

# BREAKTHROUGH MODELS FOR COLLEGE READINESS

## AN INTRODUCTION TO NEXT GENERATION BLENDED SCHOOLS

### AT A GLANCE

**Schools:** 20

**Students Served in First Year:** 3,720

**CMOs:** 14

**Districts:** 4

**Districts Working with NonProfits:** 2

**K-8 Schools:** 2

**Middle Schools:** 6

**6-12 Schools:** 6

**High Schools:** 7

### THE CALL

The Request for Proposals for “Breakthrough Models for College Readiness” launched in October 2011. Districts, charters, and school operators were eligible for up to \$450,000 in funds, including an initial \$150,000 planning grant and up to \$300,000 in matching funds.

#### Key requirements:

Schools must serve students in grades 6–12, though not necessarily exclusively.

At least 40% of students must be eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch program.

The academic model must be designed to personalize learning for all students.

At least 25 percent of all students’ core literacy and math learning time must be spent using high-quality digital content.

At least 50 percent of instructional time must be delivered in a brick-and-mortar setting.

The academic model must focus on mastery-based learning, as opposed to learning constrained to seat time.

In October 2011, Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) issued a bold challenge to school developers and operators through the launch of a third wave of grant funding, Breakthrough School Models for College Readiness, which extended a prior wave of investment in [Common Core State Standards](#)-aligned digital content: We challenged districts and charter networks to imagine what the next generation of blended schools might look like.

Since the Innosight Institute first profiled blended learning approaches in its landmark publication “[The Rise of K-12 Blended Learning](#),” several initiatives have emerged as exemplars in the space: Rocketship, Carpe Diem, KIPP LA, and School of One. In these schools, classroom time is flexible, allowing students and teachers to engage in direct instruction, small-group learning, problem-based learning sessions, and individual learning at workstations with high-quality digital content.

NGLC hoped to build on the foundations created and tested by these pioneers to spur next-generation development of schools with a relentless

focus on personalization that enable students to individualize learning plans, proceed at a self-determined rate of mastery, apply relevant real-world experiences, and receive appropriate support regardless of classroom size.

We added an additional design requirement in response to critics who had noted that many early blended school developers have relied heavily on nonrecurring public grants, private philanthropy, and other limited sources of capital to fund ongoing operations and growth, which often limits project scale. With this wave of investment, we sought not only innovative learning solutions but also schools designed from the ground up to cultivate success on a rapidly growing scale. After launching the RFP in late 2011, we worked with our K–12 partners (iNACOL and CCSSO) and others to get the word out about the challenge.

A year later we announced the final set of a total group of 20 school developers to receive NGLC planning grants to launch blended schools in 2012 and 2013. Among well-known names like Aspire, Summit, and KIPP

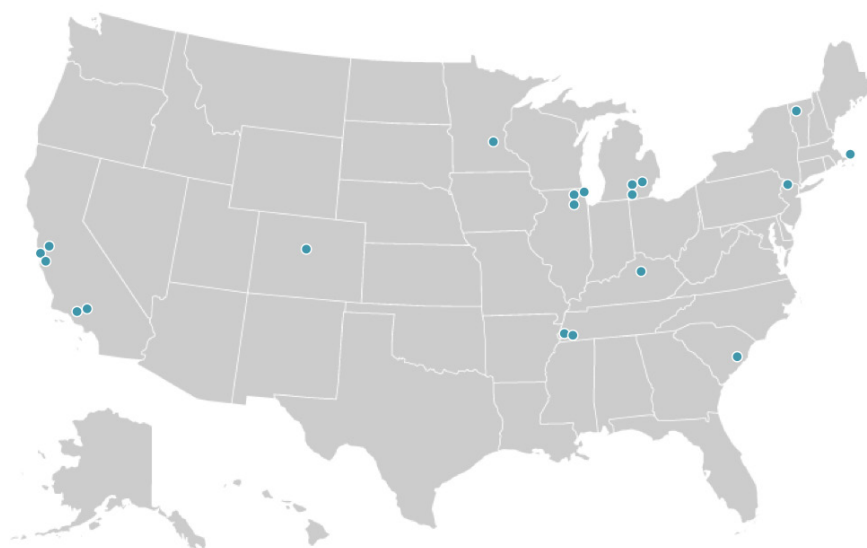
*The Innosight Institute defines blended learning as, “Any time a student learns at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home and at least in part through online delivery with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace.”*

that responded with next-generation versions of already successful models, we funded new organizations such as Alpha Public Schools and Touchstone Education that were launched by very experienced “no excuses” model leaders, as well as state/district turnaround proposals to completely reinvent struggling schools and new kinds of partnerships between schools, local employers, and postsecondary institutions.

## Our Beliefs

Each school in this portfolio reflects NGLC’s underlying core principles:

- **Outcomes matter.** What matters most is proven student achievement and a sustainable and scalable business model; new methods matter, but only if they deliver results against current metrics such as state tests in math and English language arts (ELA) and against emerging metrics designed to measure deeper learning and college readiness capacities, including the Common Core.
- **Education should be learner-centered** and learning experiences should be engaging, freed from the confines of classrooms and campuses. Active, situated, and experiential learning improves engagement, problem solving, and achievement.
- **Students learn differently and advance at varying rates.** The deliberate design of innovative approaches to student progression can accelerate the progress of students at both ends of the spectrum, those who struggle and those who learn with ease.



NGLC schools span the United States with particular density in urban areas, chiefly the California bay area, Detroit, and Chicago.

- Within a context of increasingly high college- and career-ready expectations, **technology can enable a personalized learning experience** for all students. While technology is a driver behind personalizing instruction in classrooms and an enabler of effective teaching practices, it is not an end in itself.
- Technology-enabled breakthrough learning models can **loosen the resource constraints of traditional models—time, human capital, budgets, and space.** This flexibility allows for differentiated approaches to content, assessment, pacing, and learning styles.
- Rapidly and radically improving college readiness and completion requires the widespread adoption of proven models, practices, and processes. To be truly scalable and portable, **models must be affordable and**

**sustainable,** driven by widely accepted academic and technological standards.

## The Next Generation of Blended Learning

While each model in the NGLC Wave IIIa portfolio reflects these principles, all are striving to personalize learning in different ways. The University of Southern California’s Hybrid High, for example, is open up to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, 310 days a year, to offer anytime access to students juggling work and family commitments. At Match Next, small groups of students will be paired with teaching fellows for entire class periods to work through digital content adapted to their skill level and to participate in small-group activities. An online individual learning plan, accessible 24/7, will help Venture Academy students define individualized learning goals and



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## SCHOOLS

Alpha Public Schools  
Blanca Alvarado Middle School

Aspire Public Schools  
CODE Aspire

Cornerstone Charter Schools  
Cornerstone Charter Health High School

Da Vinci Schools  
Da Vinci Innovation Academy

Education Achievement Authority  
Nolan Elementary-Middle School

Fayette County Public Schools  
The STEAM Academy

Foundations College Prep

Franklin Central Supervisory Union  
Academy 21

Generation Schools Network  
West Generation Academy

Horry County Public Schools  
Whittemore Park Middle School

Intrinsic Schools

KIPP Chicago  
KIPP Create College Prep Middle

Leadership Public Schools  
Oakland R&D Campus

Matchbook Learning

Match Education  
Match Next

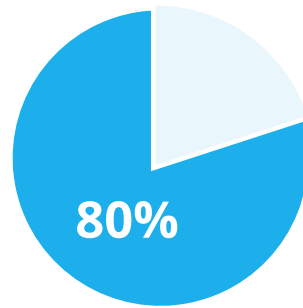
Schools for the Future  
SFF Detroit

Summit Public Schools  
Summit Denali

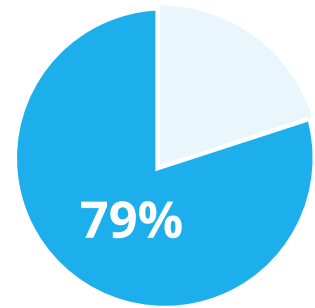
Touchstone Education  
Merit Prep Newark

University of Southern California  
USC Hybrid High

Venture Academy



Average Percentage Black & Hispanic Students Across NGLC Schools



Average Percentage Free & Reduced Lunch Students Across NGLC Schools

develop entrepreneurial ventures that will activate those goals, with the help of teachers and parents. Students at Da Vinci Innovation Academy will work in teams with faculty, industry experts, and their peers to create and launch their own interdisciplinary, real-world projects as part of the school's DNA, not as an extracurricular add-on.

Several models require tearing down a classroom's physical walls to create flexible spaces for individual workstations, small-group study, and direct instruction. Most models have interactive and adaptive learning management systems at their very foundation. Some use specific themes—digital coding at Aspire's CODE Academy, the art and science of creativity at KIPP Create College Prep—to engage students in collaborative projects, creative thinking, and team-based work.

No matter the approach they take, NGLC has specified ambitious intended outcomes for these new models:

- At least one and a half years of student performance growth annually on Common Core in ELA and math
- A 90 percent four-year cohort

graduation rate for all retained students (using definitions developed by the U.S. Department of Education)

- An 80 percent postsecondary matriculation rate
- Financial sustainability
- Accelerated student growth on other college and career success standards such as deeper learning competencies

### Our Goals

The following profiles provide a snapshot of these 20 next-generation blended school models at their inception. Each includes an overview of the tools they plan to use and the populations they will serve. While we—and the grantees—know that plans change and outcomes are uncertain, we are confident that they and the larger K–12 community will benefit from their efforts. As students arrive and the school years unfold, we look forward to learning with them and sharing their lessons learned with educators, policymakers, and reform leaders nationwide.

To learn more about "Breakthrough School Models for College Readiness," please visit: <http://nextgenlearning.org/wave-iii-a>



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# ALPHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## BLANCA ALVARADO MIDDLE SCHOOL

### PROMOTING A GROWTH MINDSET THROUGH STUDENT OWNERSHIP

“ We know we have to give students the core content they need. But we’re also firm believers that character development is just as important for their long-term success. ”

JOHN GLOVER, ALPHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012

**Grades Served:** 6–8

**Location:** San Jose, CA

**Operator:** Alpha Public Schools

**Operator Type:** Charter

**Focus:** Urban

**Students at Opening:** 170

**Students at Capacity:** 430

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**

EdElements Hybrid Learning Management System

**Student Information System:**

Illuminate

**Gradebook:** Jupiter

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:**

Mastery Connect, NWEA MAP, QRI-V, STAR (Renaissance Learning), Class Dojo (Behavior Tracking)

**Implementation Partner:** EdElements

**Digital Content Providers:**

Compass Learning, Achieve 3000 (pilot), ST Math, Accelerated Reader, Goalbook (Individual Learning Plans)

**Hardware:** Lenovo ThinkPads for

students; MacBooks and iPads for teachers

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$8,828

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$9,410

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$8,186

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$7,748

**Years to sustainability:** 2

Alpha Public Schools believes that content mastery, while key, is not enough for today’s students.

For students to thrive in college and beyond, they must be intellectually curious, have strong character, and understand what it means to behave professionally. At Alpha: Blanca Alvarado Middle School, a blended school in San Jose, California, strong interpersonal relationships and character development are at the model’s core.

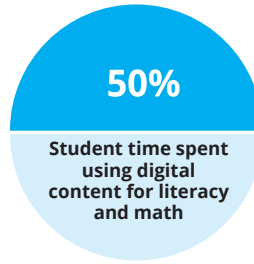
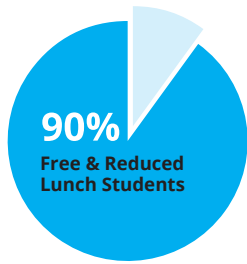
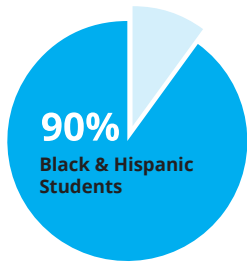
Alpha’s blended approach centers on self-contained classrooms where teachers deliver instruction in all core content areas. One teacher stays with a class of 34 students throughout the day and throughout the year. This approach lets teachers develop strong relationships with students at a time when students need that bond most. Within a single classroom, students rotate between computer-based activities and small group instruction. By integrating technology and delivering a significant portion of the core curriculum online, Alpha students will succeed by moving through content at their individual level of mastery and pace, and receive teacher-led instruction informed by

real-time data from their online content.

During each lesson, a master teacher works with 17 students, engaging them through small group instruction and activities in one section of the room while the rest of the class works through online content at individual computers. Master teachers design classroom time, refine student rotation groups, select content, and guide students to targeted activities and curriculum. Learning coaches—often noncredentialed teachers seeking to gain valuable experience—help provide one-to-one coaching, feedback, and support for students as they work through digital content. Typically, a learning coach will rotate between two classrooms. After spending time in this role, many learning coaches will go on to become Alpha teachers, creating an ongoing pipeline of new talent.

Individual learning plans (ILPs) are created by students and teachers in Goalbook to map each student’s learning trajectory. In a single, easy-to-digest snapshot, ILPs show performance data on the student’s homework, online activities, and assessments. Using that data, students

*“Alpha’s blended approach centers on self-contained classrooms where teachers deliver instruction in all core content areas. One teacher stays with a class of 34 students throughout the day and throughout the year. This approach lets teachers develop strong relationships with students at a time when students need that bond most.”*



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy,  
Foreign Language

are encouraged, through teacher coaching, to set and revise new goals every six weeks.

Data dashboards also help teachers and learning coaches individualize instruction and identify which students might be ready for accelerated tasks and which might need peer coaching or direct instruction on a specific topic. ILPs also help determine how students spend a daily, 45-minute academic enrich-

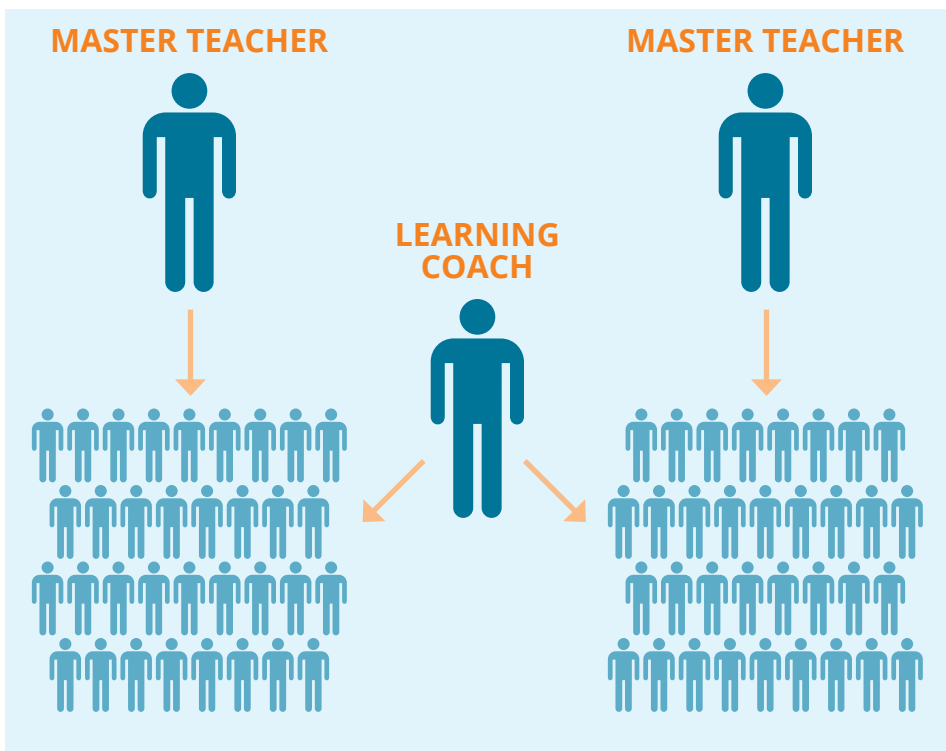
ment period; one student might spend this time working through word problems in a circle of peers, while another might access more challenging courses online. Over time, Alpha hopes to empower students to take greater control of their own goal setting and learning trajectories.

Alpha's blended model features a longer school year, a monthly Saturday academy for students who

are behind, and an after-school academy for struggling students. It also includes recurring "Data Days" in which teachers engage in professional development by diving deeper into student performance data, analyzing key trends, identifying more targeted interventions, and receiving formative feedback on their performance from peers.

Alpha's overall approach allows for personalized, mastery-based instruction that benefits students, as well as the efficiency and financial sustainability that lets schools thrive and scale in the current funding environment. Alpha serves as a receiving school for students who graduate both from Rocketship, an expanding blended elementary school in the same low-income neighborhood, and from other neighborhood schools. Alpha aims to enable students to continue the progress made at Rocketship and provide a model for blended learning in the secondary grades.

By creating an exceptional new school in a community where most schools fail, Alpha: Blanca Alvarado Middle School intends to serve as a model for replication in other communities with high-poverty, high-minority populations where academic performance levels and graduation rates fall short not only of the state average but also of student potential.



Individual teachers work with classrooms of 34 students. Learning coaches, non-credentialed instructors often searching for classroom experience, work with two classrooms and provide support to 68 students.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

School URL: <http://www.alphapublicschools.org/our-schools/alpha-middle-school>  
Operator URL: <http://www.alphapublicschools.org> | Contact: John Glover, [john@alphapublicschools.org](mailto:john@alphapublicschools.org)



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# ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## CODE ASPIRE

### CONNECTING STUDENTS TO STEM THROUGH CODING AND TECHNOLOGY

“In order for us to prepare all students to get to and through college, we must take a greater responsibility to ensure that they can use technology in increasingly sophisticated ways to access information; communicate and collaborate; problem-solve; innovate; and learn technology concepts, systems, and operation.”

LIZ ARNEY, ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** K-8  
**Location:** Memphis, TN  
**Operator:** Aspire Public Schools  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 384  
**Students at Capacity:** 564

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$8,603  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$9,482  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,105  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$8,982  
**Years to sustainability:** 2

Aspire Public Schools is bringing 13 years of experience operating high-performing public charter schools in California to Memphis, Tennessee. By combining its proven College for Certain model with a focus on computer coding, Aspire Public Schools plans to work in the Achievement School District in Memphis to open 10 schools in five years and to transform Tennessee's bottom 5 percent schools into schools that perform in the top 25 percent. CODE Aspire will be Aspire's first K-8 blended learning school in Memphis. Beginning as a K-5 school and scaling up to K-8 by year four, CODE Aspire will offer a rich STEM-focused education, individualized technology, rich learning opportunities, and explicit instruction in computer coding skills.

