career-readiness rates for districts that have participated in the Next Generation Leadership Academy compare to all districts in the state.

II. **Graduation Rates.** High school graduation rates are reported by KDE and include public high schools only. Beginning in academic year 2012-13, the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) was replaced by the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate. Kentucky has received a great deal of national attention for much improved graduation rates in recent years. Figure 4 compares NxGLA districts’ graduation rate to that of all other districts in the state.
Figure 3: Prepared by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics

**College and/or Career Readiness by Graduation**

- Next Generation Districts
- State Total

*College and/or career readiness is the percentage of public high school graduates who were college and/or career ready by graduation. College readiness indicates that a graduate met Kentucky benchmarks for English (18), mathematics (19), and reading (20) on any administration of the ACT or passed a college placement test (Compass or KYOTE). Career readiness indicates that a graduate met benchmarks for Career Ready Academic (ASVAB or ACT WorkKeys) and Career Ready Technical (KOSSA or received an industry-recognized career certificate).*

Figure 4: Prepared by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics

**High School Graduation Rates**

*High school graduation rates are reported by KDE and include public high schools only. Beginning in academic year 2012-13, the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) was replaced by the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.*
III. College-Going Rates. As Kentucky high school graduation rates have increased, the state has seen a slight decline in college-going rates – down 1.1% from a rate of 61.4% in 2010 to a rate of 60.3% in 2013. Most analysts believe that the decline is due, in part, to a steadily increasing number of high school graduates, many of whom would have been drop-outs in the past and some of whom have no desire to pursue college. Increasing college tuition rates are also a likely contributing factor. Fortunately, because graduation rates have increased, the actual number of KY students enrolling in college directly from high school each year is on the rise.

During the same four-year period, NxGLA districts also experienced a very slight decline in college-going rates – down only 0.6% from a rate of 65.1% in 2010 to 64.5% in 2013. Figure 5 compares the college-going rates of NxGLA district graduates to those of all other districts in the state.

Figure 5: Prepared by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics

*College going rates include all Kentucky public high school graduates who enrolled at an in-state public 4-year, in-state public 2-year, in-state independent, in-state proprietary or other, out-of-state postsecondary institution at any point during the academic year immediately following graduation.
IV. Advanced Placement Data. As part of the overall effort on the part of the state to better prepare high school students for the rigor of college coursework, many districts participated in an effort called Advance Kentucky focused on increasing the number of students who take Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams while also increasing their AP passing rates. Passing rates are typically defined as AP exam scores of 3, 4, or 5.

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of AP Exams in which a passing score was earned. This percentage was calculated by dividing the total number of Advanced Placement (AP) exams taken by Kentucky public high school 9th-12th graders during 2012-13 and 2013-14 in which a score of 3 or higher was earned by the total number of AP exams taken by Kentucky public high school 9th-12th graders during that academic year. Totals do not include the Kentucky School for the Blind or the Kentucky School for the Deaf.

Figure 6: Prepared by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics

*Calculated by dividing the total number of Advanced Placement (AP) exams taken by Kentucky public high school 9th-12th graders during the listed academic year in which a score of 3 or higher was earned by the total number of AP exams taken by Kentucky public high school 9th-12th graders during that academic year.
I. **BOONE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT: MAKERSPACES AND STUDENT EMPOWERMENT.** District and school leaders from the Boone County School District participated in Cohorts 1, 3, and 4 of the Next Generation Leadership Academy. In the first year, district Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Karen Cheser, and the Director of Technology were the lone representatives for the district, but they determinedly came back to the district after each Academy session and shared their learning with the larger team. As a result, full district teams came back to Cohorts 3 and 4 and the district has adopted many of the Next Generation Leadership Academy principles in their ongoing work.

Most notably, Boone County Schools partnered with Leadership Northern KY (NKY) to create a MakerSpace, “a place where kids (of all ages) and their families have access to the state-of-the-art tools that can spark creativity, nurture curious minds, and ignite the next wave of innovators.”

Opened during the 2014-15 school year, the NKY MakerSpace is available for field trips as well as after school, weekend, and summer programs where kids are able to build their own ideas with real tools and materials. Inspiring and empowering learners to think, design, experiment, and create, the MakerSpace provides creative programming through which kids apply new hands-on skills and make projects using electronics, 3D printing, robotics, woodworking, crafting, computer programming, and more.

