

REYNOLDSBURG HIGH SCHOOL, eSTEM ACADEMY

Creating a Challenging Experiential Learning Community

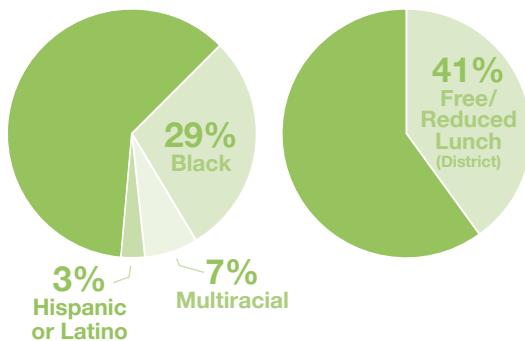
*It's the commencement of a whole new way of learning.
It's about having these students engaged and having the skills to
be college- and career-ready.*

SCHOOL INFO:

Location: Reynoldsburg, OH
Type: District
Focus: STEM
District: Reynoldsburg City Schools

BY THE NUMBERS:

Date Opened: August 2010
Grades Served: 9-12
Enrollment: 560
Teachers: 17
Students Demographics:



Reynoldsburg City Schools is a diverse and highly challenging first-ring district east of Columbus that serves 6,500 students. The district earned an A+ on the state report card and met all 26 indicators, while spending about \$3,000 less per pupil than neighboring Columbus schools.

Superintendent Steve Dackin, a former principal in the district who worked for the state department of education, took the helm weeks before voters were to weigh in on a bond issue to build a second high school. He recast the facilities proposal as an opportunity to think differently about high school. After voters approved, he launched a comprehensive community engagement and design process, which included rewriting the plan from two traditional comprehensive high schools to a new high school facility with one school, two campuses, four academies, and a personalized pathway for every student. Five years later, Reynoldsburg High School eSTEM Academy exemplifies personalized, integrated, and problem-based learning, early college credit opportunities, and work and community connections.

Debbie Howard, Chief Innovation Officer of EDWorks, a school improvement group and district partner, notes, "Reynoldsburg is rapidly becoming a national demonstration site for innovation."

What is Deeper Learning?

Deeper Learning teaches students to master core academic content, think critically, solve complex problems, work collaboratively, communicate effectively, direct their own learning, and develop an academic mindset.



An example of a Reynoldsburg classroom that keeps students engaged and ready to learn.

Student Spotlight:

Recent graduate, Alex Hudak, signed up for eSTEM's design Capstone because of his interest in engineering. Initially, he was nervous about the personalized format and had reservations as to if it would work. As he was completing his high school career, he said it made sense. "I didn't think about the credits," he said. "I would tell them what I wanted to do and they provided the courses needed to accomplish it."

Hudak said each day varied based on the assignments and projects he was working on, which kept him and students alike, engaged and excited about learning. In an almost three-hour block, he could have a face-to-face Advanced Placement calculus lesson, complete assignments for an online technical-writing class, or pore over readings from his ethics teacher.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER

Marcy Raymond was a teacher and administrator in Reynoldsburg before founding Metro Early College High School, a leading STEM school and anchor of the Ohio STEM Learning Network. She returned to Reynoldsburg to help Dackin create the innovative two-campus, four-academy high school.

As leader of the eSTEM Academy, Raymond spots emerging opportunities like Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and quickly incorporates them into curriculum. eSTEM students can choose from several college level courses including statistics, physics and computer science courses from online higher education provider, Udacity.

A student told the Columbus Education Commission they enjoyed the individual pacing, more instructional resources, and mastery-based progress that eSTEM offered. The student also appreciated the opportunity to go back and correct tests to better their scores and understanding of key concepts.

Each academy at Reynoldsburg High is developing capstone experiences designed to bridge high school coursework with college and job preparation. At eSTEM, students can sign up for one of three capstones focused on design, logistics or energy, environment, and the economy. Each triple-block course packs in college credit courses (MOOC or AP), internships and undergraduate-style research projects. The combination of small academies and big blocks makes it easier to incorporate new delivery technologies and customized learning experiences.

"Using state and local 'credit flex' policies, a single teacher facilitates as many as five or six credit hours in a three-hour block of time—breaking free from seat time requirements, but more importantly creating competency-based models of learning that are connected to the world of work," explained Lisa Duty of The Learning Accelerator.

"We want to make sure students understand the transition from high school to college and get work experience so they can make a choice for their next steps," Raymond, said. She has also helped to extend engaging eSTEM learning experiences to two of the district's elementary schools and a middle school, making it a K-12 option serving a third of the district's enrollment.



GettingSmart.com
Deeperlearning4all.org

**Reynoldsburg High School,
eSTEM Academy**
8579 Summit Road
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068
www.reyn.org