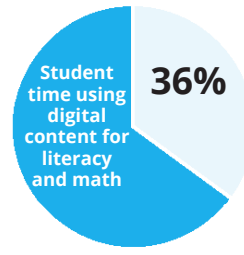
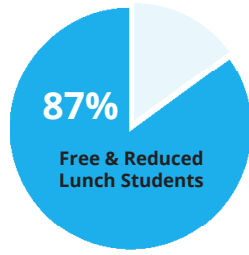
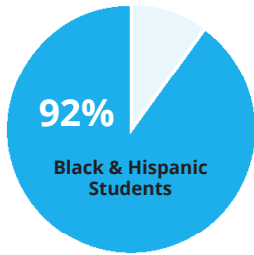
CODE Aspire is committed to teaching all kids strong computer coding skills so that they will be able to better understand the digital world around them, think logically, express themselves creatively, learn to troubleshoot their own problems, and feel empowered. CODE Aspire believes that coding:

- Teaches problem-solving skills
- Provides students with practical application opportunities
- Mirrors learning a foreign language
- Stimulates creativity
- Fosters authentic learning
- Teaches students how technology works
- Promotes collaboration
- Thrives as a discipline
- Can spark student interest in STEM majors and careers

CODE Aspire will put the students at the center of their own learning and focus on meeting each student's academic needs by creating individualized learning plans for each student. These personalized learning plans (PLPs) will provide teachers, parents, and students with a common understanding of the student's learning style, progress and objectives.

The blended school will offer classroom rotations in K-5 during which students will spend 25% of the instruction time using adaptive learning software. These K-5 classrooms

*“Aspire aims for all of its students to be proficient in algebra and all students will have taken two years of Java by the end of grade 8. Teachers will engage students in authentic studies of science through online inquiry units, digital simulations, STEM gaming, and virtual labs to move the study of science from the textbook to a hands-on, inquiry-based approach.”*



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
English Language Arts,  
Word Work, Math, Science

will be built almost exclusively on a small-group model, during which students can receive differentiated instruction from teachers and via on-line learning stations.

The instructional model in middle school (grades 6–8) will be STEM-focused and move from a rotation environment to a one-to-one, project-based environment. Students will continue to benefit from data-driven customized learning plans that will allow them to pursue educational opportunities that transcend grade level. For example, teachers’ use of structured data and multiple soft-

ware programs will allow students with different math proficiency levels to receive instruction simultaneously in a single classroom.

Because CODE Aspire will be a STEM-focused school, science instruction will drive scheduling. Aspire aims for all of its students to be proficient in algebra and all students will have taken two years of Java by the end of grade 8. Teachers will engage students in authentic studies of science through online inquiry units, digital simulations, STEM gaming, and virtual labs to move the study of science from the textbook to a

hands-on, inquiry-based approach.

Students will be fully prepared to succeed in a variety of college preparatory high school options, including fully online high schools, blended learning high schools, and online college courses offered in conjunction with high school.

CODE Aspire aims to advance digital age learning through the use of adaptive learning programs, coding instruction, technology-driven and common core-aligned projects, and explicit instruction in information fluency and digital citizenship.

## CODING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Grade	% of Time Online	Classroom Rotations and PBL	Coding Applications Expectations	Coding Language Expectations
6th	30	Science simulations and virtual labs in a project-based setting. ELA and math classroom rotations using adaptive software, and a Google Docs-rich environment.	Students learn Scratch to create apps that do something	Students learn HTML to build websites that use text
7th	30	Science simulations and virtual labs in a project-based setting. ELA and math classroom rotations using adaptive software and a Google Docs-rich environment.	Students learn Java to create apps that do something and take input from someone	Students learn PHP or Python to build websites that use texts and graphics
8th	50	Science simulations and virtual labs in a project-based setting. ELA and/or math classroom rotations, depending on student achievement data and interest. Google Docs-rich environment.	Students learn Java to create apps that do something, take input from someone, and then take a database and persists. This might also include using coding to operate robots.	Students learn PHP or Python to build websites that use text and graphics and manipulate things (like robots)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://www.aspirepublicschools.org/?q=memphis>

Operator URL: <http://www.aspirepublicschools.org/> | Contact: Liz Arney, [liz.arney@aspirepublicschools.org](mailto:liz.arney@aspirepublicschools.org)



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# CORNERSTONE CHARTER SCHOOLS

## CORNERSTONE CHARTER HEALTH HIGH SCHOOL

PROVIDING REAL-WORLD HEALTH EXPERIENCE IN A FLEXIBLE, STUDENT-CENTERED MODEL

“Our goal is to provide a bridge to the real-world with relevant experiences. We want every student to take ownership over their learning by helping them understand why they are spending so much time in school and studying.”

TOM WILLIS, CORNERSTONE CHARTER SCHOOLS

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012

**Grades Served:** 9-12

**Location:** Detroit, MI

**Operator:** Cornerstone Charter Schools

**Operator Type:** Charter

**Focus:** Urban, Higher Education Partnership

**Students at Opening:** 75

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**

BrainHoney

**Student Information System:**

PowerSchool

**Gradebook:** PowerSchool

**Assessment Tools and**

**Approaches:** Acuity, MasteryConnect

**Implementation Partner:**

EdElements

**Digital Content Providers:**

CompassLearning, Apex Learning, Revolution Prep, Achieve 3000, Powerspeak

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**

\$12,660

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**

\$15,355

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**

\$8,241

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**

\$7,737

**Years to sustainability:** 3

Health care has replaced the auto industry as Michigan's job leader and nationwide, health care jobs are booming. With the opening of Cornerstone Health High School, Cornerstone Charter Schools hopes to respond to that need while creating a unique high school experience that helps students understand how their studies will translate into real-world occupations.

Their goal is to graduate accomplished and proficient students who continue to college or choose to pursue health related positions immediately after high school. To do so, they aren't just rethinking the traditional school schedule.

They're getting rid of it.

Gone are individual classrooms and instructors for core content areas. Instead, "pods" of 75 students work in a large open space in individual cubicles where they access personalized online content. Classrooms and discussion areas are used for small-group work, project-based learning, and direct instruction from certified teachers, as needed.

Gone are distinctions for "freshmen" or "sophomores." Instead, student pods are grouped along a continuum from beginner to profes-

sional. To advance, students must be able to show mastery through standard assessments – like standardized tests or data harvested from online activities – or through real-world challenges and self-assessments. Virtual data dashboards provide any-time, anywhere access to student progress. Those dashboards are reviewed weekly with advisors (called "relationship managers") to help students reflect on their work.

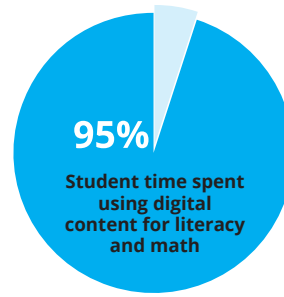
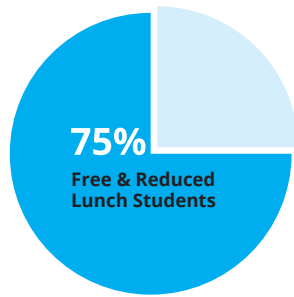
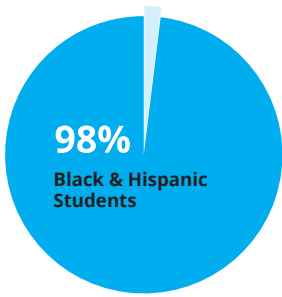
Some students might move quickly to professional level and begin taking college coursework before graduation. Others might need more time as "intermediates" as they work to meet key competencies.

Gone, too, are the standard schedules across grade levels. As students advance through key competencies, they begin to acquire new privileges that reflect their ability to take control of their own learning. A beginner, for example, may be assigned specific times to work on specific content in their cubicles or with peers in 90-minute blocks.

As a student shows greater capacity for managing their own time and working through content, they are allowed to choose what subjects to study and when and where. An

*"Gone are distinctions for 'freshmen' or 'sophomores.' Instead, student pods are grouped along a continuum from beginner to professional. To advance, students must be able to show mastery through standard assessments – like standardized tests or data harvested from online activities – or through real-world challenges and self-assessments."*





**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

advanced student might work at home, in lounge areas at school, or at an internship outside the boundaries of the campus.

One thing that's not missing is a comprehensive student support model that uses certified teachers and content experts to provide ongoing support and guidance.

*Relationship Managers* ensure students set and meet their daily, monthly, and yearly goals. Similar to a traditional guidance counselor, relationship managers follow a student from enrollment to graduation, helping students craft their individual learning plans and use student data and feedback to ensure students stay on track toward their goals. Relationship managers are the primary contact for parents and guardians.

*Relevance Managers* provide direct instruction and support students in the design and evaluation of real world projects and internships.

*Rigor Managers* oversee online coursework, providing support and setting standards for mastery.

*Success Coaches* work to help students make the transition to college and career, providing practical advice as students consider life after graduation.

One of the most unique things

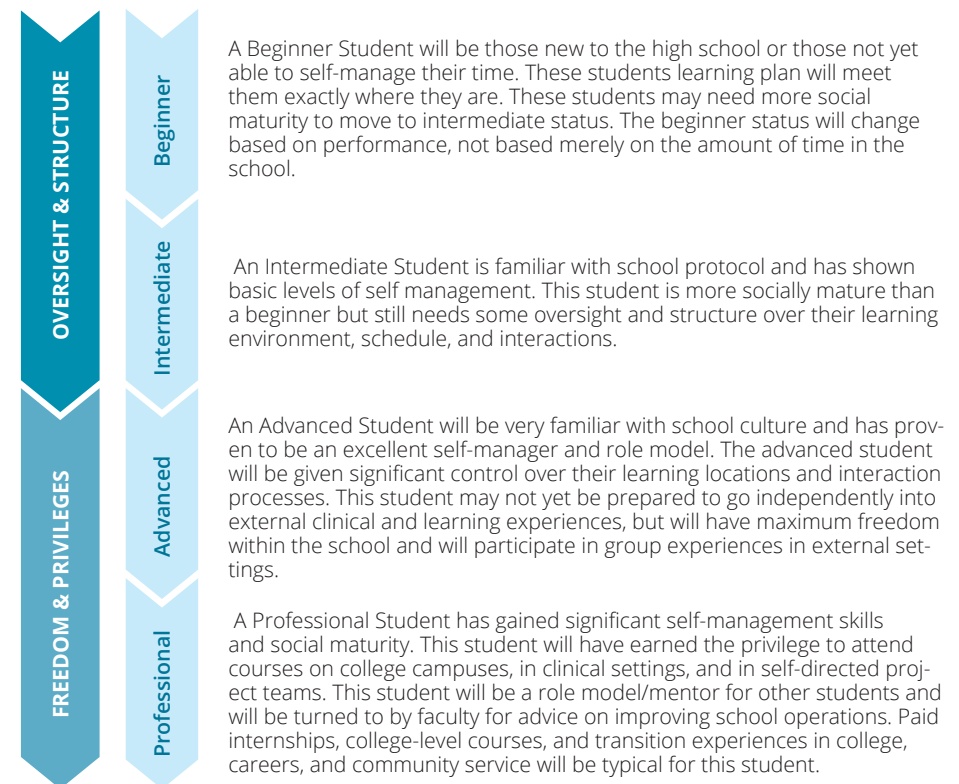
about the school is its close partnership with the Detroit Medical Center (DMC), where hospital staff are helping co-develop the school's health-focused curriculum. Throughout their academic experience, students are encouraged to explore health-related careers and competencies through projects, coursework, intern-

ships, and other real-world learning experiences.

Cornerstone aims to create a blueprint for real world learning and intends to scale the model with different occupational themes. A new school, slated to open in 2015, will focus on technology and entrepreneurialism.

## STUDENT TRANSITION

As students transition from Beginner and Intermediate levels to Advanced and Professional, they will increasingly be responsible for self-management, and can take control of their own learning and progress.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://hhs.cornerstonecharters.org/>

Operator URL: <http://www.cornerstonecharters.org/> | Contact: Tom Willis, [tom.willis@cornerstonecharters.org](mailto:tom.willis@cornerstonecharters.org)



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# DA VINCI SCHOOLS

## DA VINCI INNOVATION ACADEMY

PROVIDING HANDS-ON, REAL WORLD LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

“ We want to break the construct of high school as an isolated silo, and open school walls to incorporate college, industry, online and other holistic experiences. By providing hands-on, real world opportunities, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, and become more engaged, motivated, self-confident and successful in college and beyond. ”

NICOLE ASSISI, DA VINCI SCHOOLS

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 9-13  
**Location:** Hawthorne, CA  
**Operator:** Da Vinci Schools  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban, Higher Education Partnership  
**Students at Opening:** 150  
**Students at Capacity:** 560

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Student Information System:**  
Illuminate  
**Gradebook:** Illuminate  
**Assessment Tools and Approaches:**  
NWEA MAP, Accuplacer  
**Digital Content Providers:** CPM  
Education, teacher portfolios  
**Hardware:** PC Laptops

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$7,050  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$10,041  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$7,609  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$6,417  
**Years to sustainability:** 1

Da Vinci Schools aims to break down the walls of school, literally. Students will not simply “go” to school to have learning directed at them, but rather, school will exist in, around and through them, without limitation of setting and time.

Da Vinci Innovation Academy will launch in fall 2013 to serve racially and socio-economically diverse students in Los Angeles through a highly personalized, student-centered approach by integrating online learning (in a supervised campus lab or at home) and dynamic project-based classroom learning, college courses (online and brick-and-mortar), internships and authentic “real world” experience. This will be the CMO’s fourth school.

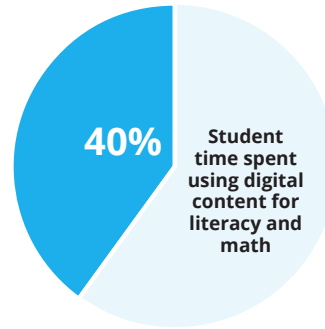
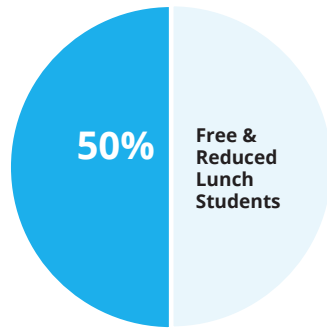
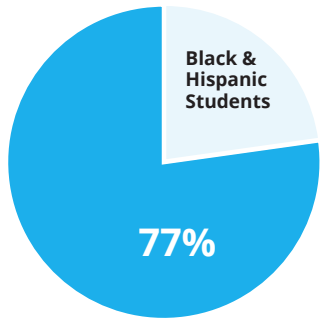
At its core, the model is designed around the student. Rather than prescribe a set percentage of time to online or classroom based learning, the time spent in each realm will depend on each student and designed around individual needs. Using a flipped model, students will be introduced to new content online

and then apply their learning and develop deeper understanding through hands on, inquiry based exploration in the classroom. Depending on their proficiency level, passion and needs, each student’s individualized learning plan will encompass targeted interventions and supports to ensure their success.

Mornings will start with community meetings and advisories, where students will work to assess progress and formulate schedules. Throughout the day, students will rotate between small group instruction, collaborative group work, online learning lab time, advisory, internships, project labs and meetings with industry experts and lecturers. School space will be practical and flexible with versatile furniture to maximize tinkering, small group instruction, and seminars.

Project based learning underpins Da Vinci’s model and much thought has been put into designing engaging and enriching activities. Collaborative teams develop interdisciplinary, real-world projects that bring profession-

*“Project based learning underpins Da Vinci’s model. Collaborative teams develop interdisciplinary, real-world projects that bring professional practice into the classroom. Projects will be planned by teams that may include Da Vinci faculty, industry experts, college faculty and students.”*

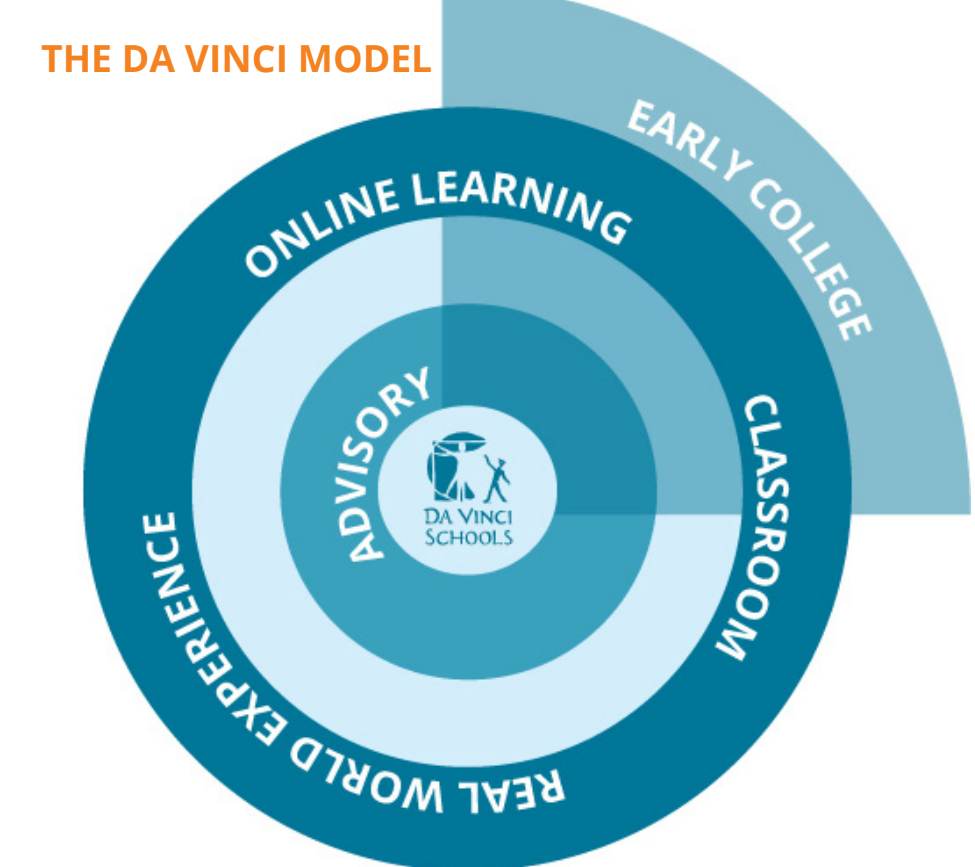


**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy, Foreign Language, College Credit, Electives

al practice into the classroom. Projects will be planned by teams that may include Da Vinci faculty, industry experts, college faculty and students. Core curriculum and assessment is linked to the California college preparatory requirements and Common Core Standards. In addition, Da Vinci is partnering with the Buck Institute for Education to train teachers to be facilitators of project based learning.

Da Vinci's blended learning model represents a natural entry point for students to incorporate college courses into their high school program, all within the support and structure of a small high school environment. In partnership with Foothill-De Anza Community College District (a premier CA community college provider of online classes), Da Vinci will create opportunities for Da Vinci students to earn college credits while they are still in high school, reducing the time and cost of attaining a college degree. Students benefit from easy access to college classes, extensive counseling and academic support, and a streamlined transfer process.

