



District of Innovation Applications Due October 31, 2014

Since the legislation for Districts of Innovation (HB 37, 2012 Enacted) became law, the focus of the initiative has been to provide districts with the opportunity to receive flexibility on certain statutes and administrative regulations in order to remove barriers to implementing innovative strategies. That is only part of the benefit of the District of Innovation status.

Being a District of Innovation has been life-changing for Eminence Schools. It has given us the ability to further drive down to the under bearing systemic barriers. Once the barrier is defined we can turn to other DOIs and the State of KY to pool our learning potential for a solution. We also have appreciated the KDE's receptivity to our needs concerns, and issues.
(Buddy Berry, Superintendent, Eminence Independent)

If you would like to be able to have freedom to think outside the box and be creative about how and when you get curriculum to your students then you need to apply to be a District of Innovation. It makes our faculty and staff proud to be a "District of Innovation" and I believe because we have that designation our employees strive to live up to that title. (Roger Cook, Superintendent, Taylor County)

Paul Peterson in his book *Saving Schools: From Horace Mann to Virtual Learning* states "Effective ideas and ideals acquire a force and energy that overwhelm the opposition. What had once seemed impossible becomes reality. What was once an idea becomes its own set of interests."

In addition to the afore mentioned flexibility, being a District of Innovation brings a group of progressive educators together to collectively push on removing barriers and changing the face of education in Kentucky.

KDE recognizes that there are pockets of innovation in school districts all across the Commonwealth that have implemented unique and creative learning opportunities for Kentucky students. By joining forces as Districts of Innovation their voices will be louder and more effective in driving change in all Kentucky schools and in modernizing education policy and law in Kentucky to better serve the needs of all students.

The collective action of this group can have a profound impact on education in our state and therefore we are encouraging your district to apply to become part of this group.

The District of Innovation designation has helped the Owensboro Public Schools chart a course for making our already very good district even better by focusing on innovation around the instructional core. It has helped us add significant connections to postsecondary education and the business community has created a sharper vision of what college and career readiness really means for our students and our community. Being associated with many of the leaders of learning in the Commonwealth has also helped to promote a growth mindset for future success. (Nicholas Brake, Ph.D., Superintendent, Owensboro Independent)

The District of Innovation designation provides a formal opportunity for rethinking the learning experience for students. It encouraged us to question, and to think differently about rules and regulations. And, although the designation did provide for additional flexibility, simply having the opportunity to create the plan itself led to really important thinking about how we could better equip our students for success in today's world. (Carmen Coleman, former superintendent Danville Independent).