



Decatur Township first in state to offer students Computer Science Pathway

By Beth Vaughn, beth.vaughn@wrtv.com | Updated Oct. 4, 2017, 6:33 p.m. EDT

DECATUR TOWNSHIP, Ind. -- The Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township is offering something new to its students. Turns out, this offering is the first of its kind in Indiana.

MSD of Decatur Township is offering K-12 Computer Science Pathway. It gives students the chance to learn computer science which, in turn, will develop problem solving, creative and critical thinking skills.

“As the first school district in the state to implement this program in grades K-12, I am confident it will be a huge asset to the students of Decatur Township,” said Assistant Superintendent Nate Davis.

150 teachers have been trained by Nextech, a local nonprofit, to deliver the computer science curriculum. In the younger classrooms, elementary and

middle school, teachers will use what they've learned to incorporate computer science into their existing lessons.

So far, 200 middle school and high school students have enrolled in K-12 Computer Science Pathway classes. Those classes include design, coding, app development, cyber security and database analytics.

ARTICLE CONTINUES BELOW

These plans were in place ahead of MSD of Decatur Township winning a \$15,000 grant from Education Workforce Innovation Network. The hope is that money will be used to increase the computer science-ready workforce in Indiana.

This is just the start. Nextech predicts a huge increase (580%) in student enrollment after the program is implemented for three years.

“This program will offer opportunities in a variety of career pathways while building a direct pipeline into the workforce for our students,” said Davis.

“By educating teachers we can reach a far greater number of students much faster than we could do on our own. Our training program serves as more than just a simple educational workshop, and instead offers a year-long professional development program that provides teachers with the content, instructional strategies and real-world context needed to confidently teach computer science,” said ,” said Nextech President Karen Jung.