Ultimately, students would be assured full transferability of coursework through an Articulation Agreement between Foothill and Antioch University Los Angeles (a private liberal arts college) and would receive continuing student registration priority at both institutions provided they meet all applicable requirements and



Students spend 30-50 percent of their time learning online, 30-50 percent of their time involved in dynamic project based learning with high quality instructors, and 20 percent of their time in internships, tinkering labs and real world experiences. The addition of early college classes and small group and individual advisories help round out the student experience.

deadlines.

Da Vinci's new model aims to transform public education by graduating college ready students, while also addressing many of the common roadblocks to college completion. Da Vin-

ci Innovation Academy students will develop the content mastery, skills, self-confidence and motivation and receive the support they need to succeed in college and after.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Operator URL: <http://davincischools.org/> | Contact: Nicole Assisi, [NAssisi@davincischools.org](mailto:NAssisi@davincischools.org)



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# EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT AUTHORITY

## NOLAN ELEMENTARY-MIDDLE SCHOOL

### CREATING A STUDENT-CENTERED SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012

**Grades Served:** K-8

**Location:** Detroit, MI

**Operator:** Education Achievement Authority of Michigan

**Operator Type:** District

**Focus:** Urban, Turnaround

**Students at Opening:** 509

**Students at Capacity:** 600

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**

Buzz teaching and learning platform (powered by Brain Honey)

**Student Information System:**

Pinnacle

**Gradebook:** Buzz and Pinnacle

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:**

Global Scholars Performance Series

**Digital Content Providers:** Mix of open source, licensed, and teacher created — Compass, BrainPop, and DefinedSTEM via netTrekker; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

**Hardware:** HP Notebooks

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$12,428

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$11,843

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$12,428

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$11,984

**Years to sustainability:** 0

“Our mission as a catalyst for change is to disrupt traditional public schooling and provide a scalable prototype for 21st century teaching and learning.”

MARY ESSELMAN, EAA

In 2011, just 20 percent of the students at Nolan Elementary-Middle School in Detroit were proficient in communication arts, only 2 percent were proficient in math, and the majority of students were performing two or more years behind grade level. Like many other persistently low-achieving schools in urban centers, Nolan desperately needed a different system for a different outcome.

Enter the Education Achievement Authority (EAA) of Michigan.

Michigan's governor has charged the EAA with transforming the lowest 5 percent of the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the state while simultaneously developing a new approach to educating 21st century students. Nolan is their latest endeavor.

Nolan now bears little resemblance to the traditional middle school it was years prior. Instead of being filled with desks, classrooms contain tables, floor pillows, and work stations. Furniture is modular and allows for flexible grouping. In any one classroom, students might work in small focused groups, spend time on their workstations, participate in individual conferencing with teachers, and — once introduced to a

learning target — cluster to work on projects. Students move throughout the classrooms in a constant buzz of conversation.

But the difference is more than just aesthetic. The design is intended to facilitate EAA's student-centered model, which organizes students by instructional level rather than age and grade level and lets them progress via mastery rather than seat time.

In EAA's student-centered classrooms, students assume responsibility for their learning and participate in planning, goal setting, and producing evidence of what they know and can do based on projects and performance tasks. At Nolan, a climate and culture is being established that fosters student ownership of learning as students become active participants in both thinking and doing in partnership with their teachers. At the center of the design is Brain Honey, a dynamic learning platform that hosts a robust repository of resources, curriculum mapping tools, and assessment tools, as well as a social platform that allows for collaboration and peer-to-peer support.

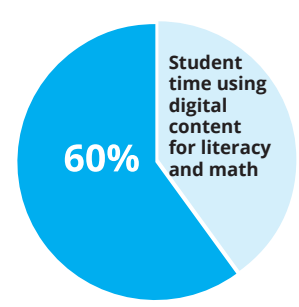
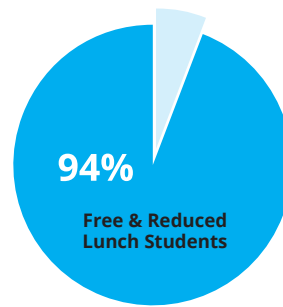
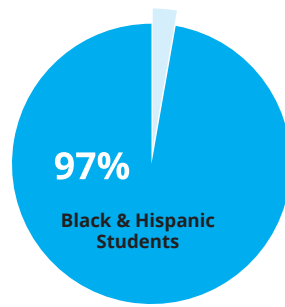
Learning objects are provided in

*“At Nolan Elementary-Middle School, a climate and culture is being established that fosters student ownership of learning as students become active participants in both thinking and doing in partnership with their teachers.”*

“bite-sized chunks” and a dashboard provides teachers, parents, and students with prescriptive, real-time analytics. Most importantly, the platform emphasizes not just cognitive skill acquisition but also collaboration and communication — between students and teachers, students and parents, teachers and parents, and students and their peers.

Younger students have relatively structured days, spending significant time with their teachers and in home-room. Older students spend more of their time working independently and in small groups, conferencing with teachers to monitor progress and for interventions as needed. Rather than pushing students through the system of education, the model gives students a voice every step of the way. Students map their learning paths, make choices and decisions around progression and pacing, conduct self-assessments, and learn to understand the consequences of their decisions.

The daily self-assessments track students’ perceptions of their exper-



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
**Math, Literacy, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language**  
 (with plans to incorporate Arts, Health and Wellness, and other electives)

tise, engagement, and effort. System reports capture students’ choice of content, length of use of that content, and preference ratings, which are correlated to student outcomes so that teachers can assess content effectiveness.

At the end of each unit, a final objective assessment serves as a gatekeeper to complement student evidence of mastery through performance tasks.

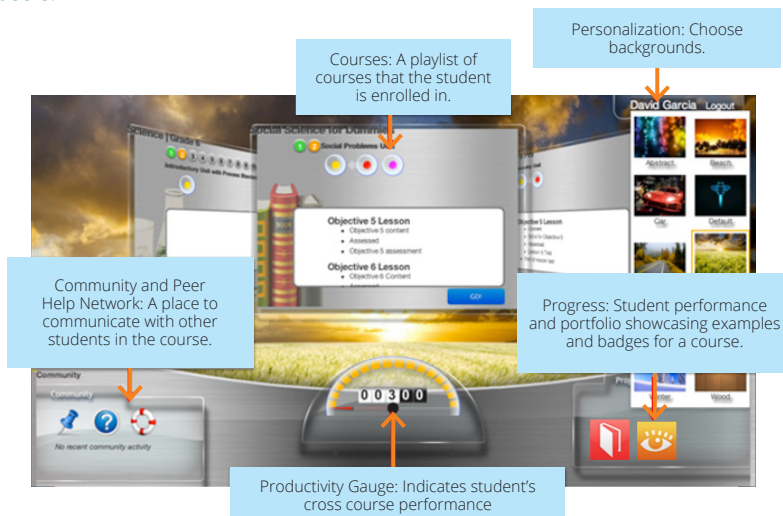
Teacher roles also shift under this model. After a rigorous hiring process, teachers undergo personalized,

on-demand, and job-embedded professional development in both pedagogy and content to prepare for work in a blended environment. Rather than building one-size-fits-all lesson plans, teachers use reports and real-time feedback generated by the learning platform to plan their interactions with students and provide intervention where needed. Real-time analytics help document best practices and assist teachers in providing appropriate support to students as well as in building their own capacity.

Turnaround is notoriously difficult. EAA and Nolan’s leadership provide a universal system of support to address the challenges of transforming school culture and overcoming ineffective practices and structures. Wrap-around supports are provided in several key areas — developing a climate and culture that shifts from the system to the student, ensuring highly effective teachers, engaging parents and the community, providing social and human service supports to students and families, and providing anytime, anywhere learning opportunities. EAA’s goal is that these activities — coupled with an extended 210-day school year — will help magnify the interdependence of the learning community and the links between a student’s individual success and the success of the learning community as a whole.

## BRAINHONEY PREVIEW

Inside Brain Honey, learning objects are provided in “bite-sized chunks” and a dashboard provides students with prescriptive, real-time analytics. Students can choose coursework from a playlist, customize their view, and reach out to collaborate and communicate with peers.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Operator URL: <http://www.michigan.gov/ea> | Contact: Mary Esselman, [esselmanm@michigan.gov](mailto:esselmanm@michigan.gov)



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# FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## THE STEAM ACADEMY

DESIGNING A NEXT GENERATION SCHOOL IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH A UNIVERSITY

“This school will be a place that will stimulate creative thinking and problem solving ... where students will be actively involved in identifying, analyzing, and helping solve problems in their local and global communities.”

MARY JOHN O'HAIR, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013

**Grades Served:** 9-12

**Location:** Lexington, KY

**Operator:** Fayette County Public Schools

**Operator Type:** School District

**Focus:** Urban, Higher Education Partnership

**Students at Opening:** 150

**Students at Capacity:** 600

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** iSchool (Moodle-based district system)

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** CASEMATE

**Digital Content Providers:** Khan Academy, Discovery Learning, BAVEL Academy

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$17,149

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$24,853

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$16,545

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$12,297

**Years to sustainability:** 1

Fayette County Public Schools and the University of Kentucky imagine a 21st-century 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 STEAM Academy, an urban public school opening in fall 2013, will incorporate mastery learning, personalized instruction, internships, and dual/college credit opportunities. The goal: to ensure that students will graduate college and career ready, and experienced. Low-income, first-generation college, and traditionally underserved students will have enrollment preference.

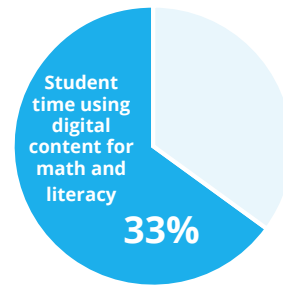
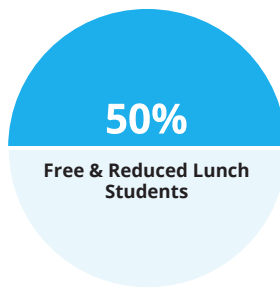
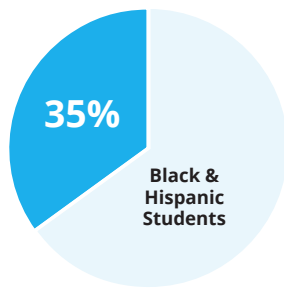
The STEAM Academy will use an innovative, hybrid instructional program based in student-paced, mastery- and problem-based experiential learning. Technology will help deliver content and real-time assessment to provide students with greater autonomy, help instructors better diagnose and address each student's needs, and engage parents more

effectively.

Student voice and student agency are central to the school model. Students will take ownership of their learning by choosing their instructional delivery, schedule, and learning style and engaging in real-world problem-solving projects that interest them. At the classroom level students will work to mastery with time as a variable. Some students may move through the coursework in two years and matriculate into classes at the University of Kentucky while others will need four years to be ready for college or career. Demonstration of mastery will be determined by summative assessments and evidence collected in an e-portfolio.

Upon entering the school, students will be assigned an adviser who will remain with the student until graduation. Advisory groups will meet bi-weekly throughout the year to provide guidance in college and career readiness skills, personal goal setting and monitoring, and problem identification and solution finding.

*“Student voice and student agency are central to the school model. Students will take ownership of their learning by choosing their instructional delivery, schedule, and learning style and engaging in real-world problem-solving projects that interest them.”*



The district is taking advantage of an environment ripe for innovation. Innovation waivers provide unprecedented flexibility in seat time, enabling a true competency-based approach. The University of Kentucky P20 Innovation Lab (part of CCSSO's Partnership for Next Generation Learning) is helping create the innovative infrastructure and instruc-

tional model. In addition, teachers will work with Innovation Lab faculty members and other UK faculty who will provide training across a range of instructional innovations including project-based learning, performance assessment, and technology integration.

Preparation of these teachers will also include a mentoring compo-

nent with master teachers, teacher leaders, and content specialists with Fayette County Schools. Ultimately, 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 lab where UK faculty can research and pilot new innovations.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 a.m.	Daily Kick Off: Initially, this time will be used for daily advisory meetings, but as the year progresses it will also be used for remediation, group project work time, acceleration, time to work on online classes, etc. This student will also be enrolled in Music 100 (Introduction to Music – online course from the University of Kentucky).				
9:00 a.m.	English 101 at University of Kentucky (UK)	Work time at STEM with faculty assistance as needed	English 101 at University of Kentucky (UK)	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)	English 101 at University of Kentucky (UK)
9:30 a.m.					
10:00 a.m.	History 101 at UK		History 101 at UK		History 101 at UK
10:30 a.m.	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)	Dual Credit Calculus 1 (taught at STEAM)
11:00 a.m.					
11:30 a.m.					
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Work Time	Lunch and internship	Lunch and Work Time	Lunch and internship	Lunch and Work Time
12:30 p.m.					
1:00 p.m.	CS 115 Introduction to Computer Programming at UK	EBCE (Student leaves the Academy for internship experiences.)	CS 115 Introduction to Computer Programming at UK	EBCE (Student leaves the Academy for internship experiences.)	CS 115 Introduction to Computer Programming at UK
1:30 p.m.					
2:00 p.m.	EBCE (Student leaves the Academy for internship experiences.)		EBCE (Student leaves the Academy for internship experiences.)		EBCE (Student leaves the Academy for internship experiences.)
2:30 p.m.					
3:00 p.m.	The "typical" school day will end at 3:00 p.m., however, extended classes could be offered to afford students more flexibility if needed during the day. Faculty and other support staff will serve as afterhours mentors to assist with tutoring and other needs. The building will remain open to students to allow them to work on other projects, online courses, and to see assistance as needed.				
After Hours					

The basic structure of the student schedule mirrors the majority of undergraduate courses at the University of Kentucky (UK), following a MWF or TR pattern. The schedule will be semester-based; those not ready to move to a new course at the start of a new semester will continue in the same course until they master the standards.

The schedule will include transition time for students coming to and from the UK campus or internship locations.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Operator URL: <http://www.fcps.net> | Contact: Jack Hayes, [jack.hayes@fayette.kyschools.us](mailto:jack.hayes@fayette.kyschools.us)



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# FOUNDATIONS COLLEGE PREP

## MARRYING THE BEST TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS WITH PROVEN PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

“We know that teachers, like students, come into school at different places. It's our goal to maximize every teacher's effectiveness.”

MICKI O'NEIL, FOUNDATIONS COLLEGE PREP

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6-12  
**Location:** Chicago, IL  
**Operator:** Foundations College Prep  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 200  
**Students at Capacity:** 840

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$12,780  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$13,559  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$11,305  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$10,358  
**Years to sustainability:** 1

*“Concerned that large classes and high demands often overwhelm first-time teachers before they even get their feet wet, Foundations is focused on reimagining the way teachers work and support one another.”*

At Foundations College Prep, a new 6–12 school opening in Chicago in Fall 2013, differentiation is key not just for the students — who will access adaptive digital content and participate in diversified classroom rotations — but also for the teachers.

The Foundations team believes that great teachers are key to transforming students' lives. Concerned that large classes and high demands often overwhelm first-time teachers before they even get their feet wet, Foundations is focused on reimagining the way teachers work and support one another to maximize capacity across the professional spectrum.

Resident teachers (those with limited experience) will work alongside expert teachers in large, foundational courses set up in a rotational model. In a single class of 40 students, a master teacher might engage 20 students in direct instruction, while a resident teacher facilitates a problem-based learning session with a smaller group. Other students might use self-paced digital content at personal workspaces around the room. While technology helps to support basic skill mastery, teachers are given time to focus instructional time on building critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

The goal is to provide a living model for resident teachers, while letting them hone their own skills with smaller groups of students under the watchful eye of the master teacher. Foundations believes this approach will provide ongoing support for teachers as they advance in their ca-

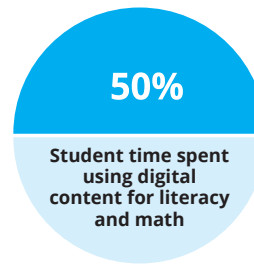
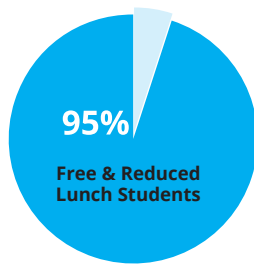
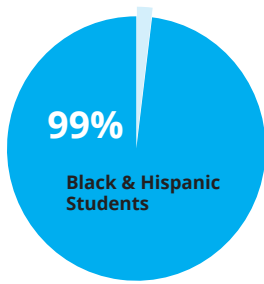
reers, while also ensuring that every student has access to expert teachers.

Maximizing the reach of teachers is key for a model focused on college prep and college success. School leaders hope that at least 70 percent of graduates will go on to four-year colleges, and at least 70 percent of those students will leave college with a degree. To do so, college readiness approaches are woven throughout the curriculum and schedule, and even reflected in the classroom design.

In the middle grades (grades 6–9), an average student will start the day in Advisory and participate in two 90-minute foundational courses in math and literacy. In large classrooms, students will rotate between instruction and group or project work, and hone their skills using virtual curriculum. Teachers will have access to just-in-time data dashboards to provide guidance as they plan daily rotations. The rest of the day will include electives, hands-on lab time, and time to work on interdisciplinary projects. Technology will be woven into each class in different ways, providing interactive videos to supplement instruction, giving students access to remedial or accelerated curriculum to meet their individual needs, providing interactivity during large lectures, or allowing students to continue the conversation online after class ends.

As students advance, their classes will deliberately mimic a more collegiate experience. For example,





**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

students might participate in a large lecture led by a master teacher with 60 of their peers before moving into small, discussion-based seminars. Other classes will use a “flipped” approach, in which students might watch a Khan Academy lesson online and then participate in an online discussion, much like online courses they might encounter in college.

Through partnerships with local universities such as the University

of Chicago, high school students will have access to current Ph.D. students as mentors and instructors. The goal is to begin to acclimate students to the academic side of the college experience while giving them mentors and roles models who can speak directly to what college is actually like. For the school's high-need population, this might be a student's first real link to college.

