



# American Youth Policy Forum

## About the Schools

### Scaling Deeper Learning through District-Wide Implementation of Project-Based Learning

An AYPF Study Tour

Kentucky/Ohio | November 6-8, 2018

#### Owensboro Innovation Academy

The Owensboro Innovation Academy (OIA) [opened in 2015](#) as the first high school in Kentucky to be a part of the New Tech Network (NTN). Starting with a freshmen class of 100 students, OIA has added a grade each year, serving approximately 320 students currently. Students from Owensboro Public Schools, Daviess County Public Schools, and McLean County Public Schools attend the school and are selected using a [stratified lottery](#) that reflects the student population of their home high school. OIA is situated within a predominantly white, working-class community and its student population reflects that reality: 81 percent of students are white and 78 percent qualify for free and reduced priced lunch. OIA is a high-performing public school, with English and math scores and ACT scores surpassing the district and state averages.

OIA is designated a [District of Innovation](#) under Kentucky Board of Education, a type of alternative school aimed at providing an “enhanced learning experience.” Districts of Innovation are “exempt from certain administrative regulations and statutory provisions, as well as waiving local board policy, in an effort to improve the learning of students.” Districts of Innovation aim to re-think what a school looks like, reinvent instruction, and redesign student learning, in an effort to better engage and prepare more students to be college- and career-ready. For example, OIA has flexible scheduling, using a combination of class time, online classes, internships, etc. to truly personalize each student's schedule to fit his or her needs.

As a NTN school, OIA focuses on project-based learning where students immerse themselves in real-world, hands-on projects to master the academic content. OIA is focused on training future entrepreneurs and is located in the Owensboro Centre for Business and Research, a [business incubator space](#) that launched in 2009 to provide office and laboratory space for emerging businesses that focus on the life sciences. The school also has a [partnership with Brescia University](#), allowing students to earn two-year associates degrees while in high school. Students are able to choose from four tracks (general studies, health studies, pre-nursing, and pre-engineering); two of the tracks cover basic college requirements for either an associate of arts or science degree.

#### For More Information:

Innovation is Key at New Owensboro High School (NPR Article/Podcast):

<http://wkyufm.org/post/innovation-key-new-owensboro-high-school-1#stream/0>

Owensboro Innovation Academy: What it's Like (Student Blog):

<https://newtechnetwork.org/resources/owensboro-innovation-academy-like/>

## Winton Woods City Schools

Winton Woods City Schools, located on the outskirts of Cincinnati, Ohio, became a part of the New Tech Network (NTN) in 2011 and converted into an entire [PreK-12 NTN district](#) in 2016 with support from a [state-level innovation grant](#). Winton Woods is an [open enrollment district](#), serving approximately 3,600 students from the communities of Forest Park, Village of Greenhills, and Springfield Township. The student population is very diverse, with 25 languages spoken in the district. Winton Woods serves a majority black student population (57 percent), 17 percent of students are English language learners, and 74 percent are economically disadvantaged.

As a [NTN district](#), Winton Woods is focused on [project-based learning](#), where students learn through challenging, authentic, real-world projects. This unique approach to teaching and learning creates a [seamless pathway](#) from preschool through 12th grade. In 2016, the preschool program received a five-star rating from the State of Ohio's Step Up to Quality rating system. Over 96 percent of third-grade students met the requirements of Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The middle school offers math and foreign language classes for high school credit, advanced classes in science and language arts, and elective engineering courses focused on technology and robotics.

The high school is fully accredited by Advanced Ed and is a full member of the Southern Regional Educational Board High Schools That Work school improvement network. The 4- and 5-year graduation rates are on par with state averages (83 percent and 86 percent, respectively). In addition to comprehensive academics, the district offers a variety of arts, sports, and extracurricular activities and clubs. The district's music program was recognized by the National Association of Music Merchants as one of the [Best Communities for Music Education](#) in the country.

### **For More Information:**

Winton Woods City Schools: A New Tech Network District (4 Videos):

<http://www.wintonwoods.org/Content/new-tech-network>