



## Young Scholars Academy

*“Better educational opportunities lead to retention of talent in our region, stronger local economy, and a brighter future for all of us.” - Inna Pylyayevai, YSA Parent, Cohort 3*



Kentucky is losing out on a credentialed workforce every time a college student takes beyond 4 years to complete a bachelor's degree.

The average time it takes a student to complete a bachelor's degree in Kentucky is 4.9 years.

20% of Kentucky college students drop out after the first year.

We know that 79% of students who complete 30 or more college credit hours in their first year of full-time college end up completing their degree.

**The YSA model is a shared-ownership, collaborative effort between K-12 and higher education to ensure students hit this critical benchmark and become productive members of Kentucky's workforce.**

# NKU | Young Scholars Academy

The YSA model is currently a collaboration between Northern Kentucky University, the Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services, and nine individual school districts.

- Students are fully immersed as non-residential NKU full-time students for 2 years.
- NKU funds two full-time positions dedicated to the YSA student experience.
- Participating districts fund two full-time positions dedicated to the YSA student experience.
- All teammates are extensively trained as NKU academic advisors and serve as adjunct instructors.
- YSA blends the transition to higher education through a team of stakeholders on the fiscal/programmatic level and the everyday “on the ground” level.

*“When we first learned about the YSA program, we were skeptical because our son is very much of an introvert. We were concerned that he wasn’t ready to be ‘on his own’ in terms of being responsible for his own schedule, finding his way around campus, and getting any help he may need. However, that is why we ultimately decided that YSA was the best place for him! It’s given him an opportunity to come out of his shell and be his own person, while still having the full support of a staff completely dedicated to these students. I would recommend this program to any parent who wants to give their child a jumpstart on their secondary education.”*

Leigh Scharold, YSA Parent, Cohorts 2 and 3



## Young Scholars Academy

- Students admitted in cohort model prior to their junior year of high school
- YSA students are fully immersed NKU students during their junior/senior years, completing:
  - Dual credit enrollment for final high school requirements
  - An estimated 60 hours towards an Associates and/or Bachelors degree
  - General education requirements
  - Entry-level coursework in one or more disciplines of interest
- Scholars have the opportunity to earn an Associate of Arts in Integrative Studies

*“As a first-generation student, I always dreamed of going to college and my parents were always excited for me to have an opportunity that they worked so hard for me to have. Being able to start college two years early was so exciting to me and being able to get my associate’s degree at the same time I graduated high school was a dream come true. I took the opportunity and thrived throughout those two years in YSA, and I am still currently a student at NKU. I also found my major while in YSA and am on track to graduate with my bachelor’s degree in Spanish next spring. I am so grateful for the leaders in YSA and the program.”*

Katherine Creech, YSA Cohort 1, AAIS ‘22, BA ‘24



## Young Scholars Academy

*“When my son first signed up for YSA we as a family were nervous. He was just a high schooler about to be on a college campus. Those nerves subsided very quickly. He excelled at YSA/NKU. This opportunity allowed him experiences that have done so much for him now as a full time college student. He learned proper study skills, he is very comfortable on campus and enjoyed every minute of the program. We are actually about to embark on this adventure with our daughter. I will always speak highly of the program and encourage anyone to follow the path of YSA.”*

Jess Tomlin, YSA Parent, Cohorts 1 and 4

The YSA team oversees the entire experience: recruitment, advising, orientation, intervention, programming, teaching UNV 101, school/family communication, and enrollment projections.

Staff are based at NKU full time (7:30-4:00), M-F to coordinate all aspects of scholars' experiences with stakeholders, including high schools, NKU faculty and staff, and parents and families.

YSA's regional staff members are based at NKU but are funded through financial contributions from participating districts.

YSA staff uniquely coordinate all aspects of the scholar experience from both the K-12 and higher ed sides, with a dedicated director and coordinator on each side.

# NKU | Young Scholars Academy

*“This opportunity for our Dayton kids is LIFE*

*CHANGING.*

*Seeing them be a part of something that they never envisioned themselves doing is so rewarding.*

*They now BELIEVE they can do hard things.*

*That they BELONG on the college campus.*

*If we are serious about creating a generation that will lead our country forward in ways that we have not been able to do, we must continue to open doors for kids that are now standing behind closed doors.”*

Jay Brewer, Superintendent

## Dayton Independent Schools

- In 2012-2013, Dayton High School students earned a total of 6 Dual Credit College Hours.
- In 2022-2023, Dayton High School students earned a total of 736 Dual Credit College Hours.

- 422 students served since 2020
  - 2020-21 - Kenton pilot
  - 2021-22 - Kenton pilot
  - 2022-23 - Regional
  - 2023-24 - Regional
- Average College GPA: 3.28\*
  - 73% with GPA of 3.0 or higher\*
- 90% retention rate between two years of the program\*
- 97% of program graduates are now attending college post-program
  - 83% of them are in-state
- 51% of scholars are first-generation college students
- 51% of scholars are low-income (as defined by qualification for free/reduced lunch)
- 15% are underrepresented minorities



## Young Scholars Academy

- Initial \$100K investment from Kenton County School District in 2020-21.
- Annual \$484,000 investment from participating districts for tuition, transportation, and meals.
- NKU provides full-time services at discounted dual credit rate, equalling annual investment over 2 million.

This academy has proven to be a tremendous success for our scholars.

- District success - 2020-2022
- Regional success - 2022-2024
- State success - 2024 and beyond
- Minimum 300 total scholars
- 10% allocated to state



- State Success 2024 and Beyond:
  - Increase the number of NKY school districts participating in YSA.
  - Include statewide scholars, 10% of total population to be housed at NKU.
  - NKU/Districts working collaboratively to include more business engagement/support.

## NKU/Young Scholar Academy State Funding Request:

- \$7,000,000 Total
- Local Districts continued support:
  - Funding existing P-12 Staff
  - Transportation/Textbooks
- NKU continued support:
- Staffing/Tuition/Secondary Educational Experience
- This financial request was based on the current funding model for Craft/Gatton Academies.
- The YSA is a proven model that will enhance economic development in the region and state by providing scholars an educational choice to expedite their degree/credentialing in a world class secondary environment.