In the end, the Foundations team

hopes that the school — personalized for students and teachers, and grounded in a rigorous college prep curriculum — will create learners who can perform as well as or better than their higher-income peers. And technology becomes an essential tool that facilitates an entirely different kind of school, one that reimagines the way teachers, time and schedules are used.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

Sample 6th Grade Schedule (A Day)

Class	Size	Teacher(s)	Use of Tech
Advisory	14	●	Rich Dashboards
Reading Foundations	40	● ●	Rotation
Math Foundations	40	●	Rotation
		● ●	
<b>Lunch</b>			
Writing Foundations	30	●	Rotation Optional
SS/Science Foundations	30-40	●	Optional
Interdisciplinary Project	20	●	Tech-rich
Elective	Varies	●	Varies
Lab/Small Group	Varies	●	Lab

Sample 6th Grade Schedule (B Day)

Class	Size	Teacher(s)	Use of Tech
Advisory	14	●	Rich Dashboards
Writing Foundations	40	● ●	Rotation
Math Foundations	40	●	Rotation
Problem Solving		●	
<b>Lunch</b>			
Reading Foundations	30	●	Rotation Optional
Gym	30-40	●	Optional
Science Lab/SS Seminar	20	●	Tech-rich
Elective	Varies	●	Varies
Lab/Small Group	Varies	●	Lab

● Expert Teacher   ● Proficient Teacher   ● Resident Teacher   ● Staff Member (Type Varies)

A snapshot of what a day might look like for a sixth-grade student. The day will begin in Advisory, where teachers will use data dashboards to inform daily lessons and goal planning. Foundational courses will be rotational, allowing students to move between direct instruction and either group work or individual, self-paced content.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://foundationscollegeprep.org/> | Contact: Micki O'Neil, [micki.lynn.oneil@gmail.com](mailto:micki.lynn.oneil@gmail.com)



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# FRANKLIN CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

## ACADEMY 21

EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO CHART THEIR OWN JOURNEY

“High school won't look like high school—it will look like learning.”

STEFANIE BLOUIN, FRANKLIN CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012  
**Grades Served:** 9–13  
**Location:** St. Albans, VT  
**Operator:** Franklin Central Supervisory Union  
**Operator Type:** School District  
**Focus:** Rural  
**Students at Opening:** 75  
**Students at Capacity:** 400–500

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** Educate  
**Student Information System:** PowerSchool  
**Gradebook:** Educate  
**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** Mazano scales, RISC competencies, and Educate (LMS assessment platform)  
**Digital Content Providers:** SAS, Hippocampus, PHET, Khan Academy, Apple K-12 iTunes  
**Hardware:** Macbooks and class iPads

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$13,970  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$20,536  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$14,811  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$11,280  
**Years to sustainability:** 1

At Academy 21, a new high school in rural Vermont, the teacher-driven instruction model is being turned on its head. Students aren't just creating content—they're drafting their own learning plans, determining how to measure and demonstrate their learning, and using individual and group projects to explore themes and skills that they define.

In other words, students are in the driver's seat.

At the start of each day, students log into an online learning management system, where they

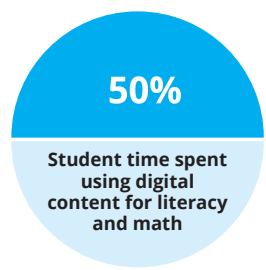
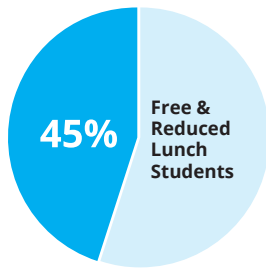
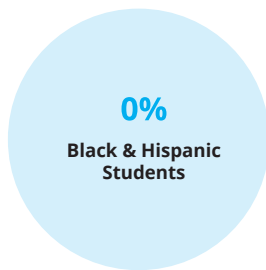
can review both their individual learning plan and a daily menu of activities. A student's learning menu might include individualized online learning using digital content, small-group instruction with a teacher, or multidisciplinary, project-based learning involving problem-solving sessions, collaboration on field studies, or work on community-based projects.

An individualized plan is created in collaboration with a teacher based on a student's progress toward core competencies and learning goals.

### A DAY IN THE LIFE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
CLP 07:30 - 07:45	Collaboration (delayed start)	Collaboration (delayed start)	CLP 07:30 - 07:45	CLP 07:30 - 07:45
Learning Lab 07:45 - 09:20	CLP 08:10 - 08:25	CLP 08:10 - 08:25	Learning Lab 07:45 - 09:20	Learning Lab 07:45 - 09:20
Advisory 09:20 - 09:35	Learning Lab 08:25 - 09:35	Learning Lab 08:25 - 09:35	Advisory 09:20 - 09:35	Advisory 09:20 - 09:35
STEM PBL 09:35 - 11:10	Advisory 09:35 - 10:05	STEM PBL 09:35 - 10:55	STEM PBL 09:35 - 11:10	STEM PBL 09:35 - 11:10
CLP 11:10 - 11:25	STEM PBL 10:05 - 11:15	Electives 10:55 - 12:55	CLP 11:10 - 11:25	CLP 11:10 - 11:25
Electives 11:25 - 02:51	CLP 11:15 - 11:30		Electives 11:25 - 02:51	Electives 11:25 - 02:51
	Electives 11:30 - 02:51	Advisory 12:55 - 01:26		
		Humanities PBL 01:26 - 02:36		
		CLP 02:36 - 02:51		

Individual students have access to a custom “learning menu” that details how they will spend their day. A plan might include individual online learning, direct instruction, electives, and problem-based learning sessions with their peers in core content areas. Each student participates in daily “Customized Learning Plan” time with advisors to help manage and track progress.



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:  
Math, Literacy**

Students use the plan to articulate where they want to be and how they plan to get there. The plan links to a multimedia e-portfolio, where they can demonstrate learning and a data dashboard that shows, in real time, how they are progressing toward their goals.

Personalization goes beyond an individual student's schedule. The Academy 21 curriculum includes not only clear outcomes for standard core content areas like math, literacy, social studies, and science but also Habits of Mind, a curriculum designed to foster competency in 21st-century skills.

To show competency in those areas, students create individual or team projects based on their interests. Students capture and share those projects (research papers, videos, presentations) in a multimedia e-portfolio, accessible to their teachers and parents, and portable beyond graduation.

Student mastery is assessed not by quizzes and tests but by a rigorous

*"The Academy 21 curriculum includes not only clear outcomes for standard core content areas like math, literacy, social studies, and science but also Habits of Mind, a curriculum designed to foster competency in 21st-century skills."*

performance-based assessment (PBA). PBAs, which can occur at any point in the curriculum, ask students to demonstrate what they've learned in front of two adults, typically two teachers but potentially a teacher and an employer or other community leader. A student might showcase a video, for example, and then provide rationale for the platform and the message while answering questions posed by the panel.

While students sit in the driver's seat, the school employs a balance of both direct instruction and student-led inquiry. Educators serve as "activators" of learning, helping students develop and refine learning plans and providing small-group instruction throughout the day.

During learning lab time, when students engage in individual online learning, teachers provide guidance and support when students struggle. Academy 21's focus on reflection extends to the teachers, who are encouraged to use formative feedback to refine and evaluate their own performance.

Franklin Central Supervisory Union is committed to learning from, reflecting on, adapting, and sharing the model to inform and help support broader change. Academy 21 is as much about teacher learning as it is about student learning, and that learner-centered focus is modeled throughout the organization. As they continue to refine the model, they expect that various aspects—the approach to scheduling, learning modalities, and technology—will inform the development of new models across the PK-16 continuum. Their goal is to serve as a test bed that will allow the district to move in the direction of adopting the model and provide an example to an array of partners across the state.

*"Educators serve as 'activators' of learning, helping students develop and refine learning plans and providing small-group instruction throughout the day. During learning lab time, when students engage in individual online learning, teachers provide guidance and support when students struggle."*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

School URL: <https://sites.google.com/a/fcsuvt.org/a21-odyssey/home>  
District: <http://www.fcsuvt.org> | Contact: Stefanie Blouin, [sblouin@fcsuvt.org](mailto:sblouin@fcsuvt.org)



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# GENERATION SCHOOLS NETWORK

## WEST GENERATION ACADEMY

### TRANSFORMING THE TRADITIONAL SCHOOL MODEL TO HELP DISTRICTS DO MORE WITH LESS

“More than 90 percent of America’s children attend public schools managed by districts and governed by teacher contracts. It’s critical that our nation pursue transformational innovation in districts as well as outside them.”

WENDY PIERSEE, GENERATION SCHOOLS NETWORK

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012

**Grades Served:** 6-12

**Location:** Denver, CO

**Operator:** Generation Schools Network

**Operator Type:** Nonprofit

**School Type:** District

**Focus:** Urban, Turnaround

**Students at Opening:** 450

**Students at Capacity:** 1,050

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** Jump Rope

**Student Information System:** Infinite Campus, provided by district, Jump Rope

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** STAR Reading, STAR Math

**Digital Content Providers:** Khan Academy, Reading Plus, ALEKS

**Hardware:** NComputing-driven classroom mini-labs

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$5,383

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$6,205

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$5,190

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$5,132

**Years to sustainability:** 2

West Generation Academy, a new turnaround school launched by Generation Schools Network on the site of Denver’s West High, includes many hallmarks of next-generation blended design. School days are longer to expand learning time. Classrooms are designed for rotations; in a single, 75-minute period, students might move from direct instruction to individual work on personalized digital content or to collaborative, small group work. Data tools provide real-time feedback to students and teachers. Digital tools help students “catch up” or dig deeper into their interests.

And yet, Generation Schools is not merely committed to redesigning the academic model in school. It’s also committed to creatively “redeploying” a school’s existing resources to personalize learning for students, support teachers, transform college and career guidance, and increase learning time—all without adding to school costs and while operating within key parameters of teacher contracts.

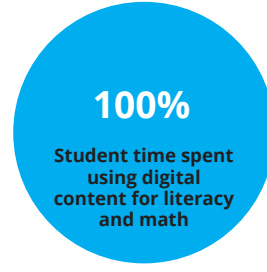
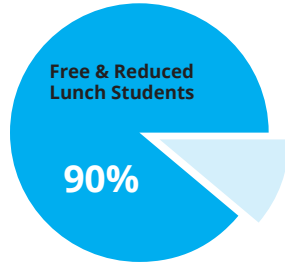
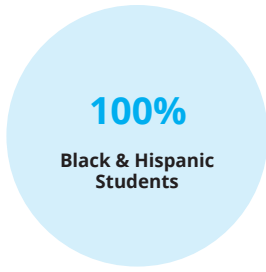
West Generation students, for ex-

ample, benefit from a longer school year (200 days versus the standard 180-day calendar year) and from longer school days (8 hours per day). To increase access without adding to the budget, the Academy staggers teacher vacations to keep the amount of “working days” the same and offsets longer teaching days with shorter training days, essentially trading “time for time.”

Core class sizes are small; math and literacy classes have 18 to 25 students. Content experts might teach a Foundations course in English or math as their primary role, while also teaching a larger Studio class (an elective or additional core course) as a secondary role.

Generation Schools Network also thinks creatively about supporting students outside the classroom. In addition to a school guidance counselor and psychologist, the Academy enlists a team of teachers to provide college and career courses throughout the year. Twice each year for a full month, students participate in a rigorous, credit-bearing course that challenges them to set life goals

*“Generation Schools is committed to creatively ‘redeploying’ a school’s existing resources to personalize learning for students, support teachers, transform college and career guidance, and increase learning time — all without adding to school costs and while operating within key parameters of teacher contracts.”*



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

and explore life beyond the campus through college visits, listening to guest speakers, or participating in technology-based research studies. Each course is designed to encourage students to sharpen their ability to negotiate, communicate, solve problems, and manage projects.

This model has already shown positive results in New York, where Generation launched Brooklyn Generation School in 2007 on a campus once described as “unsalvageable.”

Eighty percent of the school’s first graduates were accepted into college, and the number of students graduating on time doubled.

West Generation Academy builds on that model but in a vastly different region. The push west reflects Generation Schools Network’s stated goal to scale innovation and systemic transformation across urban schools at varied per-pupil revenue allotments to demonstrate that, with the right partnerships, dramatic

change can occur in a district setting. In addition to opening new schools, the organization partners with and supports existing district schools in whole-school redesigns and supports knowledge sharing across affiliate networks to encourage the diffusion of best practices and proven approaches.

The goal, according to school leaders, is to ensure that innovative practice and change occurs not just outside the system, but within it as well.

## MODEL SNAPSHOT

Key Advantages	Generation School’s Signature Model	Conventional School Model
Expanded learning time	Eight hours per day, 200 days per year	Six hours per day, 180 days per year
Smaller class sizes in core courses	18–25	25–35
Technology-enhanced learning	Half-class mini-labs in every core class	Limited access
Extensive common planning time	More than two hours each day	Typically, 45 minutes per week
High-caliber teacher training	More than 20 days per work year	One to three days per work year
Key data tools to inform instruction	Real-time responsive	Too often limited/delayed
Fewer classes for teachers to teach	Three classes per day	Five to six classes per day
Far fewer students per teacher	75 or fewer students daily	150 or more students

Smaller classes and expanded learning time in the Generation School’s model are made possible by creative redistribution of resources that keep costs low.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://westgenerationacademy.dpsk12.org/>

Operator URL: <http://www.generationschools.org/> | Contact: Wendy Piersee, [wendy@generationschools.org](mailto:wendy@generationschools.org)



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# HORRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## WHITTEMORE PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

### REIMAGINING PUBLIC EDUCATION WITH AN INSIDE-OUT WHOLE SCHOOL TURNAROUND MODEL

“Children are this country's greatest resource. They are wired to use technology 24/7. It's time for our schools to catch up with what our learners are experiencing and demanding in their learning environments.”

JUDY BEARD, WHITTEMORE PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6-8  
**Location:** Conway, SC  
**Operator:** Horry County Schools  
**Operator Type:** School District  
**Focus:** Urban, Turnaround  
**Students at Opening:** 200  
**Students at Capacity:** 600

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** Education Elements  
**Student Information System:** PowerSchool (and Education Elements dashboards)  
**Gradebook:** PowerSchool  
**Digital Content Providers:** Achieve 3000, Discovery Education, DreamBox Learning, EPIC

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$9,623  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$10,377  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$9,891  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$9,891  
**Years to sustainability:** 3

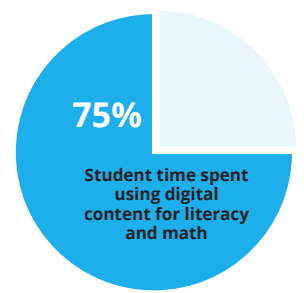
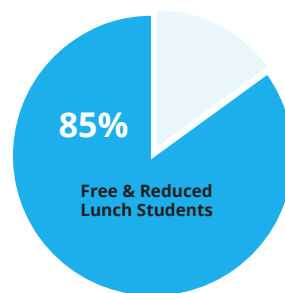
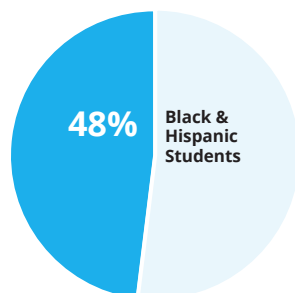
The school district of Horry County Schools in South Carolina is turning around Whittemore Park Middle School, a low-performing, high-poverty public school. The highly student-centered iCAN model that will be implemented in the school is designed around a blended core academic curriculum and a carefully constructed system of supports. The competency-based model both accelerates academic gains and develops students' lifelong skills and dispositions in a holistic approach to college and career readiness.

iCAN is an acronym for the model's central elements: individualized, college and career readiness, aspirations of students, and network of support. The model personalizes learning through four support structures: iCAN Learning Teams, iCAN Academy groups, iCAN Exploratory Courses, and iCAN Extended Learning.

In iCAN Learning Teams, groups of one hundred students will spend significant time working with digital content, facilitated by four core aca-

demical teachers, who provide individual and small group instruction and support. Student groups will be flexible and fluid based on weekly assessments of competency and structured around individual student need and learning preferences. Students will move among the four Learning Team classrooms based on their personalized learning plans, constructed around each student's aspirations, learning preferences, and demonstrated proficiency. The Common Core State Standards guide selection of content, strategies, learning activities, and assessments in digital, face-to-face, situated, and experiential contexts. Within their teams, students advance based on demonstration of learning through vertically aligned assessments that measure across grade bands.

The iCAN Academy is a comprehensive program focusing on academic and social support, metacognitive development, and lifelong learning skills. Students will stay with their small Academy groups—which will meet daily for 50 minutes—



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

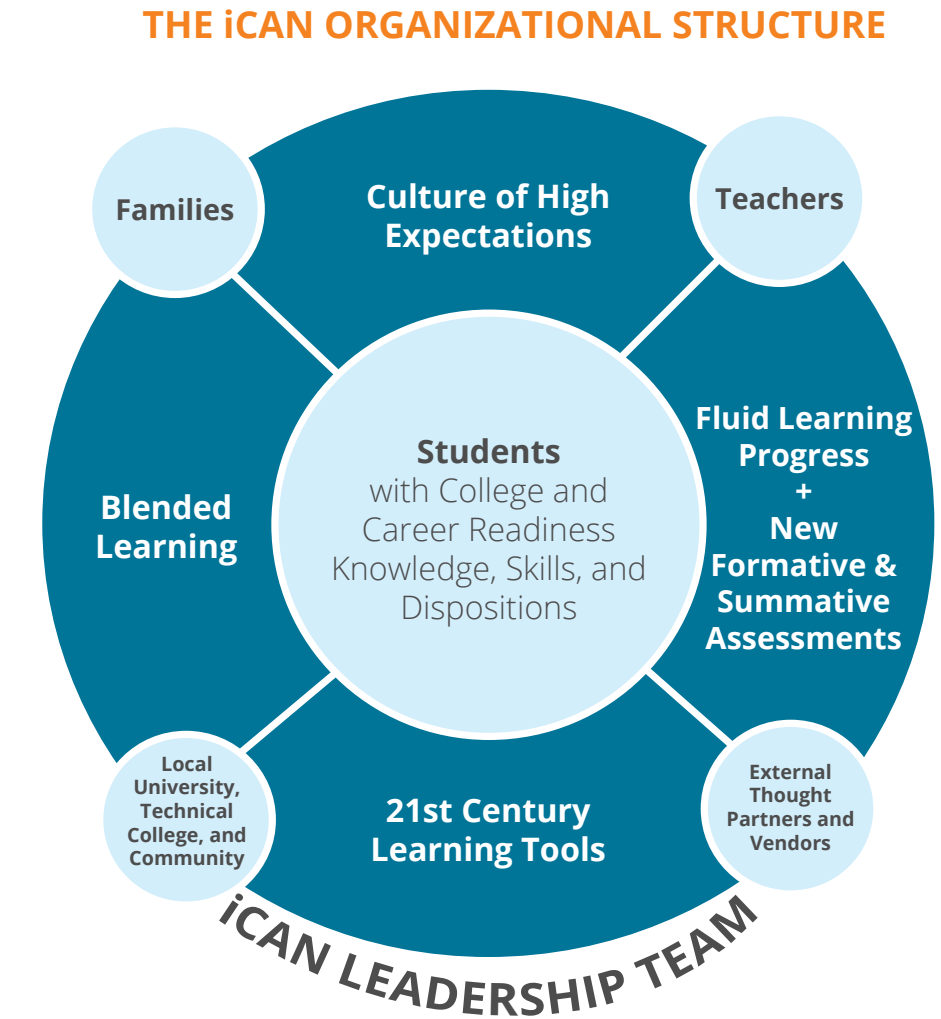
throughout their middle school years. College and community partners will help by providing mentoring and experiential activities.

iCAN Exploratory Courses are enriching learning opportunities designed around students' interests and range from robotics to choral music. Students will learn anytime, anywhere through iCAN Extended Learning. Tech tools will allow students to interact with digital content, teachers, and peers beyond the traditional school day and outside the school building. Face-to-face tutorials are provided before and after school.