In addition to the launch of the NKY MakerSpace, Boone County Schools has invested much time and talent into the development of a Next-Generation-focused Strategic Plan to guide their work into the future. The “Boone County Schools 2015 Strategic Plan” aligns the district’s mission, stated theory of action, core values, and missions around three big goals: Student Empowerment, World-Class Education, Resource Optimization. The plan also highlights the district’s Bring Your Own Technology program, Service Learning and Project-Based Learning, and College- and Career-Pathway program – all of which are key tenets of the Next Generation Leadership Academy. In the words of Chief Academic Officer Cheser, “Being involved in the Next Generation Academy work for the past few years has been one of the catalysts for moving us forward.”
RECORD OF SUCCESS:
• Opened NKY MakerSpace in 2014-15 academic year.
• Through a district-wide partnership with Children Inc, all students are engaged in service learning experiences and the district has set a goal for all students to be engaged in at least one PBL experience each semester.
• In partnership with Northern KY University, Thomas More College, and Gateway College, Boone County established the Boone County Early College where students can earn up to 24 college credits per year at a dramatically reduced tuition rate.
• The recently opened Boone County Design School, housed on the campus of Gateway College, targets student interested in art/design careers such as app/game graphic design, computer animation, and web/mobile design.

II. JENKINS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT: PREPARING STUDENT FOR CAREER AND COLLEGE PATHWAYS IN A SMALL, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Jenkins Independent School District educators are “fully committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment to every student to be college and career ready by utilizing national and state standards as a measurement for achievement.”

District and school leaders in the Jenkins Independent School District participated in Cohort 1 of the Next Generation Leadership Academy. The initial experience had such significant impact that the superintendent continued to send more educators from the district to participate in Cohorts 2 and 3.

The teachers, staff, and administration of Jenkins Independent School District began to think differently as a result of their involvement in the Leadership Academy. One shining example involves the vocational and technical students in the district. Since the school district does not have its own vocational and technical school, they entered into an agreement with Letcher County School District several years ago to provide that opportunity. Over time, Letcher County opened earlier than Jenkins, resulting in many of the openings going to students in Letcher County School District. Students from Jenkins Independent School did not have the access to a vocational and technical education that they once enjoyed.
David Lee, principal of Jenkins Independent School was disappointed that the agreement with the neighboring school district did not work as it had in the past. He and his teachers brainstormed about other opportunities for their vocational and technical students. As they committed to creating a new opportunity for their students, it occurred to them that since they had not limited themselves to school district boundaries—why limit themselves to staying within state boundaries? The results of this outside the box thinking resulted in an agreement with Wise County School District in Virginia. An agreement has been reached that allows Jenkins Independent students to enroll in both districts to give them access to a vocational and technical education. Enrollment for vocational and technical school students has increased, and students are excited about this opportunity.

The dual enrollment opportunity with Wise County School District encouraged educators in the district to consider dual enrollment more broadly. They reflected on how they might better prepare their students for life outside of Jenkins Independent. The result of this reflection resulted in a dual enrollment program with the University of Pikeville.

In the fall of 2014 59% of Jenkins Independent School District’s juniors and seniors will be involved in one of these college and career readiness programs. These successes have encouraged research into and development of initiatives involving project based learning and standards based grading in the coming year.

RECORD OF SUCCESS:
- 1 to 1 iPads were implemented at the 6th grade level for the past two years.
- A 21st Century Learning Program and the Family Resource Center provide excellent support services to families that help reduce barriers to learning.
- Time for mentoring, tutoring and working with students that need additional time for mastery is built into the day and into after school programs.

III. HARDIN COUNTY SCHOOLS: HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED; EARLY COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER IN A LARGE, SUBURBAN DISTRICT. The educators, students, and community leaders of Hardin County, Kentucky have a common vision to create an environment for learning that allows students to prepare well for work or college after graduation from Hardin County Schools. During the 2012-13 school year, Superintendent
Nanette Johnston and a team of district leaders participated in the Next Generation Leadership Academy in with the desire to learn about new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. As a result of their participation in the Academy, Hardin County has launched several initiatives that include the use of problem-based learning, expansion of flipped classrooms, a deeper and more meaningful use of technology, standards-based grading, performance-based credit, student voice, and others.

