

# INNOVATION GENERATION

InnovationGenerationOhio.com

## Imagine Your Child's Future: *Innovation Generation*

Imagine an education program that allows your child to explore a variety of career-related interests, starting as early as middle school – without getting locked into any one pathway.

Imagine an education program that provides your child the qualifications he or she needs to get a good job right out of high school – or to use those same skills toward earning a four-year college degree.

Imagine that such a program exists right at your child's school, alongside his or her regular course choices – not in place of them.

Now, also imagine that there is no charge for your child to enroll beyond nominal materials and lab fees comparable to those for other course offerings.

If you can imagine all of that, you've imagined *Innovation Generation*, a unique collaboration of 15 central Ohio school districts, businesses and higher education partners founded on the need for young people to explore their interests and talents before deciding on a career.

### **Our Commitment to Our Students**

Our district is committed to providing opportunities for Westerville students to not only graduate high school, but to move forward equipped with an industry credential, college credit, or both. Research shows that students with these opportunities are less likely to need remediation in college and are more likely to successfully complete a post-secondary program.

But we also know that today's economy has changed dramatically over the last 30 years. More and more good jobs require a credential demonstrating specialized technical skills, but not always a four-year degree. *Innovation Generation* is tied directly to growth areas within the central Ohio economy.

### **How Innovation Generation Works**

#### In Middle School

Throughout middle school, students will have an opportunity to explore many career and interest pathways through courses such as Engineering and Design. In addition to building foundational academic and personal skills in students, these early experiences also support students and families in setting goals for high school and beyond.

The cornerstone program available to middle schoolers is Advanced Manufacturing. Students participating in Advanced Manufacturing will apply the engineering design process and operate the same industry-leading technology and software used in the world's top companies to solve problems that matter. They will have an opportunity to use Westerville City Schools' mobile FabLab, which is equipped with some of the latest high-tech manufacturing tools. Students will learn to operate laser cutters, 3D printers, robots and the computer software needed to program them. Making things is much cooler than it used to be, so Advanced Manufacturing may be just the right career path for students with the interest, creativity and talent to bring technology and brainpower together.

## In High School

In high school, students can choose to pursue a pathway developed to meet economic growth areas in central Ohio. These pathways will provide access to high school and college-level courses, as well as an opportunity to earn an industry credential. They include:

### *Health care:*

The health care industry is one of the fastest growing and most important in central Ohio. The variety of good health care jobs for motivated students is almost limitless. For a student who's passionate about medicine and technology or has a sincere desire to be involved in an industry where the goal is to help improve lives, a career path in health care might be a perfect fit.

### *Business logistics:*

If a hurricane hits Texas, how do emergency response agencies coordinate rescue workers and humanitarian aid? In one word: logistics. Logistics is the science of managing the movement of objects – food, materials, animals, equipment and liquids – as well as time, information and energy. This movement can occur on trucks, trains, ships, or electronic networks. And in central Ohio, good jobs for motivated young people in business logistics are growing fast.

## **About Innovation Generation**

In 2013 the Ohio Department of Education provided grants totaling \$14.4 million to 15 central Ohio school districts to develop the initiative that became *Innovation Generation*. Westerville programs are funded by a \$1.4 million share of that grant and are intended to be sustainable after the initial funds are spent. The 15-district collaboration is affiliated with the national Pathways to Prosperity Network and is supported by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Jobs for the Future.

## **Why Innovation Generation is needed**

Economic development experts have estimated that our region will need nearly twice as many adults with postsecondary credentials to meet workforce demands by 2020. According to Complete College America, 59 percent of Ohio jobs will require a college degree or industry-recognized certification; currently 36 percent of Ohio adults have one.

## **Leaving Student Options Open**

This initiative combines industry-specific learning with college course work leading to marketable industry certificates, as well as progress toward an associate degree. For students who want to complete an associate degree, or pursue a four-year degree at a later time, *Innovation Generation* will provide a significant head start.

## **Enrollment**

The next opportunity for students to enroll in an Innovation Generation pathway will be in early 2015, when students will choose their courses for the 2015-16 school year. To find out more about the pathways and how to participate, students and parents can talk with a teacher or school counselor. Or, they can Anne Baldwin, Career Tech and College Readiness Coordinator, [BaldwinA@westerville.k12.oh.us](mailto:BaldwinA@westerville.k12.oh.us), 614-797-7758.