As the model is implemented, Whittemore Park anticipates identifying groups of students using different nomenclature. Rather than identifying a student as "in 6th grade," for example, the school will identify the student as "in year one" since students will be taking courses in a variety of grade levels.

In addition to ongoing professional development to build human capacity, the principal is undertaking a number of steps to ensure that the model is staffed by the most highly-qualified teachers. Existing teachers will be interviewed for teaching positions in the iCAN model and new teachers are being recruited in close partnership with the local university's undergraduate and graduate education programs. A variety of constructs will provide differentiated support for teachers as well as a system for monitoring and evaluating teacher practice. Through professional development designed and managed by the leadership team, teachers will have whole group, small group, and individualized opportunities to learn.

The school's principal, who has extensive experience successfully turning around schools, has been given complete autonomy to innovate and alter all aspects of the existing



The learner is at the heart of the iCAN model, surrounded by four key groups that help the learner and support implementation of the model. The iCAN Leadership Team—principal, teacher leaders, curriculum specialists, guidance counselors, instructional technology specialist, consultant, and district staff—guides the effort.

school. In partnership with the district, the school has begun exploration of alternative course credentialing, preparing to apply for waivers for the iCAN model for current seat time requirements. As one observer of the school's model commented, "They are really creating a new middle school model rather than shuffling the chairs in a turnaround."

The iCAN model will serve as a promising practices model for the 43

schools within the district and scaled through implementation of promising practices in additional district middle schools as well as in pilot high school sites. Additional partnerships with the Riley Institute's Center for Education Policy and Leadership and Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools networks will provide opportunities for scale.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Operator URL: <http://www.horrycountyschools.net> | Contact: Judy Beard, [jbeard@horrycountyschools.net](mailto:jbeard@horrycountyschools.net)



# INTRINSIC SCHOOLS

## CULTIVATING AUTONOMOUS AND PERSEVERING LEARNERS

“The mission of Intrinsic Schools is to prepare all students for 21st century post-secondary success and to cultivate independent, intellectually curious learners. To achieve this, we will create a new model that leverages technology to personalize learning and is informed by the experience of great teachers.”

MELISSA ZAIKOS, INTRINSIC SCHOOLS

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6-12  
**Location:** Chicago, IL  
**Operator:** Intrinsic Schools  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 270  
**Students at Capacity:** 600

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,774  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$12,017  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$10,982  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$10,500  
**Years to sustainability:** 2

Intrinsic Schools will serve 6–12th grade students in Chicago starting in Fall 2013 using a blended school model. To reimagine middle and high school, Intrinsic is combining technology-enabled adaptive learning and expert teaching.

Intrinsic will cultivate independent, intellectually curious learners who will own their learning and much of their schedule. Student goal-setting is a critical element of the model. Each student will have a seven-year individualized learning plan that outlines a path to post-secondary success. Students will be provided with real-time tools to monitor their own progress along this path. Furthermore, students will each lead two parent-teacher conferences per year to discuss their progress.

At the start, the 270 students will be grouped into three pods of 90 students. At capacity, an Intrinsic school will have seven pods. Students will spend half of the day in a humanities block and the other half in a

STEM block. Within each block, students will move fluidly between individualized adaptive digital content, multimedia content, small group instruction, seminars, and group and independent project work.

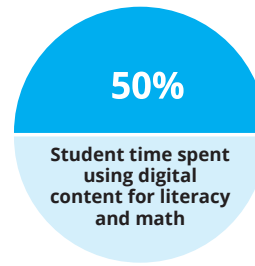
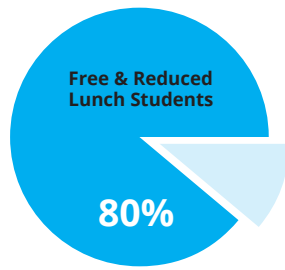
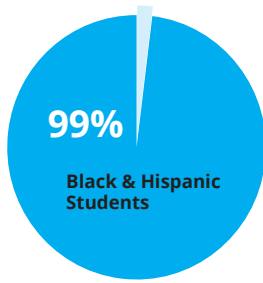
Students will participate in mixed-ability groups for some activities and at other times receive targeted instruction via on-line content or with peers at the same instructional level.

The Intrinsic model requires a complete redesign of the classroom. The physical space of each pod will be open and flexible: there will be areas for quiet individual work, small group instruction, collaborative work, group projects, and large forums. When not leading direct instruction, teachers will work on interdisciplinary teams and float throughout the space.

While students will lead most interactions and be at the center of their own learning, master teachers are at the core of the Intrinsic school design. These teachers will design units around essential questions and

*“Student goal-setting is a critical element of the model. Each student will have a seven-year individualized learning plan that outlines a path to post-secondary success. Students will be provided with real-time tools to monitor their own progress along this path. Students will also lead two parent-teacher conferences per year to discuss their progress.”*





**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

curate on-line curriculum. Intrinsic is currently evaluating technology platforms to support this design.

Intrinsic will create internal capacity for teacher development, whereby first-year teachers will co-teach with a master teacher. Although these newer teachers will be responsible for different content areas, they will benefit from sharing responsibility for students with a master teacher.

Intrinsic will work closely with various partners to cultivate talented ed-

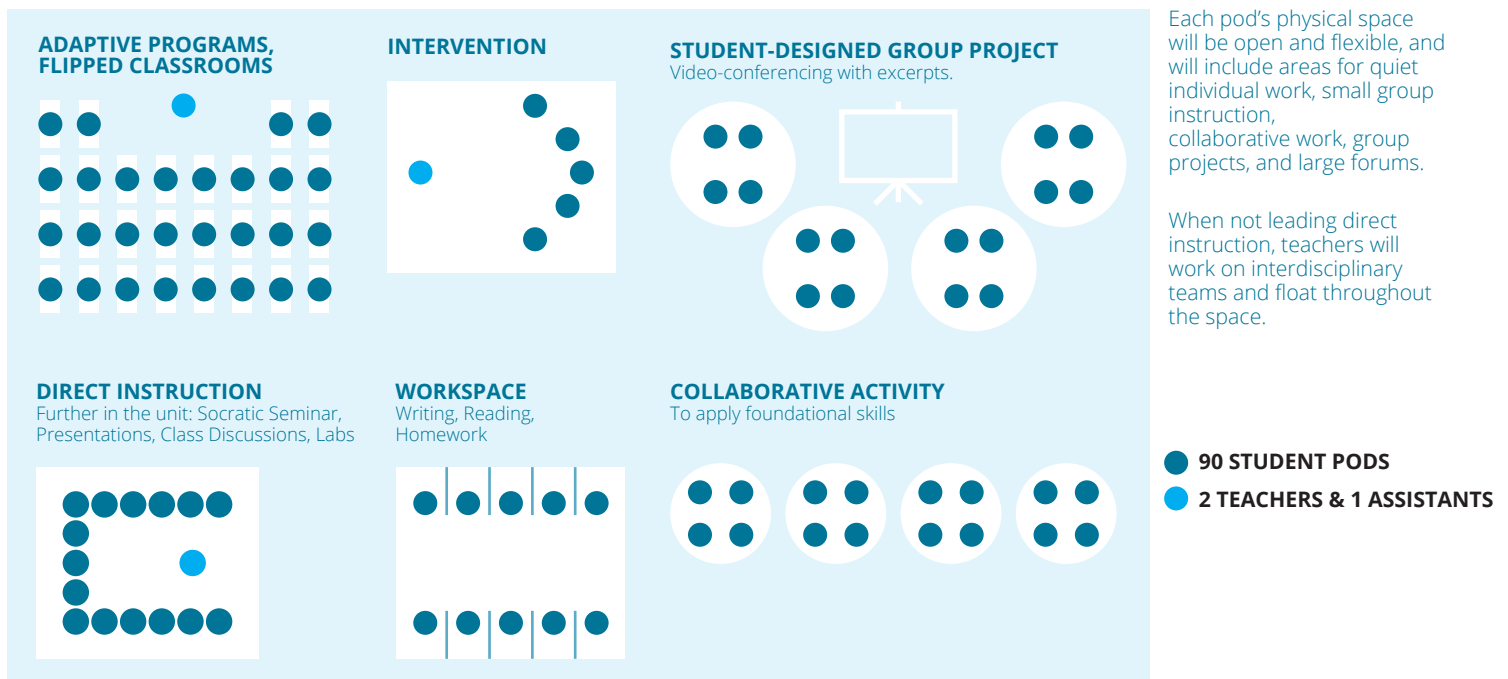
ucators and develop integrated curricular experiences for students. For example, the organization will work with local social service agencies to support the student holistically, and with local colleges and universities to emphasize college and career readiness from the start.

The charter management organization (CMO) is committed to a research and design approach to teaching and learning. Teachers and students will regularly pilot, analyze,

and evaluate different aspects of the model. In addition to helping refine the model, this process will increase student ownership and motivation.

With both a lean school staffing model and CMO, Intrinsic will be sustainable and scalable, planning to serve 3,000 students across five schools over the next five years. Intrinsic's goal is to create a replicable model for preparing students for 21st century college success.

## BIRD'S EYE VIEW



### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Operator URL: <http://intrinsicsschools.org/> | Contact: Melissa Zaikos [mzaikos@intrinsicsschools.org](mailto:mzaikos@intrinsicsschools.org)



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# KIPP CHICAGO

## KIPP CREATE COLLEGE PREP MIDDLE SCHOOL

EMBEDDING A FLEXIBLE, STUDENT-CENTERED DESIGN IN A HIGH-EXPECTATIONS CHARTER

“Our mission is still to make sure kids are ready to go and have the opportunity to go to and through college. We believe technology can help students learn differently and help teachers work more efficiently.”

KATE MAZUREK, KIPP CREATE COLLEGE PREP MIDDLE SCHOOL

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012  
**Grades Served:** 5–8  
**Location:** Chicago, IL  
**Operator:** KIPP  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 90  
**Students at Capacity:** 350

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**  
Eduvant  
**Student Information System:**  
PowerSchool  
**Gradebook:** Eduvant  
**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** iReady and Wowzers  
**Digital Content Providers:**  
Edmodo, Socratic  
**Hardware:** Chromebooks

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$13,038  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$9,140  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$8,570  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$8,209  
**Years to sustainability:** 0

All KIPP Chicago schools have the same mission: to ensure students have the skills, knowledge, and character traits required to create their path to and through college. Using extended class days and a mantra that emphasizes commitment to excellence and high expectations, KIPP is also delivering results: 96 percent of students graduate high school and 90 percent go on to college.

KIPP Create College Prep Middle School, opened in fall 2012, builds on the successful KIPP academic model by blending instructional technology with proven, high-quality teaching methods. Students spend nearly half their day engaged in individualized learning at their own pace, on their own device, with curriculum that's tailored to their own level of understanding.

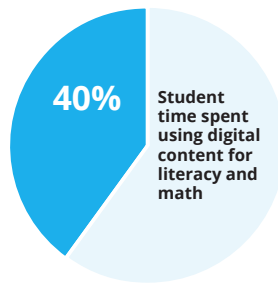
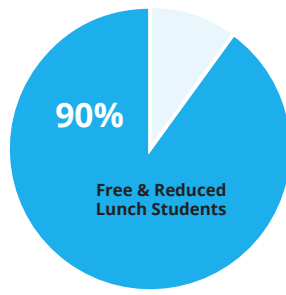
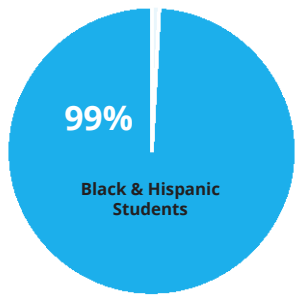
For KIPP Chicago, technology is not merely a tool for cutting costs — it's a way for a single instructor and a single classroom to serve the individual needs of a diverse student body. Classroom furniture is light and flexible, allowing a lecture-style classroom to be taken apart and re-

assembled for individual learning on computers or clustered for classroom discussions. In an average day, a student might log into a Google Chromebook to brush up on individual reading skills during homeroom, huddle with another student to create a video project for their online portfolio during visual arts, engage in a hands-on experiment in science class, or work with a teacher-facilitator in a small group to tackle a word problem during math.

Creation is a central component of the school's design and its namesake. In Create classes, students use digital content-creation tools to engage in problem-based learning activities designed to draw connections between core academic classes. Students might use Photoshop to edit a collage or geometry to create a 3D virtual pyramid. All projects become part of an online e-portfolio that showcases student work.

A critical component of each day is a "Power Hour" housed within a flexible Learning Lab space. There, students use high-quality videos, tutorials, and interactive content from

*“Creation is a central component of the school's design and its namesake. In Create classes, students use digital content-creation tools to engage in problem-based learning activities designed to draw connections between core academic classes.”*



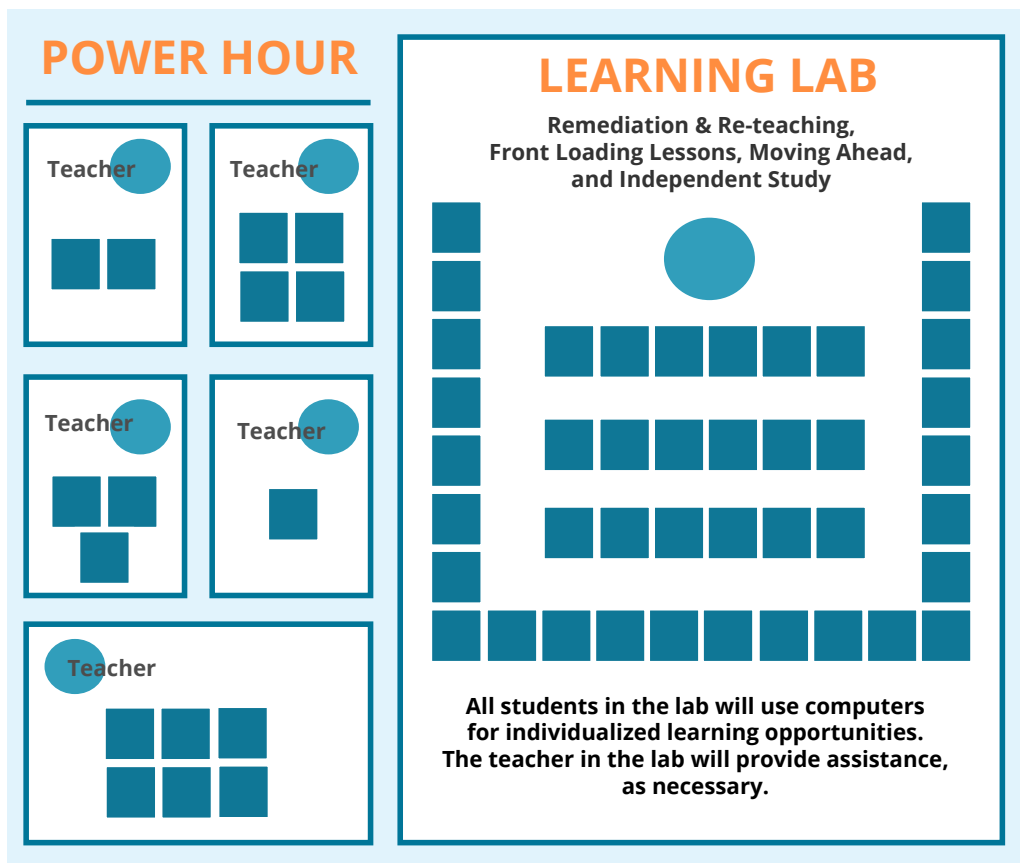
**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

providers such as LearnZillion, Khan Academy, and Wowzers to practice key competencies on their own and in teams based on an individual learning plan. Each student's learning plan is developed following summer testing and refined throughout the year through ongoing assessment. The Learning Lab includes individual workstations, as well as areas for

one-on-one support with teachers and small group remediation.

At each step, student performance data are captured, displayed in user-friendly dashboards, and used by teachers to gauge student progress and pinpoint areas of concern. Similar data dashboards provide feedback to students and parents any time, anywhere.

Teachers are a key component of the model. The model hinges on KIPP's belief that teachers are still incredibly important in the classroom as the deciding factor about what happens in the class. But what teachers are doing within this space is very different — how they are using data, how they are creating lessons, how they are providing custom support



KIPP classrooms utilize flexible seating and moveable furniture to enable various configurations and learning zones throughout the day depending on the classroom activity.

During the daily "Power Hour," for example, a single space might accommodate teacher-led instruction, group work, and individual computer work.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

School URL: <http://www.kipp.org/school-content/kipp-create-college-prep-middle-school>  
Operator URL: <http://www.kippchicago.org/> | Contact: Kate Mazurek, [kmazurek@kippchicago.org](mailto:kmazurek@kippchicago.org)



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# LEADERSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## OAKLAND R&D CAMPUS

### COMBINING REAL-WORLD R&D WITH STUDENT-CENTERED DESIGN

“What is perhaps most unique to the design is that all of this fits around an R&D core. We are not simply trying to change the way education is delivered, we are trying to institutionalize design thinking and an innovation culture in one of the most change-resistant segments of our society, public education.”

LOUISE WATERS, LEADERSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012

**Grades Served:** 9–13

**Location:** Oakland, CA

**Operator:** Leadership Public Schools

**Operator Type:** Charter

**Focus:** Urban

**Students at Opening:** 350

**Students at Capacity:** Up to 600

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**  
Created by LPS

**Student Information System:**  
Illuminate

**Gradebook:** Illuminate

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** ExitTicket, Illuminate, NWEA MAP

**Digital Content Providers:** CK-12, Ivy Bridge, Read 180, DynEd, OER

**Hardware:** Chromebooks

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,079

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$10,088

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,490

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$8,907

**Years to sustainability:** 1

As the spotlight on blended learning has grown in recent years, so, too, has the list of digital content providers and organizations supporting schools and teachers. From digital curriculum to data-rich learning management systems, the landscape can be dizzying.