Many of these initiatives contributed to the creation of the Early College and Career Center or EC3. Hardin County has joined in a dynamic partnership with Western Kentucky University, Central Kentucky Community Foundation and Elizabethtown Community and Technical College to create this innovative learning environment.

High school students in the Hardin County Schools access the center to take courses in several career pathways, some of which include health science, engineering, manufacturing, automotive technology, media arts and communication, and culinary arts and hospitality services. These career pathways address needs expressed by the community’s business and industry partners such as the need for workers with the ‘soft’ skills and work ethic to be successful. The pathways are ones in which students have also expressed interest.

EC3 opened its doors on August 6, 2014 for 500 students. Students will attend their home school for half a day and EC3 for the remaining half. Students will have the ability to take dual credit courses at the adjacent Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, Western Kentucky University (via distance learning labs), or Sullivan University. As Hardin County Schools continues to work collaboratively with community and business partners and their post-secondary partners, the district has created an advisory council in an effort to stay in tune with the relevant needs of the community.

RECORD OF SUCCESS:
State assessment results have increased steadily over the last seven years, and national assessment results (EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT) have never been higher. The school district has instituted a system for monitoring classroom progress tied to three SMART goals that drive what occurs in all of our schools. Hardin County Schools has significantly increased the use of integrated technology in the classroom and has increased college career readiness percentage by more than 20% over the past two years.
IV. FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STEAM ACADEMY: A DYNAMIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY AND FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOLS. The STEAM Academy is a partnership between the Fayette County Public School District (FCPS) and the University of Kentucky that is focused on creating a 21st-century high school that is flexible and adaptable, technology rich, responsive to student and teacher needs, and recognizes and extends learning beyond the traditional school day and classroom. The acronym STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics and the overarching goal of the school is to ensure that students graduate college and career ready and experienced. Because students are selected based on a system that ensures a heterogeneously diverse student population reflecting the overall demographics of the school district, the STEAM Academy is uniquely positioned to inform the district on effective practices which lead to closing achievement gaps among low income and other traditionally underserved students.

UK is helping the FCPS faculty and staff to create STEAM’s innovative infrastructure and instructional model. In addition, teachers work with the Next Generation Leadership Academy faculty members and other UK faculty who provide training across a range of instructional innovations. The STEAM Academy will serve as an incubator -- where pre-service and master teachers gain experience in a mastery-based, blended learning environment -- and a research and development (R&D) lab – where UK faculty can research and pilot new innovations. This collaborative partnership provides broad benefits to the UK College of Education not only in furthering the work of the P20 Innovation Lab and the Next Generation Leadership Academy, but also positioning the College for a redesign of teacher and principal preparation programs using an embedded clinical model. The relationship also benefits the University more broadly in several ways including the potential to recruit diverse, well-prepared students to UK that will potentially pursue STEAM related degrees with higher success rates and shorter time to degree.

RECORD OF SUCCESS:
• FCPS-UK is awarded a Next Generation Learning Challenge grant in the amount of $450,000 for the planning and implementation of the STEAM Academy.
• STEAM opens its doors to 150 freshmen in the fall of 2013 and adds another class of freshmen in the fall of 2014.
• STEAM has implemented a ubiquitous device environment with full learning
management system support, creating the first truly paperless school in FCPS.
• STEAM adopted a more flexible course mastery schedule allowing students more access to college and career pathways while in high school.

V. EMINENCE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT: SCHOOL ON F.I.R.E! According to Eminence Independent Schools’ superintendent, Buddy Berry, his district recognized that ‘something had to change’ if they were to break out of a traditional instructional mode to better meet the needs of a student population that at the onset included approximately 65% eligibility for Free or Reduced Lunch and 75% of students coming from families that had no college graduates in their household. This need for change was the driving force behind the concept that led to the School on F.I.R.E. (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education). The foundation for the model is based on the Council of Chief State School Officer’s six critical attributes of innovation.

