

## **KENTUCKY SCHOOL LAUNCHES NEW EDUCATION PROJECT WITH APPLE COMPUTERS**

*Innovative School Design Based on the Council of Chief State School Officers' Model of Innovation*

EMINENCE, KY, Tuesday, May 2, 2012

EMINENCE, KY May 2, 2012- Eminence Independent School District launched a new school innovation project on Tuesday. Eminence Independent Schools, founded in 1901, is located in central Kentucky in a small town with a population of 2200. They have a strong history of academic achievement with the seventh highest ACTs in Kentucky and serve a diverse community of leaders. The project is called the School on F.I.R.E. (Framework for Reinventing Education) and will be the first of its kind in the U.S.

The unique program provides a means for empowering students to achieve well beyond high school both socially and academically, and is largely technology based. Apple computers and the school board joined together to provide all students grades 9-12 with an Apple MacBook Pro computer as well as access to a one-of-a-kind Wi-Fi equipped bus.

Starting this fall, students 9 through 12 will attend core classes just three days a week. The other two days will be set aside for what the district calls "interventions, connections and enrichment," including free college classes at Bellarmine University in Louisville. More importantly, Eminence Independent Schools' Board of Education has committed to paying the remaining costs of college classes.

Bellarmino University is an independent, private Catholic university in Louisville, KY with a large liberal arts focus. It is organized into six colleges and schools and confers numerous Bachelors and Masters degrees in more than 50 academic majors. By the time Eminence students graduate, some will already be one-third of the way through college. Dr. Joseph McGowan, President of the University is enthusiastic about this distinctive partnership and Bellarmine's integral role in pioneering the School on F.I.R.E.

"Bellarmino University is looking forward to a highly successful, cutting edge partnership with the great students, faculty, and staff of Eminence, and of course with their very impressive superintendent, Buddy Berry, a national leader in educational innovation, an esteemed alumnus and a highly valued partner. The Board of Education in Eminence must also be congratulated for their forward thinking leadership and their solid support of this exciting program and model for the future, said McGowan.

The University of Kentucky has helped with the instructional system design through their Next Generation Academy, and the structure is modeled after the The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) six core characteristics for innovation. The concept also includes preparing all learners for college and career readiness while

equipping them with next generation skills. For example, the curriculum includes blogging, social presence, and presentation skills.

64% of students in Eminence schools are on free and reduced lunch and 90% are from first generation college families. By partnering with Bellarmine University, class costs will be reduced by 92% off regular tuition.

Eminence Independent Schools has always enjoyed a rich tradition of academic and athletic success, and the students have successfully competed at the regional, state, and national level. The School on F.I.R.E. model is on a quest to be the most innovative school district in Kentucky, as well as set the bar nationwide for the future of classrooms.

“Today is a monumental day in the history of Eminence Independent Schools. It is our hope that our students and staff will lead the way in reinventing schools as we know it,” said Buddy Berry, Superintendent of Eminence Independent Schools.

***About Eminence Independent Schools:***

*Eminence Independent Schools were founded in 1901 and serve 600 ranging from pre-school to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. EIS have a strong history of academic achievement with the seventh highest ACTs in Kentucky and serve a diverse community of leaders. They are located evenly between I-64 and I-71 in Henry County, Kentucky. Eminence has a population of 2200, and EIS have approximately 90% of students from first generation college families. Small class sizes and the unique setting of all schools located on the same campus provide a friendly, close-knit family environment that fosters success at every step.*

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