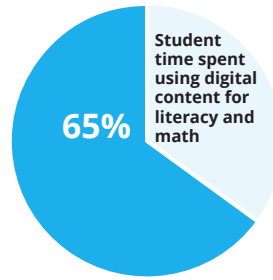
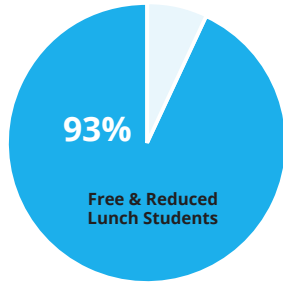
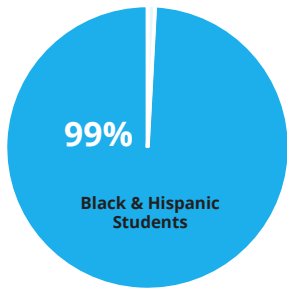
Leadership Public Schools (LPS), a successful California charter school network, has resisted the urge to turn to long-term contracts with external providers. Instead, it sees itself as planted firmly in the R&D space. With LPS Oakland, a new 9–12 school, LPS is expanding its role as a “collaborative innovator,” working with teachers and students to design blended learning environments and tools that will help lay the foundation for key skills, personalize learning, and promote 21st century thinking. LPS aims to involve students in both the production and consumption of technology.

The LPS model focuses on four strategies:

- Provide personalized learning to help students accelerate backfill of missing skills in math and English
- Support teachers through access to high-quality digital content and real-time data feedback
- Scaffold key concepts so students can quickly advance to core college prep content
- Build opportunities for critical thinking and deeper learning

Those expectations are firm. In practice, it means that a single 75-minute class period includes the use of summative quizzes at the start and end of class to monitor progress, access to online content through digital flexbooks and online courses, and non-technology-based interactive learning (through labs, seminars, and debates).

*“At any one time, there are multiple innovations, individual strategies, and products in varying stages of development across the LPS network. A team of teachers designs, adopts, and adapts each idea. It is then prototyped in one or two classrooms with pioneering teachers, iterated by a larger group of teachers through collaborative innovation, and then built into the network-wide practices and expectations.”*



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy, Science,  
Social Studies

Throughout class, teachers provide feedback and intervention as needed, while students access personalized online content and lead non-tech activities that facilitate deeper learning.

Although the learning structure is fixed, the actual content and tools can evolve from year to year as teachers test and evaluate open educational content or refine their needs. The emphasis is on providing the very best content, not just digital content. Where there are gaps, LPS develops its own tools and platforms or pushes vendors to further innovate.

At any one time, there are multiple innovations, individual strategies, and products in varying stages of de-

velopment across the LPS network. A team of teachers designs, adopts, and adapts each idea. It is then prototyped in one or two classrooms with pioneering teachers, iterated by a larger group of teachers through collaborative innovation, and then built into the network-wide practices and expectations. When something works — or doesn't — the information flows across the LPS network and beyond.

Because most of the blended courseware and other resources LPS will be creating or adapting will be free, modularized, and modifiable, they will be easily transferable to schools with constrained facilities, schedules, and staffing. One of the

most visible examples of collaborative innovation at LPS is ExitTicket, a sophisticated online “clicker” that lets students use any kind of technology — including mobile devices — to take online, concept-level quizzes and get immediate feedback.

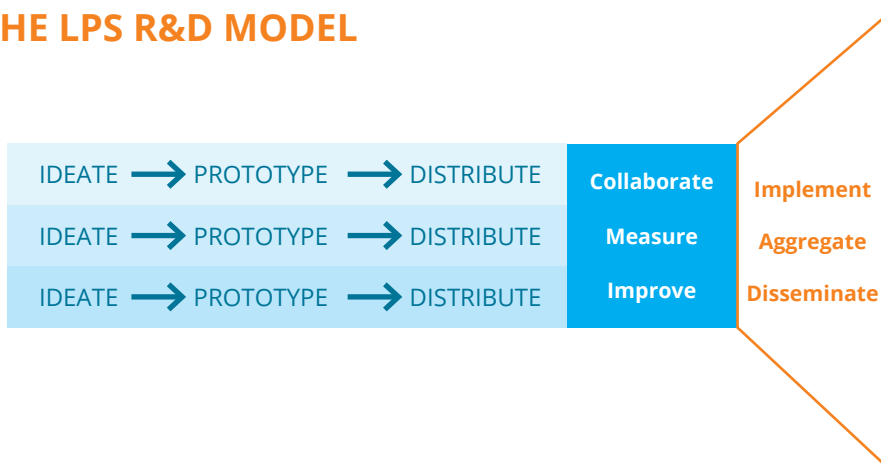
The teacher tracks this just-in-time data on an iPad heatmap and can intervene immediately according to student need. Growth and mastery data is immediately updated for both teachers and students. ExitTicket grew out of a need across LPS schools to track concept mastery and leverage data in more integrated ways.

Beyond content acquisition, LPS strives to be innovative in how students apply their skills. This year, students will use afterschool time for experiential learning activities. Through a partnership with TechNovations, for example, students will learn programming and technology design that they can apply throughout the year by serving as tech support within the school and piloting technologies through a Young Innovators Club.

In fall 2013, an extended version of this experiential time will be built into the daily schedule with dedicated time for hands-on activities one day a week.

These “outside-the-classroom” experiences help ensure the LPS spirit of innovation trickles down beyond an organizational ethos to become a method for student empowerment.

## THE LPS R&D MODEL



At any one time, there are multiple innovations in varying stages of development across the LPS network. A team of teachers designs, adopts, and adapts each idea. It is then prototyped in one or two classrooms with pioneering teachers, iterated by a larger group of teachers through collaborative innovation, and then built into the network-wide practices and expectations. With varying degrees of formality, ethnographic interviews are conducted during the process to identify issues and promising practices to inform the iterative development.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Operator URL: <http://www.leadps.org> | Contact: Louise Waters, [lwaters@leadps.org](mailto:lwaters@leadps.org)



**NEXT GENERATION  
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# MATCHBOOK LEARNING

TURNING AROUND THE NATION'S LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS

“Highly engaged, personalized experiences for teachers lead to personalized learning for each student.”

SAJAN GEORGE, MATCHBOOK LEARNING

## AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 5-8  
**Operator:** Matchbook Learning  
**Operator Type:** Nonprofit  
**School Type:** Turnaround  
**Focus:** Urban

## MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Implementation Partner:**  
EdElements  
**Hardware:** Netbooks for students

## BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,796  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$9,558  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,782  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$9,507  
**Years to sustainability:** 0

Armed with experience from a prototype turnaround in Detroit, Matchbook Learning will turnaround a district middle school that is performing in the bottom 5 percent. Matchbook hopes to create a successful and sustainable turnaround model for college readiness not only by transforming the student experience but also by enhancing the role of teachers. Matchbook will employ the following five key elements as part of their teacher-centric model:

- Designing a new process to convert a traditional school into a blended learning school
- Focusing on the school culture to motivate students and teachers
- Coaching teachers on personalized learning instruction
- Engaging stakeholders to build support
- Blending the classroom with a teacher-centric approach

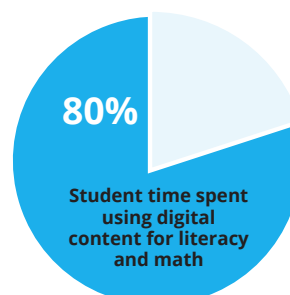
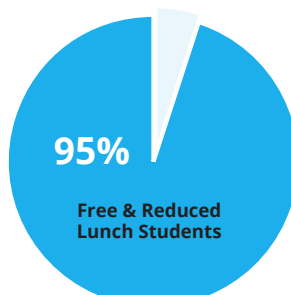
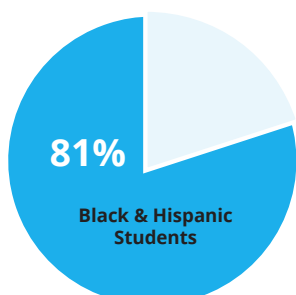
This blended model combines innovations in technology with strengthened teacher-led instruction

to result in the best of traditional and next generation learning.

Matchbook Learning will engage in a full redesign of both the physical school space and the teaching and learning culture within the school.

By appealing to the students' and teachers' desire for autonomy, focusing on mastery of goals and broader sense of life purpose, and relating specifically to district, parent, and community stakeholders, Matchbook hopes to enact real sustainable change.

Matchbook is partnering with Education Elements to create highly customizable and individualized learning pathways for students. The online curriculum will include interactive multimedia applications that combine video, sound, text, animation, and graphics that align with various student-learning styles. Through the use of data and analysis of regular detailed reports, teachers will be able to understand and monitor each student's progress and mastery. Students will be grouped into small and flexible groups based on student readiness, interests, learning style and profile, and specific instructional objectives. Technology becomes an essential teacher tool.



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy

Daily dashboards, classroom observation feedback and prototyping, continual data analysis, and assessment support will allow teachers to differentiate instruction by content, process, product, and the learning environment and spend time with students as needed.

Two full-time program managers will be dedicated to working with teachers and principals to monitor blended classroom instruction on a daily basis and provide frequent and targeted professional development and coaching, culminating in Matchbook Learning's biweekly "20-Mile March" progress-monitoring review process, where each teacher pro-

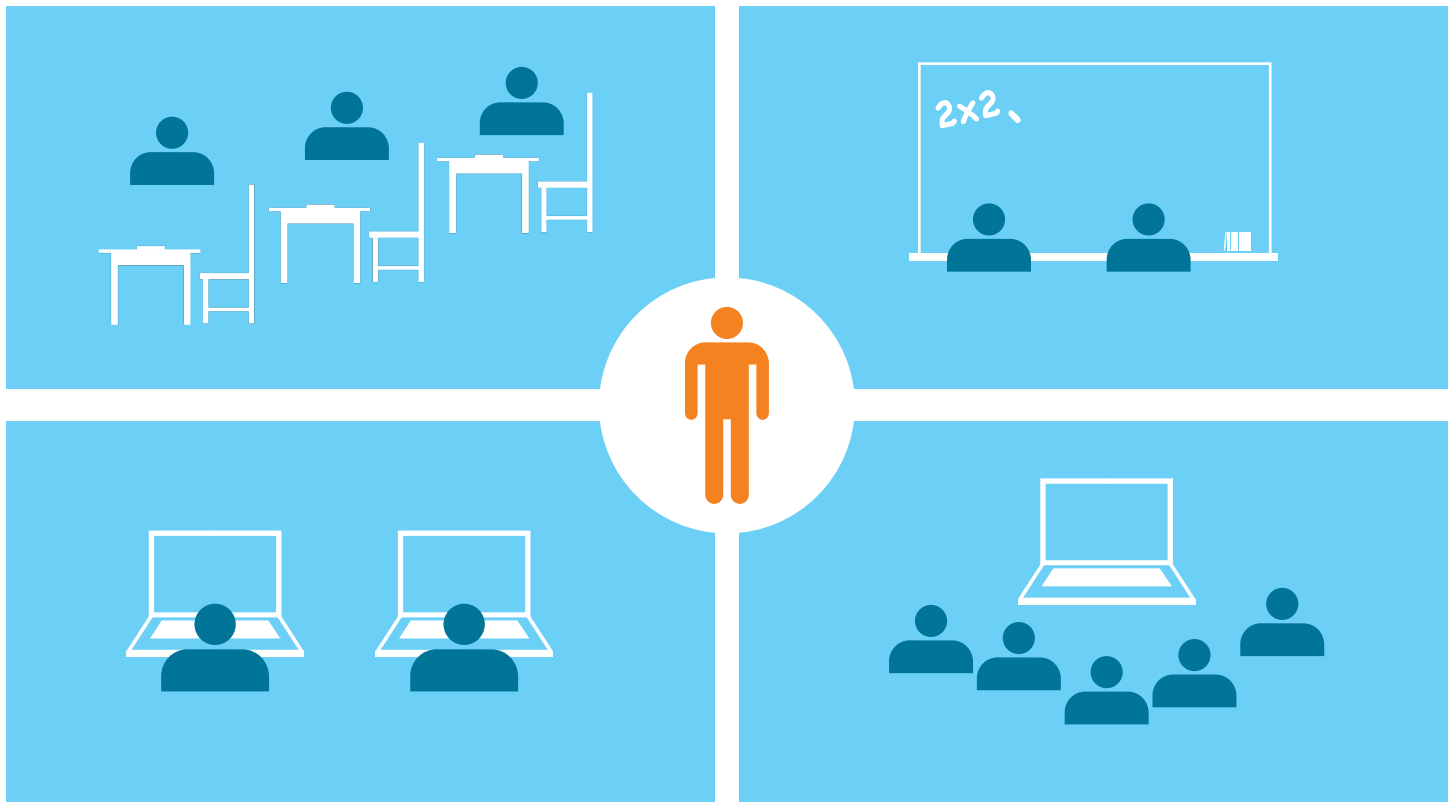
vides an additional support structure to ensure student achievement is continually monitored, assessed, and targeted.

Matchbook was founded on the premise that technology-based innovations offer the first and best chance for scalable success to meet the need of the nation's failing schools. The model is both sustainable on public funding and scalable.

In addition, the organization's approach offers a faster path to scale by partnering with school districts and building their capacity to continue the successful turnaround after the four-year relationship with Matchbook ends.

As the first blended school model in the country designed specifically for school turnarounds (i.e., bottom 5 percent schools) and deployed as a district turnaround (i.e., not charter), Matchbook's model promises to be immediately sustainable on public funding, as well as highly scalable. By leveraging innovations in blended-learning technology and engaging teachers' unique motivations, abilities, and capacities in the process of personalized instruction, Matchbook's scalable model will ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn, succeed academically, and achieve their college and career dreams.

## MATCHBOOK'S TEACHER MODEL



Matchbook Learning views teachers as the architects of core content, intensively engaging them as the primary recipient of hands-on coaching to design pathways for personalized instruction.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Operator URL: <http://www.matchbooklearning.com/> | Contact: Sajan George, [sajan@matchbooklearning.com](mailto:sajan@matchbooklearning.com)



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# MATCH EDUCATION

## MATCH NEXT

LEVERAGING SMALL-GROUP INSTRUCTION TO ENGAGE STUDENTS AND MAXIMIZE TEACHERS

“One of the most exciting pieces of this model is that our teaching fellows are going to be spending an incredible amount of time with their students. They are going to get to know them extremely well. They can set the pace based on the students’ needs and move more quickly into higher order activities.”

RAY SCHLECK, MATCH EDUCATION

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6–8  
**Location:** Boston, MA  
**Operator:** Match Education  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 72  
**Students at Capacity:** 216

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$15,595  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$26,225  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$17,041  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$17,258  
**Years to sustainability:** 4

When Match Next opens in inner-city Boston in fall 2013, it will build on the success of the “no excuses” charter’s existing schools, Match Charter Public School (6–12) and Match Community Day (currently K1, K2, 2, 3; eventually K–12).

Match Next doubles down on one of its most successful practices: high-dosage tutoring. In this new model, there will be no traditional classrooms; technology will be used to complement and enhance traditional tutoring, which pairs small groups of students with a teaching fellow for an entire class period. In these small groups, students will work through digital content (matched to their level of understanding and mastery) and participate in small group discussions and activities. For example, students might brush up on their math skills using content from Khan Academy and then work to collaboratively apply those concepts through the lens of sports statistics with their fellow’s help.

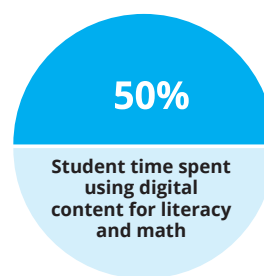
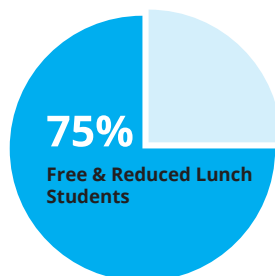
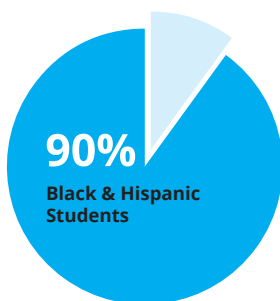
The small-group approach allows a teaching fellow to get to know

students on a more intimate level, understanding their unique learning styles and potential challenges. The fellows can leverage those connections to design engaging activities—discussions, debates, and problem-solving sessions—that match students’ interests and skill levels. Technology is used to maximize the quality of instruction.

The model also frees a master teacher to circulate through the room, pulling aside students who might need more intensive remediation or observing the fellows to generate feedback for the next day’s morning strategy session.

Each master teacher will have access to a real-time data dashboard to pinpoint students who might be struggling with a specific lesson or concept.

The goal is to provide students with a high-touch, deeply personalized experience that still fosters a sense of collaboration and engagement with their peers and instructors. By leveraging teaching fellows for instruction, a single master teacher



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy



can provide support to 36 students. The use of digital content will provide high-quality instruction and data monitoring tools that supplement the work of fellows.

Match envisions its new school as a technology research platform that can generate reality-based knowledge about which technology and tools work best with low-income, inner-city students—kids who must make rapid academic gains to reach grade-level proficiency (and then excel further).

The organization has built a strong relationship base to share its knowledge, including regional partnerships in Newark, Houston, Denver, and New Orleans. By

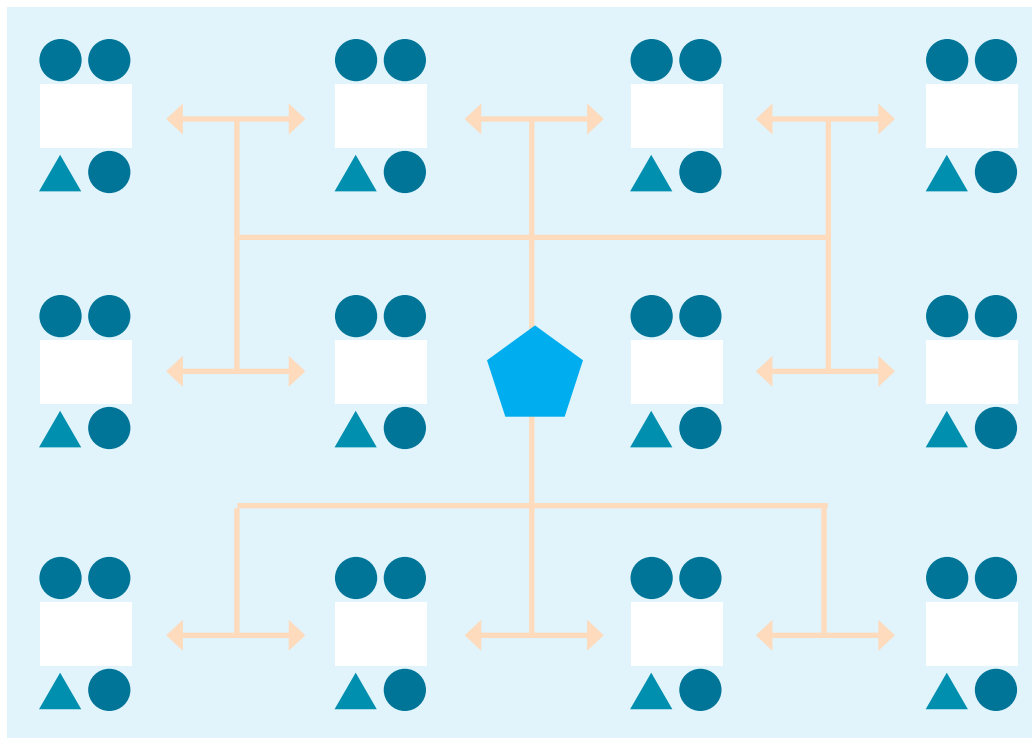
*“Match Next doubles down on one of its most successful practices: high-dosage tutoring. In this new model, there are no traditional classrooms; technology will be used to complement and enhance traditional tutoring, which pairs small groups of students with a teaching fellow for an entire class period.”*

disseminating “what works” about its model and training processes, Match hopes to serve a growing community of blended learning schools, rather than simply multiply its own.