The School on F.I.R.E. Framework was conceived as a systematic approach to ensure that 100% of Eminence students become college- and career-ready, equipped not only with mastery of the Common Core Standards, but with a set of next-generation skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. To accomplish this mission, Superintendent Berry and his team determined to embed authentic engagement and completely personalized learning across all content and grade levels in an environment where students become co-participants in their learning. The result has been a comprehensive instructional transformation across the district.
Highlights of the School on F.I.R.E. Model include:

- Early College Initiative - any high school student that reaches ACT benchmarks attends classes two days a week on a prestigious Kentucky university campus. Students earn between 13 - 24 hours of college credit per year.
- A completely redesigned master schedule in which the core classes meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays while Tuesdays and Thursdays are reserved for immediate intervention for struggling students, connection courses completely rooted in the common core in a challenge-based environment, or enrichment opportunities of college courses on the college campus.
- Next generation skills are embedded into all learning at all grade levels. Teachers employ flipped classrooms K-12 and a 1:1 Laptop program at the high school level.
- Exemplars of Eminence Excellence - a standards-based continuum which identifies three key criteria of World Class Excellence to serve as a progression for students at each grade level. Students lead panel reviews as a defense of the learning at grades 5, 8, and 12, providing evidentiary reasons why they are ready to matriculate.

RECORD OF SUCCESS:

- Standards Based Grading, within a model of mastery, occurs at each grade level.
- Completely personalized lessons with extensive student agency is facilitated through the E-magineers Program.
- Next Generation skills are being embedded within the core instruction which has lead to systemic coding, philanthropy, PBL, 3D printing, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and Passion Projects.

VI. HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: KID-FRIENDLY; CREATING INNOVATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN A SMALL, RURAL DISTRICT. “All initiatives are gaining more and more traction throughout the district. Our building level administrators are thinking out of the box more…being more creative and innovative.” – Tim Abrams, Superintendent

Henry County Public Schools, a small rural school district in central Kentucky, is focusing on creating a “Kid Friendly” environment in which students are focused, responsible, imaginative, engaged and determined to learn. District and school leaders and students are focused on creating an environment in the school district in which students are held accountable for their own learning, such as the involvement of the elementary schools in the Leader in Me program.

Superintendent Tim Abrams and a group of school and district leaders decided to pursue another avenue of
achieving the goal by participating in the Next Generation Leadership Academy sponsored by the University of Kentucky College of Education. The Henry County educators focused on the need to better prepare students for life after K-12 education.

As a result of participation in the Leadership Academy Henry County Public Schools has initiated standards based grading district wide. This is fully implemented in the elementary schools and is partially implemented in the middle and high schools. Other initiatives include self-paced learning in the middle school, blended learning opportunities at the high school, a STEM initiative in the middle school and the creation of some 1 to 1 classrooms. Every school in the district has personalized learning plans for their students.

However, Henry County educators did not leave innovative thinking at the boundaries of their district. They could see the great successes they were enjoying and began to consider the impact of joining hands with neighboring districts. Henry County educators, together with fellow Leadership Academy participants from Carroll County, partnered with Trimble and Owen County School Districts to offer a more specialized education at the Collaborative Career Academy (CCA) which will be located in Carroll County. The curriculum is based on inquiry learning with students working in real-world situations and learning how to solve problems outside the classroom. Students will earn college credit for courses completed at CCA. The CCA will open in the fall of 2015.

CCA is a great example of collaborative innovation—four districts pooling resources to create opportunities for students that no one district could provide.

Superintendent Abrams shared that it was beneficial to hear from educators in other areas of Kentucky and outside Kentucky. Of particular value was the connection to and support from University of Kentucky staff during and after the Leadership Academy had convened.

RECORD OF SUCCESS:
During the 2013-14 school year, there were some significant achievements in the areas of College of Career Readiness.

- 47% of HCHS students (302 students out of 637 total) received college credit during the 2013-14 school year.
- 1,095 cumulative college credits were received by HCHS students this year.
- 16 students will graduate with their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Certification.
- 95 sophomores earned National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC).
- 16 seniors will graduate with Industry Certifications.
- 61.7% of seniors will be graduating college or career ready--up from 54.1% in 2013.
APPENDIX C

Summary of Interviews with Superintendents/Designees

Interviews were conducted with superintendents/designees from various NxGLA participating districts. There were 14 total interviews with representatives from each of the 4 Cohorts – all interviewees had actually participated in the Academy. Eight interviews took place in the spring/summer of 2013 and 6 additional interviews in the spring of 2015.

