



School LEA: 7207060

School Name: GEORGE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Submitter Information

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Date of application: 6/16/2014

District Information

District LEA: 7207000
District Name: SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Superintendent Name: JIMMY ROLLINS
Superintendent Email: jrollins@sdale.org

General Questions

School's Most Recent Accountability Status: Needs Improvement
Special Accountability Status: N/A
Is this a brand new LEA? No
Is this an ALE School? No

Vision and Mission

The success of the Springdale School District in creating personalized learning environments for its students and implementing innovative strategies to meet that goal has been truly remarkable. Evidence to that effect can be seen in the recent awarding of a \$25.8 million Race to the Top District grant by the United States Department of Education. The grant competition required a focus on personalized learning and a demonstrated history of success and innovation, which made it possible for Springdale to earn the highest score in the country out of more than 200 applications submitted.

The Springdale School District has submitted six identical applications in order for the District to establish the Springdale School of Innovation. Those six secondary schools would become feeder schools for the School of Innovation, and that organizational model would allow students to return to their home feeder schools for participation in extracurricular programs.

Serving as a pilot for each of the District's twenty-nine schools, the schools of the State of Arkansas and the nation, this School of Innovation will provide an accelerated pathway for students to earn an Associate's degree and/or industry-level certification(s) in addition to a high school diploma by the end of their twelfth grade school year. The combination of nationally emerging best practices of competency-based learning and blended learning will be the keystone of the instructional plan of this school. This model will provide personalized, self-paced learning thereby ensuring student voice and choice. Students will participate in an academic environment that is focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and hands-on learning that engage families and community. This learning process will open doors for opportunities in post-secondary learning environments and the world of work. Academic partnerships are being created with the Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) that will assure students the opportunity to earn sixty or



more hours of concurrent credit in established career pathways and fields of study culminating in an Associate's degree.

In the Springdale School of Innovation, students will be asked to declare a major focus of study in a STEM area. The school will focus on providing students the opportunity to move at their own pace rather than being confined to the time constraints imposed by Carnegie units. With the Carnegie unit waiver, students will be able to accumulate general course credits beginning in the eighth grade. Starting in the tenth grade school year, students will take concurrent college courses enabling them to earn college and high school credits simultaneously. The school's curriculum will include teaching the required 38 units as mandated by the Arkansas Department of Education. To this end, students at the School of Innovation will earn a High School Diploma and an Associate's Degree and/or industry-level certification by the end of their twelfth grade school year.

In the 2014-2015 school year, approximately 200 eighth grade students will attend the School of Innovation. Each year, 200 additional eighth grade students will be admitted until approximately 1,000 students are enrolled in grades eight through twelve in the 2018-2019 school year.

Any waivers included in this application will only apply to students who are in the School of Innovation program.

During the 2014-2015 inaugural year, the school will be housed in approximately 15,000 square feet of leased instructional space at the Jones Center for Families, 922 East Emma Avenue, Springdale, Arkansas, but will not have its own local education agency (LEA) number. In addition to the leased instructional space, amenities available at the Jones Center include an auditorium, dining area, olympic size swimming pool, regulation basketball court, and more. Additional information on the Jones Center for Families may be found at the following website: <http://thejonescenter.net>

With the unparalleled opportunity afforded the District through the Race to the Top grant, the Springdale School of Innovation will establish a new standard for educational excellence that can transfer to any school in the nation. The innovative design of the school will fundamentally change education from a traditional, mass-production teaching model to a student-centered, personalized learning model.

The school's design has been influenced by renowned national consultants who have helped spawn numerous successful educational initiatives, but the core of the design effort has been developed by the Springdale School District's educational team in concert with local business leaders, specialists from corporate Northwest Arkansas, and school district patrons. Those partnerships and the joint commitments that have been developed will assure the successful implementation and positive future of educational service for the students of the Springdale School of Innovation and for all who share in and contribute to the innovative plan of the Springdale School District.



Goals and Performance Targets

Goal	Goal Description	Goal Assessment
1	Through competency-based learning, students will begin earning high school credits in eighth grade and college credits in tenth grade thereby enabling students to graduate from high school with an Associate's Degree and/or industry-level certificate(s).	1. The number of students who are prepared to take college courses during their tenth grade year as measured by ACT or COMPASS score (Baseline data will be collected during the 2014-2015 school year.) 2. The number of students earning concurrent credit each school year (Baseline data will be collected during the 2014-2015 school year.) 3. The number of students graduating with industry-level certification (Because the first cohort of students will begin in eighth grade, this goal will not be measured until the 2018-2019 school year.) 4. The number of students graduating with an Associate's degree (Because the first cohort of students will begin in 8th grade, this goal will not be measured until the 2018-2019 school year.)
2	Carnegie units, the traditional method of measuring course credits based on clock hours, will be eliminated and replaced by competency-based learning.	The baseline data will be established in the 2014-2015 school year for each of these assessments and will be re-established every five years. 1. All students will receive course credits upon demonstration of proficiency in District-designed competencies aligned with Arkansas standards. 2. The number of students meeting their individual formative growth targets in reading, mathematics, and science, as measured by the MAP assessments, will increase by one-tenth of the difference between the baseline and 100% annually. 3. The number of students meeting their individual growth targets in English/language arts and mathematics, as measured by the PARCC assessments, will increase by one-tenth of the difference between the baseline and 100% annually.
3		
4		