Match has also worked to improve training for its teaching fellows and codify its staffing model. Prospective

applicants are recruited through the existing Match Corps, a fellowship that trains and supports new fellows. Match fellows will have the option to participate in the Match Teacher Residency, where they receive additional weekly training, creating an ongoing pipeline of future teachers.

## MATCH NEXT CLASSROOM



Match classrooms will be flexible, allowing teachers and students to reorganize tables for discussion or remediation. In a typical configuration, each table will have three students and a teaching fellow. A master teacher circulates the room to provide feedback, support, and to pull out students who might need further remediation.

◆ 1 MASTER TEACHER  
 ▲ 12 TEACHING FELLOWS  
 ● 36 STUDENTS

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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# SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

## SFF DETROIT

REACHING DISCONNECTED YOUTH THROUGH A RIGOROUS, RECUPERATIVE COLLEGE PREP MODEL

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012  
**Grades Served:** 8–12  
**Location:** Detroit, MI  
**Operator:** Schools for the Future Development  
**Operator Type:** Nonprofit  
**School Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 120  
**Students at Capacity:** 480

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** Canvas  
**Student Information System:** PowerSchool  
**Gradebook:** Canvas  
**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** ACT Plan and Explore, Achieve 3000, Think Through Math, Scantron Performance Series  
**Digital Content Providers:** Agile Mind, Think Through Math, Achieve 3000  
**Student Hardware:** Chromebooks  
Achieve 3000, iReady  
**Behavior Management:** Kickboard

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$10,910  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$16,126  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$10,099  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$10,092  
**Years to sustainability:** 3

“*Schools for the Future is designed specifically for students who are off-track academically, where frustrating school experiences could easily make them walk away. SFF can counter this by addressing learning gaps—but in a way that is recuperative, confidence-building, and blends remediation with challenging, higher-order academic work and extended learning opportunities that help students accelerate their learning and leave SFF college- and career-ready.*”

**EPHRAIM WEISSTEIN, SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE**

Picture a 15-year-old student. Now imagine her in a middle school classroom, struggling with basic skills and a life outside school, managing part-time work and the increasing demands from friends and family. Although she reads at a third-grade level, the term “grade level” just doesn’t apply to her—she’s a high schooler in every other way—and she’s strong at basic math, having helped out in the family business. Promote her socially to high school and statistically she’ll drop out by grade 10. Put her in a traditional alternative school or online recovery program and she might graduate, but with marginal skills. But if you keep her in middle school, what will happen to her?

Schools for the Future (SFF) offers an alternative to help her succeed. SFF is a new model for overage and undercredited students that uses a mastery approach to help them recuperate lost credits while accelerating their path toward college-ready standards and high school graduation. In its Detroit-based school, SFF combines intensive staffing with strategies to address social-emotional development with “wraparound” services like tutors and various technologies to support the diverse learning needs of students who are two or more years behind academically when they enter high school.

The heart of a student’s SFF experience is the “PACT Team,”

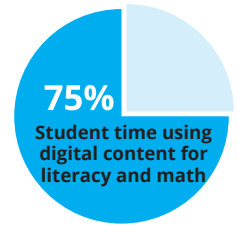
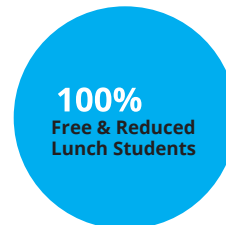
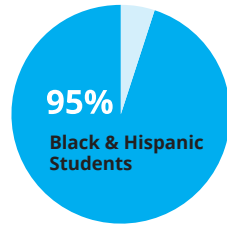
a group of 12–14 students that remains together for the duration of the program. The team meets daily, co-facilitated by a trained youth development specialist and an academic teacher, or PACT leader. PACT provides a daily “homebase,” facilitating a personalized program that anchors every student’s SFF experience and provides a regular format for performance review, study groups, individual and small-group counseling, and learning management. For 70 minutes each day, students meet with their PACT leaders to track academic progress, work on social-emotional literacy, and set a learning path to graduation and beyond.

Central to SFF’s model is the organization of curriculum into 30-day modules, where students advance based on demonstrated proficiency. Students and teachers receive real-time data on performance, and parents can view their children’s progress anytime and immediately communicate with SFF advisors and PACT leaders. Every 30 days, in sync with SFF’s modular curriculum design, the school takes a formal one-day hiatus for PACT leaders to conduct a comprehensive progress and support review with each student. As a result, a student might schedule a new set of course modules or extra “flex time” practice on a particular skill, or he might work with his PACT leaders to connect with a tutor.

SFF students progress through four

performance levels to graduation. Courses at the first two levels support acceleration and focus heavily on literacy and math as the “languages of learning.” Students spend the bulk of their day working on core subjects. In a prototypical class, five groups of three students work on five different activities within a module, two groups work on a different module, and three students work individually on their Chromebooks. Students attend SFF from 9:00 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. and, toward the end of the day, take electives such as art, computer animation, sports and recreational activities, and job readiness training in addition to reading and math computer-assisted learning. Students can stay for dinner or plug into the LMS and learning playlists they created later.

As students advance to SFF’s upper levels, Transitions and Pathways, they gain greater independence and broader options about how, where,



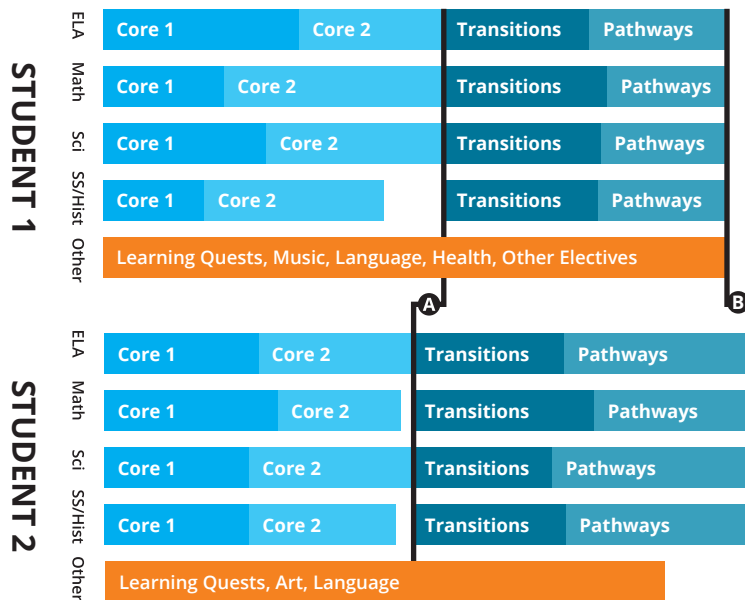
**BLENDED SUBJECTS: Math, Literacy, Science, Social Studies, PACT (youth dev. class)**

and when they learn. Their “limitless campus” of school, web, and community-based learning opportunities includes blended courses at the school, online courses, Saturday academies or workshops, tutorials, internships, Summer of Work and Learning activities, community-based projects, and required dual enrollment courses. By the final level, students are off-site as much as 60–70 percent of the day, accessing a range of high-quality learning opportunities such as college courses or internships that a single school could never provide alone. This approach also allows SFF to use

an innovative and cost-effective staffing plan, with higher student-staff ratios at lower SFF levels (when students need more intensive support) and fewer staff at higher levels (when students are more independent).

The SFF team integrates wraparound services and a high-tech, high-touch approach into the high school experience. A valuable opportunity exists to apply the new SFF model beyond Detroit to help address the growing nation-wide issue of overage and undercredited high school students.

## RECUPERATIVE COLLEGE PREP FOUR LEVEL PERFORMANCE SYSTEM



**CORE 1:** Grade 6 or below proficiency

**CORE 2:** Grade 8 proficiency

**TRANSITIONS:** Grade 10 proficiency

**PATHWAYS:** Grade 12 proficiency

### CORE 1 & 2 EXPERIENCE

Recuperative college prep curriculum: basic and higher order skills concurrently.

30-day curriculum modules to increase motivation and more effectively track learner progress and needs

Intensive literacy and numeracy development (115+ mins. day)

Built-in opportunities to accelerate through carefully selected acceleration programs

Formal 30-day performance reviews

1:1 technology environment and “high touch/high support” blended online curriculum

PACT Team: Hub of the SFF student experience and daily support system. Facilitated by youth development specialist and academic teacher. Affective development curriculum.

### Gateway to SFF Upper Levels **A**

Successful presentation of performance portfolio, required reading and math proficiency, and demonstration of gateway and ACT assessment benchmarks.

### Transitions & Pathways Experience

Increasing independence and diversity in path to graduation using “limitless campus” of web-based and community learning opportunities

2 required internships

2 required dual enrollment courses

PACT Team continues to provide “home base” for student support and graduation pathway planning

### Graduation & Post Secondary Transition **B**

Passed state graduation exam, received ACT score of 21 or better, and met other SFF graduation requirements.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://www.schools4future.org/sff-detroit> | Operator URL: <http://www.schools4future.org>

Contact: Ephraim Weisstein, [eweisstein@schools4future.org](mailto:eweisstein@schools4future.org)



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# SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## SUMMIT DENALI

### RE-ENVISIONING WHAT SCHOOL LOOKS LIKE

“With Summit Denali, we have the opportunity to design an entire school and educational experience around the question, ‘How does learning best occur?’ By putting student learning at the center and using technology to allow teachers to do what they do best, we will be able to offer a truly optimized learning environment for every individual student.”

*JOE BIELECKI, SUMMIT DENALI*

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6–12  
**Location:** Santa Clara, CA  
**Operator:** Summit Public Schools  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 100  
**Students at Capacity:** 700

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**  
Activate Instruction, developed by Summit in partnership with Illuminate Education

**Student Information System:**  
Illuminate

**Gradebook:** Illuminate

**Digital Content Providers:** Khan Academy, others TBD

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$9,460

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$14,464

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$7,965

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$7,884

**Years to sustainability:** 4

When Summit Public Schools examined its portfolio of California schools looking for areas to improve, the end goal was clear—college and career readiness—but school developers struggled to find room for change within their existing model.

The existing model was already rigorous, with all students participating in a college-prep curriculum, including at least six Advanced Placement courses before graduation. The schools were already leveraging digital content in the classroom to help provide differentiated instruction and remediation. But the very design of the traditional school—four walls around a classroom and students grouped by grades—was making it impossible to truly think outside the box.

What the school needed was to tear down the walls and remove the barriers separating teachers and students from learning.

In the fall of 2013, Summit’s “Optimized School Model” will debut with the opening of Summit Denali in Silicon Valley. Summit plans to break down silos between grades and con-

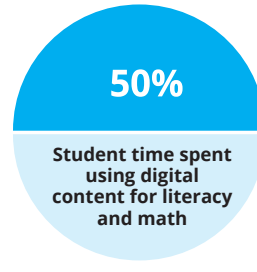
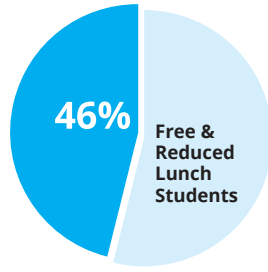
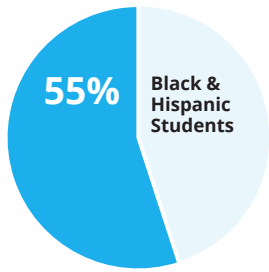
tent to allow students to move at their own pace, both academically and physically.

Driven by the belief that every minute of every day provides an opportunity for students to learn, Summit Denali’s design converts the significant time that students spend away from school—that is, evenings, weekends, vacations, and summer break—into a valuable learning opportunity.

The model enables this through three elements: a robust, custom-built LMS; continuous student access to content and assessments, and an Intersession program that regularly offers all students intensive, hands-on opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge, explore their passions and interests, investigate careers, and learn outside the school walls.

Summit is creating an open learning space where students can work on digital content in individual workstations. These workstations will be surrounded by learning spaces for small-group learning, one-to-one coaching and mentoring, and larger-group workshops and seminars.

*“In Summit’s Optimized School Model, the teacher’s role shifts from independent contractor to team member. Rather than be assigned to an individual grade, teachers will work together in teams with fluid sets of students to provide high-quality, face-to-face learning experiences.”*



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:  
All Subjects**

The individual workstations will be the gateway to the online LMS, which will give individual students (and parents) real-time access to a student's personalized learning plan, content, and assessments. These assessments will track competency in three main areas: High School Ready, College Ready, and Early College. Each day, students will log in to see an individualized list of what they need to master and a playlist of learning options (such as digital content, hands-on activities, or group discussions).

Teams of educators will regularly meet with students to monitor progress on the plan, set goals, evaluate performance, and facilitate continued achievement.

In Summit's Optimized School Model, the teacher's role shifts from independent contractor to team

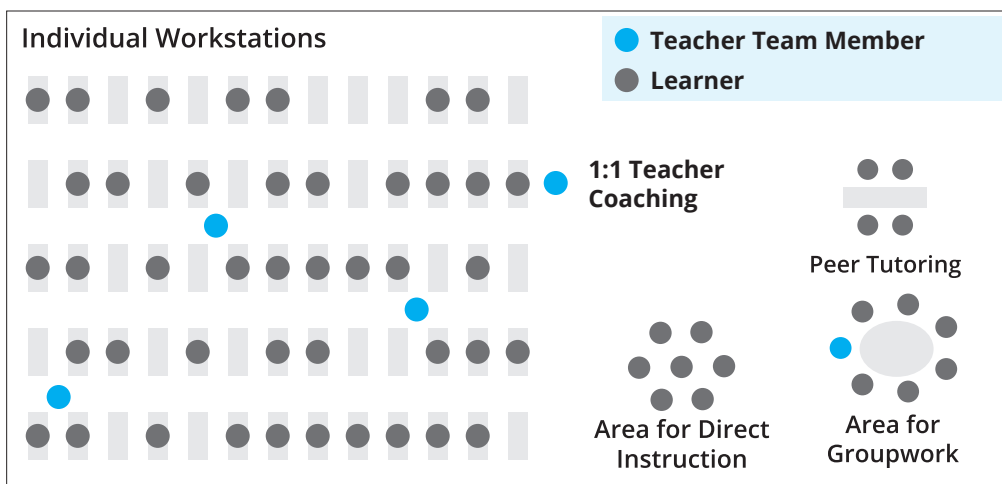
member. Rather than be assigned to an individual grade, teachers will work together in teams with fluid sets of students to provide high-quality, face-to-face learning experiences. Students will progress through learning phases by demonstrating competency in the skills, knowledge, behaviors, dispositions, and engagement needed to succeed in college, career, and community. Teams of educators might include both certified and nontraditional teachers, such as tutors, learning coaches, and data experts.

The school will also include a hallmark of the Summit model: a multiweek Intersession program (held at different times of the year) that gives students the freedom to engage in a course, internship, or project that explores areas of

interest or potential careers. During Intersession, Summit students work full time on courses ranging from digital arts and theater to robotics and community-service projects. At Denali, Intersession experiences will integrate with the development of the behaviors and dispositions they need to succeed in college, career, and life.

Summit Denali is just one stop along a "College Ready Corridor" that Summit is building in California. The charter network currently operates four schools, with plans to open 10 more over the next decade to serve 6,000 students across Silicon Valley. In all cases, lessons learned from individual models help refine and influence the entire cohort moving forward.

## LEARNING SPACES



Summit Denali's learning space is designed to be flexible and fluid, encouraging a natural flow of ideas between teachers and students and meeting all personalized pathways and learning styles. Individual student workstations are at the center of the main room, with surrounding learning spaces for peer tutoring, direct instruction, one-to-one coaching and remediation, and small-group projects.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Operator URL: <http://summitps.org/> | Contact: Mira Browne, [mbrowne@summitps.org](mailto:mbrowne@summitps.org)



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# TOUCHSTONE EDUCATION

## MERIT PREP NEWARK

COMBINING A CULTURE OF HIGH EXPECTATIONS WITH LEARNING INNOVATIONS

“Our goal is to push what happens when students are ‘offline’ in a blended learning school. We want to challenge students to take the content standards they’re learning online to show mastery when they are working offline.”

**BEN RAYER, TOUCHSTONE EDUCATION**

### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012  
**Grades Served:** 6-12  
**Location:** Newark, NJ  
**Operator:** Touchstone Education  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 80  
**Students at Capacity:** 630

### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:** Canvas  
**Student and Teacher Platform:** Developed by Junyo  
**Student Information System:** Powerschool  
**Gradebook:** Kickboard  
**Assessment Tools and Approaches:** NWEA MAP, Junyo  
**Digital Content Providers:** Compass Learning, Khan Academy, Achieve 3000, iReady  
**Behavior Management:** Kickboard

### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$14,520  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$16,500  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$14,823  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$14,823  
**Years to sustainability:** 1

The Touchstone Education model hinges on six key values: achievement, innovation, excellence, teamwork, urgency, and integrity. The model is explicitly designed to scale, and scale broadly.

At its core, however, is an uncompromising focus on high expectations—not just for students, but also for the model itself. When designing their first school, developers searched for a way to deliver differentiated support and personalization, while also ensuring that students were prepared for the rigors of college and the workplace.

Merit Prep Newark, Touchstone’s first 6–12 school in Newark, New Jersey, attempts to maximize the best of both technology and “offline” time with teachers and peers. The hoped-for result is that students will work through content at their own pace

while demonstrating what they learn in ways that reflect critical thinking, creativity, and other 21st-century skills they will eventually need in the workplace.

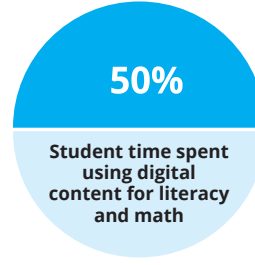
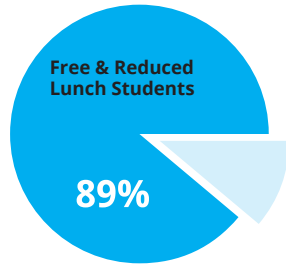
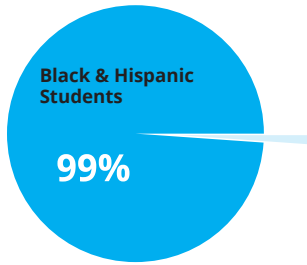
Each day, students log in to a personal home page that shows their daily schedule of online content and which skills they need to conquer. They learn these skills by working through self-paced, interactive digital content that lets individual learners move as slowly or quickly as needed.