Responses from the superintendents/designees were extremely favorable about their districts’ experiences with the Next Generation Leadership Academy. A summary of interview responses is outlined below:

1. Why did you choose to participate in the NxG Leadership Academy?
   • To learn about new, innovative approaches to teaching and learning
   • Quality of work at UK and those who organized the Academy
   • Realized we need to change the way we educate kids
   • The totality of the whole program; it wasn’t so much one specific learning experience – just knowing the KDE and UK players involved, we wanted to be a part of the process. I felt like we needed to be plugged into that work.

2. What initiatives have been implemented as a result of your work with NxG Leadership Academy?
   • Project-based learning
   • Increased use of technology as a tool for learning
   • Performance-Based credits
   • Standards-Based Grading
   • Different degrees of Personalized Learning
   • Blended Learning at high school level
   • STEM initiatives implemented
   • Implemented 1:1
   • Flipped classrooms and other blended approaches were nurtured through our participation in NxGLA.

3. What has occurred in your district as a result of this work?
   • Work continues to deepen and expand
   • Vision has expanded while linking us to people and resources to help us stay on course
   • More focus on Personalized Learning
   • Building level administrators are “thinking out of the box”
4. Was your participation in the Academy worth the time and resources you committed to it?
   • Resounding “Yes” from 13 of 14 respondents
   • One superintendent who had left his former NxGLA district responded “Undetermined.” He went on to explain that he was not sure where the work currently stands in his former district.

5. What changes would you recommend for the Leadership Academy?
   • Encourage UK to remain on cutting edge
   • Allow teams to develop a plan of action early on in the process and assign faculty members to assist with the district efforts
   • Beneficial to hear from folks from inside Kentucky as well as outside Kentucky
   • I would like to see more consideration of blended learning opportunities at the elementary level – with gifted/talented students and beyond.

6. What parts of the Academy were most helpful?
   • Examples/models/connections
   • Cutting-edge work
   • Personalized support
   • Networking
   • Connection with faculty at UK
   • Working together to secure grants for districts

7. What did you take away from working with other leaders in the Academy?
   • Ideas and how other leaders began the work
   • Understanding that this is not easy work and will not happen overnight
   • Understanding that we all have common challenges
   • Lots of ideas

8. Other districts were brought to the Academy to share their stories; how did that impact your thinking and your work?
   • Learning from those who had done the work
   • Change is challenging when dealing with numerous schools
   • Especially liked learning from Wisconsin districts

9. Have you stayed connected with other leaders in the Academy?
   • Participation in the Kentucky Innovation Lab Network

10. How has the work with the Academy impacted the way you use technology?
    • Validated that simply going 1:1 is not implementing the change we want to see; how you use 1:1 will make the difference
    • Created a strategic plan to deepen the work beyond a surface level
    • Resources (book studies) helped in revising technology vision
    • Personalized Learning
    • Implemented 1:1 district wide
Participant Perception Survey Tally

96.4% of respondents indicated their overall satisfaction with the Academy experience.

91.2% of respondents indicated that their overall leadership skills, knowledge, and dispositions were enhanced by their participation in NxGLA.

In specific areas, respondents indicated that their leadership skills, knowledge, and dispositions were somewhat to significantly enhanced as follows:
- 87% for Personalized Learning
- 83% for Comprehensive Systems of Learning Support
- 100% for Performance-based Learning
- 91% for Anytime, Anywhere Learning
- 95% for Authentic Student Voice

In specific areas, respondents indicated their satisfaction with various aspects of the Academy experience as follows:
- 100% with the engagement of a network of like-minded school/district leaders across Kentucky
- 91% with the networking between themselves and UK NxGLA faculty
- 100% with networking opportunities with like-minded leaders from other states
- 95% with virtual networking opportunities
- 96% with options, tools, and support to redesign new systems for learning

65% of respondents rated their NxGLA experience as Superior to other professional learning experiences; 30% of respondents rated their experience as Good.

Regarding the helpfulness of the various NxGLA components:
- 100% of respondents found the face-to-face convenings to be helpful or most helpful.
- 86% found the Networking opportunity with other NxGLA schools and districts to be helpful or most helpful.
- 86% found the networking opportunity and support from UK NxGLA faculty to be helpful or most helpful.
The UK Next Generation Leadership Academy seeks leaders who understand the education system, originally designed for an Industrial Era, is no longer adequate in preparing students for a diverse, global economy. Through an intensive year-long partnership, faculty members from the University of Kentucky P20 Innovation lab work with leaders on how to design and create new systems to support 21st century learning.
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