



Pennsylvania Don Eichhorn Schools: Schools to Watch

Boyce Middle School



**Designated in 2008: Re-Designated in 2011:
Re-Designated II in 2014: Re-Designated III in
2017**

- Boyce Middle School
- Upper St. Clair School District
- Allegheny County
- Principal: Dan O'Rourke
- 1500 Boyce Road Upper St. Clair Pa, 15241
- Phone: (412) 833-1600 Ext. 5000
- School Email dorourke@uscscd.k12.pa.us
- Website: <https://www.uscscd.k12.pa.us/Domain/322>

School Statistics

<http://paschoolperformance.org>

Community: Suburban
Enrollment: 630
Grade Levels: 5 & 6
School Schedule: 6 day rotation: 75 minute blocks for core-content classes

Student Demographics

American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
Asian	12.3
Black or African American	.65
Hispanic (any race)	1.13
Multi-Racial	1.78
White	84.14
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0

2016 AYP: Reading 86.02% Math 70.15%
2016 School Performance Profile 70.9

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- Customized learning, a district tagline and a Boyce Middle School mantra, is central to the learning environment
- Teaming configurations that places student needs first while enabling teachers to be content specialists
- Student-centered learning that addresses the whole child in this critical stage of development
- Interdisciplinary instruction
- Flexibility within the master schedule that allows staff to be responsive to student needs
- Aggressive academic curriculum aligned to essential questions; all curriculum is reviewed twice per year

- Learning targets continue to set the direction for the class and are visibly posted for students; specific learning goals are a clear and overt beginning of every lesson
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) continue to be a regular part of the school day, demonstrating the leading role that collaboration and communication play in academia
- Strong collaboration and communication between school and home (utilize multiple vehicles of communication)
- Technology is central to Boyce's 21st century customized learning, showcasing the 1:1 initiative that was rolled out for the 2015-2016 school year
- Teams are physically located within close proximity, with movable walls that allow for the complete team to be in one space together
- Spanish, French, and German offered in both grade levels
- Expressive Arts rotation exists that includes Music, Art, Family and Consumer Science, STEAM Design and Library
- Understanding by Design (UbD) with Essential Questions continues to be used, allowing for an interdisciplinary approach to learning across the core and special classroom areas, coordinated by the teachers
- TDA support across all subject areas
- Authentic assessments are utilized in the form of projects, research papers, presentations, slide shows, and more
- Blocks of time within the schedule have increased lab and inquiry-based activities in science, and student discussions show self-reflection as well as a reflection of the learning
- Math classroom quick checks for topic sections are aligned with open-ended responses, creating a stage for increased written responses and solution explanations
- An expanded Rubicon Atlas allows for a central housing of curricula, further aiding teachers, and BlendedSchools continues to be utilized as a 24/7 site of customized, "on-demand" learning for students, offering access to teachers' lesson plans, study guides, instructional videos, as well as a place for journaling, blogging, and effective study skills and strategies
- Increased data analysis continues to aid in the customization of learning; feedback and assessments are constant but varied
- Enrichment, acceleration, remediation and differentiation are all elements of the customization provided by each teacher
- Monthly department meetings that focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment

DEVELOPMENTAL RESPONSIVENESS

- Core team setting that employs best practices, including interdisciplinary instruction, common plan time, regular PLC meetings, varied curriculum, differentiated instruction, customized learning, extracurricular offerings and formative character and skill-building activities while maintaining a student-responsive staff that includes teaching guidance counselors, support teachers, services and aides, and a building that accommodates the needs of the middle-level learner
- The start of the school day remains a later one, setting the stage for the best physical success of the student
- Multiple music, club, and intramural offerings are available for all students
- Student Council leadership opportunities are available to all students
- Community service projects throughout the year are open to all students
- Choice exists between traditional and International Baccalaureate (IB), but the curriculum of both traditional and IB reflects a shared vision that incorporates social and global awareness and service

- Multiple transition programs are utilized to promote a smooth transition to Boyce
- A strong PTO partnership is evident; this partnership provides curricular and extra-curricular resources
- Customized academic offerings to meet the students' needs at their readiness levels
- Within the academic day, rotation through Expressive Arts (Music, Art, Family and Consumer Science, Library and STEAM), and World Language (French, Spanish and German) instruction continues to balance the rigor of the core academics as well as offers a platform through which students may explore personal skills and ethnic customs
- Teaching guidance counselors with a structured curriculum
- Student Support Services, facilitated by the guidance counselors and school psychologist, continue to look out for the emotional and social well-being of students, reaching beyond the school walls to best help students in need
- Positive school climate assisted by Project ACHIEVE and anti-bullying programs
- Common planning time for students to collaborate, plan, and communicate
- HR and end of day time for organization, interventions, remediation, review, activities, and more

SOCIAL EQUITY

- Each student uniqueness is celebrated, respected and cared for; students are encouraged to value diversity
- Customized learning and exemplary teachers take each student individually to grow and develop so that every child may reach maximum potential and achieve maximum learning and experiences
- Teaming model enables teachers to build and foster relationships with students and parents
- Data analysis is continuously completed to drive educational decisions
- Customized learning paths are created to support student needs
- Opportunities exist for challenge, support, enrichment and remediation, with an umbrella of services to meet specific needs
- A 6-day rotation schedule is utilized to provide multiple opportunities to students
- A student centered approach with a focus on meeting the needs of each child
- Each team participates in a bi-weekly PLC meeting with the counselor to discuss student needs
- Safety and Security is the top priority of the school and District
- International Education Week is one example of the many ways Boyce Middle School celebrates and embraces diversity
- Community service projects, often student-driven, are planned, organized, and conducted regularly

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

- The team structure is the heart of the school
- Communication is prioritized and constantly enhanced
- Partnerships exist within and outside the school
- New teachers continue to be paired with veteran mentor teachers and participate in a separate induction program. Co-teaching continues to be used in the classroom; new teaching teams offer specialized learning and greater adult support for innovation, creating rich settings for teacher-facilitated, student-directed learning
- Data continues to be instrumental to the decision-making and curriculum process and is readily available to teachers, parents and students
- Continual learning is the norm not just for the students, but for the Boyce staff as well. Conferences, AIU partnerships and in-service days equip staff members with new and specialized knowledge

reflection and practices. Boyce teachers continue to help train other teachers with instructional strategies, shared readings and innovative practices; Boyce functions as a whole team in order to best service and educate the whole child

- The master schedule enables opportunities for students to develop academically, grow socially, and receive support emotionally
- The building's design offers unique opportunities to 5th and 6th grade students
- The 1-1 initiative allows teachers to communicate, deliver differentiated instruction, gather formative data to drive instruction, while enabling students to be content producers. The professional development and support of the 1-1 initiative is ubiquitous
- Co-teaching is evident in many classrooms daily
- Student support systems are structures and systemic
- Professional development opportunities are available in-house and through conferences, partnerships, and more