As students complete activities or online assessments, performance data is fed into a two-way dashboard that reflects real-time results to both students and teachers. The teacher dashboards provide snapshots of group performance, visually demonstrating which students are proficient and which are performing above or below grade level.

### A DAY IN THE LIFE

	8:00-8:30	8:30-10:15	10:15-12:00	12:30-2:15	2:15-4:00	4:00-5:00
<b>MON:</b>	Advisory	English	Math	Science	Flex	After School
<b>TUE:</b>	Advisory	Science	Math	English	Flex	After School
<b>WED:</b>	Advisory	Math	Science	English	Flex	After School
<b>THU:</b>	Advisory	English	Math	Science	Flex	After School
<b>FRI:</b>	Advisory	Flex	Flex	Data Analysis / PD / Student Plans		

For students, each day begins with a 30-minute advisory that uses a social-emotional curriculum designed to help build trust, surface and discuss shared challenges, and engage students in reflection about their learning. The rest of the day, students work through 105-minute content blocks where they might divide time between online content and teacher-led instruction, discussion, or group work. During “flex” time, struggling students can work with teachers for remediation, while advanced students can move on to accelerated content, Advanced Placement courses, or electives.



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy, Science,  
Social Studies

These quick snapshots help teachers both select students for small group instruction and suggest new content for the following day. Over time, teachers can use student data to identify when a student's performance is a long-term trend and when it's a momentary lapse due to a challenging subject or personal issue.

On Fridays, teachers work in teams to review student data and create student groups and lesson plans for the following week. This dedicated planning and professional development time helps individual teachers pinpoint which students need remediation and targeted instruction in the week ahead.

When students are not logged in to their computers, "offline" time is dedicated to critical thinking and

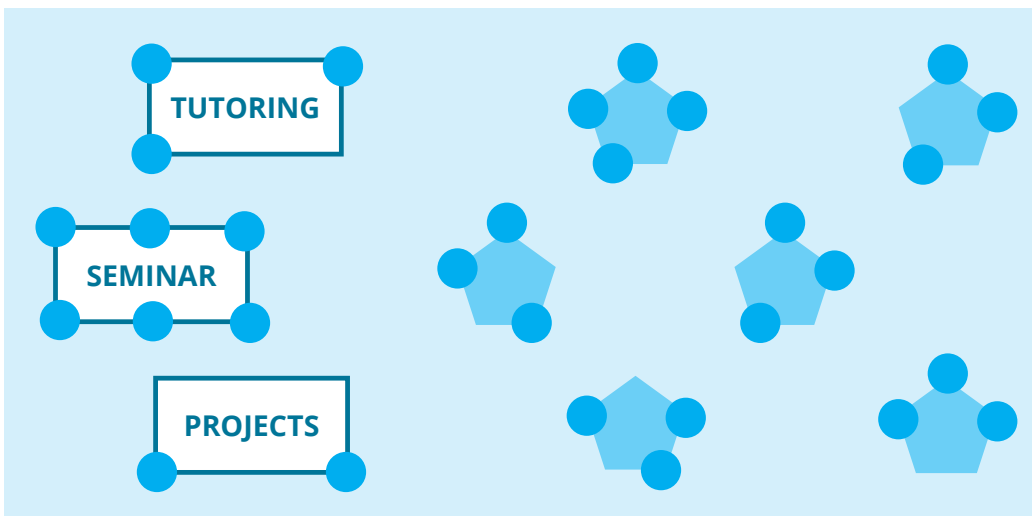
*"When students are not logged in to their computers, 'offline' time is dedicated to critical thinking and deeper learning. In small groups with master teachers, students are challenged to demonstrate their learning through projects, experiments, guided group work, and discussions."*

deeper learning. In small groups with master teachers, students are challenged to demonstrate their learning through projects, experiments, guided group work, and discussions designed to show that students can apply their skills to relevant and challenging activities.

Expansion is a key part of the Touchstone vision. The organization intends to create a model that gets great results for students and

design it in such a way as to create systems and processes that can scale anywhere. Technology is an essential factor that will enable both.

The ultimate goal is to build a national nonprofit that will operate networks of schools under the Touchstone model. Those networks will provide regional staff, financial resources, and support to schools that adopt the model with high fidelity.



At Merit Prep Newark, work occurs in a large, open room that looks more like a workplace than a school space. Students are grouped in pods of 30 in individual workstations surrounded by space for discussion and breakout. Throughout the day, students stay in their "home" pod while teachers rotate in and out for different content blocks. During any class period, students might get pulled aside for tutoring, peer projects, or a teacher-led seminar.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

School URL: <http://www.meritprepschools.org>

Operator URL: <http://touchstoneeducation.org> | Contact: Ben Rayer, [brayer@touchstoneeducation.org](mailto:brayer@touchstoneeducation.org)



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# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## USC HYBRID HIGH

### DRAMATICALLY INCREASING STUDENT ACCESS TO LEARNING

#### AT A GLANCE:

**Opened:** Fall 2012  
**Grades Served:** 9-12  
**Location:** Los Angeles, CA  
**Operator:** Ednovate, Inc.  
**Operator Type:** Nonprofit  
**School Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 150  
**Students at Capacity:** 650

#### MODEL TOOLBOX:

**Learning Management System:**  
Custom-built open-source LMS

**Student Information System:**  
Schools Pathways

**Gradebook:** Combination of Apex Learning for digital content and customized gradebook for other competencies

**Assessment Tools and Approaches:**  
Apex, custom-built rubric-based system, NWEA MAP

**Digital Content Providers:** Apex Learning, Khan Academy

**Hardware:** MacBook Air laptops, iPod touches and iPads

#### BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:** \$10,805

**Year 1 expenses per pupil:** \$12,062

**Year 4 revenue per pupil:** \$8,426

**Year 4 expenses per pupil:** \$8,083

**Years to sustainability:** 3

“We strongly believe that academic growth is inextricably linked with social-emotional growth. We begin where students are ready to begin, aim at where students want to go, and adjust to student persistence and engagement.”

DAVID DWYER, USC HYBRID HIGH

When designing a new high school in Los Angeles, the University of Southern California (USC) started by zeroing in on the problem: nationwide, 1.2 million high school students drop out every year. And the dropout rate in USC's own backyard is 45 percent. The problem isn't limited to specific types of students such as those with unique family situations or personal struggles. In fact, they discovered, the very nature of “school” and fixed school schedules might be part of the problem.

The solution: a school model that considers the responsibilities and struggles that adolescents bear, reflected in increased access, more opportunities to learn, customized learning paths, and flexible schedules for students.

USC Hybrid High is open up to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 310 days a year. Technology and differentiated staffing allow the school to innovate with time, staffing and space, and operate at the same cost as the traditional 175–180 day schools. Beyond year-round access and customized schedules, the model allows for personalized and mastery-based

learning and provides significant out-of-school learning opportunities and an advisory structure for social-emotional supports.

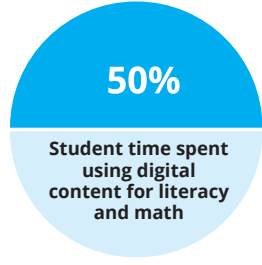
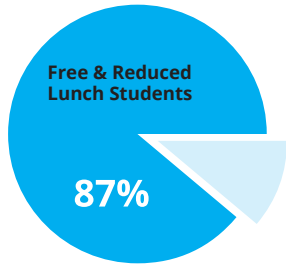
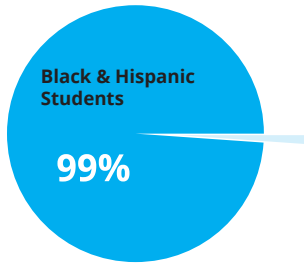
The principle that underpins the Hybrid High model is that social-emotional growth and academic growth are inextricably linked. When they enter the school, students select an advisor who will work with them until graduation. These advisors become advocates, getting to know the students and their families and working with students on both academic growth and social-emotional growth. Weekly, students meet with personal advisors to evaluate progress based on real-time data and modify learning plans for the coming week.

Students spend half their time engaged in interactive, self-paced learning, mastering common core aligned content, and the other half on challenge-based projects, internships, dual-credit courses, and community service.

Students learn to manage their own schedules and the pace of their learning and to set their own expectations. If a student knows that he can focus better in the morning,

“USC Hybrid High is open up to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 310 days a year.”





**BLENDED SUBJECTS:**  
Math, Literacy, Science,  
Social Studies,  
Foreign Language

he can schedule his core academic courses then.

If another student is struggling with math, he makes sure to meet daily with an intervention specialist. With parent approval, students with jobs or family commitments can adjust their schedule to their needs.

Unlike traditional schools with classrooms that open into silent halls, USC Hybrid High features a large, open, and bustling space that allows for students to work independently on their computers, huddle rooms where two to three students can work collaboratively or with a tutor, and project studios where learners can build and tinker. In the

school, students work through online courses, collaborate on problem solving with peers, and consult with a differentiated instructional team that includes teachers and subject matter experts. They can also meet with a student support coordinator about personal issues. Outside school, students can also work with online teachers or on civic engagement projects. Students can continue to work on the weekends at the school on both their digital courses and challenge-based projects. By rethinking and diversifying staff, USC Hybrid High provides expertise and support when and where students need it.

When students come to the end of

a course, they are required to demonstrate mastery both by taking a final exam and by developing a project that explores big questions raised in the course at a deeper level. When they complete their project, they present it to panels of peers, parents, and teachers.

Students are also responsible for creating their own projects that they pursue either individually or in small groups. They work with their teachers to define the project and interactively create rubrics for evaluating the work products. Some of these projects may result in community-service opportunities. During intersession weeks, the entire school might take on the study of a broad subject like the availability of potable water worldwide. The study would include workshops with experts, experiments, and student presentations. The ultimate goal is to empower students, engage them in their learning, and provide them with constant support.

USC Hybrid High considers school design to be a process, an iterative effort guided by formative data. To fulfill their mission, the founders are committed to developing a replicable and scalable instructional and operational model that's continually evaluated and improved. The school aims to serve as a laboratory and inform efforts of the local district and others working to better serve high-need students by experimenting with hybrid and blended models.

## HYBRID HIGH MODEL

	Advisories and Counseling	Challenged-Based Projects	Online Core Courses	School and Community Service	Extended Hours, Days and Weeks	Flexible Schedules	Just-In-Time Support	No-Excuse Commitment	Personalized Learning Plans
21st Century Skills	●	●	●				●		●
Civic Engagement	●		●					X	
Common Core Standards		●	●		●				●
Social and Emotional Growth	●		●	●	●			X	

USC Hybrid High's model includes a focus on content mastery, 21st century skills, civic responsibility, and personal growth and resiliency. Flexible scheduling, personalized supports, project-based learning, and extended access to school enable this approach.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

School URL: <http://uschybridhigh.org> | Contact: David Dwyer, [ddwyer@usc.edu](mailto:ddwyer@usc.edu)



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# VENTURE ACADEMY

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERS AND INNOVATORS

“We want students to take charge of their learning. We’re not just dabbling in this, we’re aggressively and relentlessly focused on student ownership. We want our students to know their learning goals, where they stand, and how they will get there.”

**JON BACAL, VENTURE ACADEMIES**

## AT A GLANCE:

**Opening:** Fall 2013  
**Grades Served:** 6-12  
**Location:** Minneapolis, MN  
**Operator:** Venture Academies  
**Operator Type:** Charter  
**Focus:** Urban  
**Students at Opening:** 125  
**Students at Capacity:** 400-500

## BY THE NUMBERS:

**Year 1 public revenue per pupil:**  
\$12,710  
**Year 1 expenses per pupil:**  
\$13,630  
**Year 4 revenue per pupil:**  
\$11,697  
**Year 4 expenses per pupil:**  
\$8,804  
**Years to sustainability:** 1

*“The school’s focus on entrepreneurialism will be infused in every segment of the student experience. Just like the inventors they study, students will be expected to be driven, self-motivated directors of their own learning.”*

Venture Academy, a new year round 6-12 charter slated to open in Minneapolis in fall 2013, isn’t just creating 21st century learners. They’re helping grow the next generation of leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs, students dedicated not just to learning facts but using knowledge to pull apart, reassemble, and redesign ideas.

Venture’s learning model is founded on three model elements:

- **Inspiring Innovators and Leaders:** Inspiring passionate, purposeful innovators, entrepreneurs, makers and other leaders is not only an aspirational goal after graduation. While at Venture, students and staff engage in the passionate, deep practice of innovative, entrepreneurial leadership by taking charge of their learning and taking responsibility for improvement. Blending the best digital content and tools, time-tested classical approaches and hands-on project and discovery learning, Venture cultivates the knowledge, skills, mindsets and experiences of creative, 21st century innovators, entrepreneurs, makers and leaders.
- **Try-Measure-Learn-Iterate:** Venture’s educators and students seek constant improvement by tracking learning progress and adapting programs, methods and tools with the support of personalized digital learn-

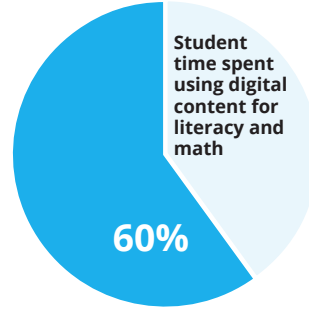
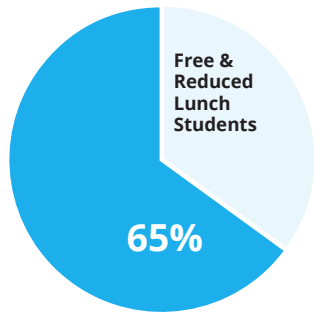
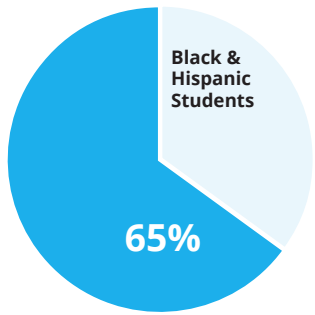


A snapshot of the core elements of the Venture model.

ing plans, data dashboards and real-time feedback. Students, educators and leaders are always encouraged to try new approaches, take risks, admit mistakes and share lessons. Failing fast is essential to learning.

- **Growing Great People:** Like the Talent Code’s Daniel Coyle, Venture believes that great learning, leadership and character is neither innate nor mysterious. Venture is designed to ignite the passions of young people and educators to relentlessly practice becoming great learners, educators, leaders and human beings.

The school’s focus on entrepreneurial leadership will be infused in nearly every segment of the student experience. Just like the inventors they will study, Venture Academy students will be expected to be driven,



**BLENDED SUBJECTS:  
Math, Literacy**

self-motivated directors of their own learning. Each student will define their own learning goals, which, coupled with pre-semester assessments and feedback from teacher coaches, will help drive an individual student learning plan. The plan will be housed online, providing 24/7 access to students, teachers, and parents, and adapted each week during a 1:1 session with their personal coach. An online dashboard will provide real-

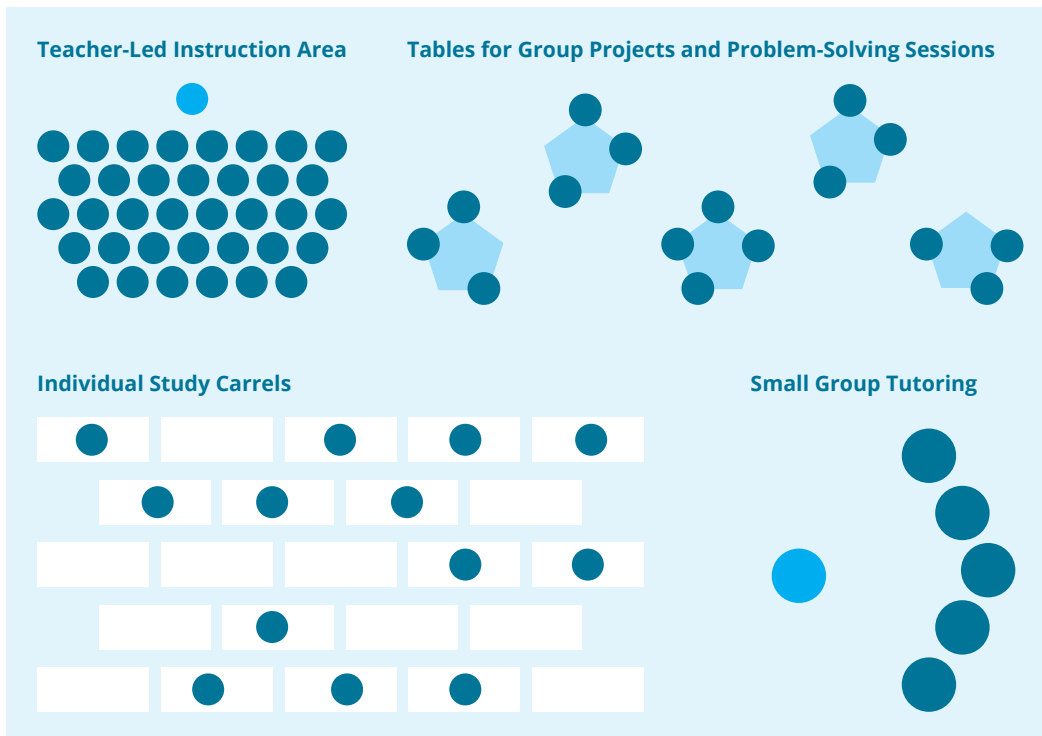
time updates about how students are progressing toward their academic goals, with updates to parents and teachers on progress.

Each day will begin with student advisory where, in small cohorts anchored by a teacher or administrator, students refine their individual goals and discuss any personal challenges. Part of the time is also set aside for "Herotime," where students share a profile of an inventor or innovator

that inspires their work. During all-school assemblies, students will be encouraged to celebrate "marvelous mistakes" by sharing weekly failures and what they've learned.

Utilizing personalized schedules, students will engage in direct face-to-face instruction, team-based problem-solving sessions, simulation activities, small-group tutoring, or digital content adapted to their level of understanding.

## THE VENTURE LEARNING COMMONS



The Learning Commons is a large, open area that includes study carrels where students can access videos, digital curriculum, and learning games and simulations on their own devices. Tables for group projects and small group work are scattered around the room.

On the perimeter, classroom spaces let teachers provide direct instruction, small-group tutoring, and one-on-one remediation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Operator URL: <http://ventureacademies.org/> | Contact: Jon Bacal, [jbacal@comcast.net](mailto:jbacal@comcast.net)



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