Requested Waivers

Code section, Rule, or Local Policy	Goal	Rationale
Standard XVIII - Accreditation of Schools: Rules 24.05 A.C.A 6-16-124 (a)(2) Standard IV - Curriculum Rule: 9.03.3.11 "Carnegie Unit"	2	<p>This waiver will only apply to students who are in the School of Innovation program.</p> <p>The applicant will determine academic success by each student's ability to demonstrate mastery of content and skills without regard to the length of the course as measured by clock hours. This type of self-paced instruction is referred to as mastery learning or competency-based learning. Rather than logging 120 clock hours before progressing to the next course, students must demonstrate proficiency of essential competencies. District-designed competencies are based on Arkansas curriculum standards. The required 38 units will be taught. Competency-based learning provides students the opportunity to complete a course by demonstrating mastery with fewer than 120 clock hours in a course. Conversely, students will be able to take more time to reach proficiency and will not be required to move to the next level inadequately prepared.</p> <p>For further information, see School of Innovation Executive Briefing under the tab of Additional Documentation.</p> <p>What are Competencies? (from Center for Secondary School Redesign, included in additional documentation)</p> <p>As students transition into a system where all coursework is described in terms of demonstrating proficiency, the importance and relevance of content becomes clear to each student. Competencies will be created and implemented. Competencies will meet the most rigorous level. To guide competency development nationally recognized rubrics, such as the New Hampshire Competency Validation Rubric, will be used. Competencies should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align with national, state, and local standards; areas may be combined or clustered for learning.• Clearly and descriptively articulate importance in understanding the content area.• Connect content to higher concepts across other content areas.• Include skills that are transferable across content areas and applicable to real-life situations.• Require an understanding of relationships among theories, principles, or concepts.



- Require a deep understanding and an application of knowledge to a variety of settings.
- Ask students to create conceptual connections and exhibit a level of understanding that is beyond the stated facts or literal interpretation and defend their position or point of view through application of content.
- Promote complex connections through creating, analyzing, designing, proving, developing, or formulating
- Define what is to be measured in clear and descriptive language.
- Promote multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate evidence of learning in interdisciplinary fashion.

How does Competency-Based Learning (CBL) work?
(from CompetencyWorks, included in additional documentation)

In 2011, iNACOL held a summit on competency education, bringing together educators, instructional leaders, and education advocates who believed in the promise of this new approach to teaching and learning. Participants developed the following working definition of competency education, which this paper uses as its definition:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery.
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
- Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience for students.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Depending on the state or district, competency education may be called proficiency-based, performance-based, standards-based, or mastery-based education. Although the terminology can vary, these approaches have in common the elements of competency education. Students in these environments receive a personalized education that meets each one at his or her level, providing robust, timely supports and interventions to keep them engaged and on track to college and career readiness.

Competencies, Advising, Teaching, and Learning
(from The Center for Secondary School Redesign, included in additional documentation)

Personalized learning recommendations are embodied in the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) developed with each



student, with the guidance of his or her teacher of record and family. As the applicant moves toward a system of personalized and deeper learning for each student, the concept of teacher broadens to include a significant mentor/advisor role. The teacher will work closely with the guidance counselor for the benefit of each student. Through this PLP process, teachers, advisors, families, and students will have access to student achievements and goals and will be able to view their learning recommendations and pathways to achieving their goals.

To create an effective teaching force that is well prepared to use CBL, staff will be trained to use instructional strategies that foster deep learning experiences. New approaches to teacher preparation and professional development will be used to help teachers understand CBL, as well as the role of deeper learning and 21st century competencies in mastering core academic content. Teachers will have support from school and district administrators, including time for learning, shared lesson planning and review, and reflection as resources to support the implementation of CBL. Teacher teams are working together to develop inquiry-based units, develop aligned performance assessments, develop mastery exhibitions, and design instructional approaches that allow students to chart a course to competency.

Arkansas History

The applicant requests the ability to teach Arkansas History without regard to the length of the course as measured by clock hours. Instead, Arkansas History will be based on the mastery learning framework of demonstrating mastery of essential competencies. Course guidelines as defined in A.C.A. 6-16-124 (b)(1) will be followed.

Arkansas History is mentioned separately in this waiver because the length of a secondary Arkansas History course is legislated to be one semester per A.C.A. 6-16-124 (a)(2).



Documentation Checklist

Submission Status	Document Category
Submitted	Stakeholder Engagement
Submitted	Shared Leadership
Submitted	Election Results
Submitted	Professional Development Scope
Submitted	Budget
Submitted	References
Submitted	Approved School Board Resolution
Submitted	Statement of Assurances