

# UPPER ST. CLAIR SCHOOL DISTRICT **ANNUAL REPORT** 2015



Customizing Learning,  
Nurturing Potential...  
Delivering Excellence

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It is with great pride that I present this Annual Report of the Upper St. Clair School District (USCSD) for 2015. The following descriptions highlight the important information included in this publication:

- Important steps were taken in 2015 to set the future direction of USCSD. On page 3 of this report, you will find information regarding our Strategic Plan for 2015 to 2020. Strategic Plan goals were developed involving the input and support of 140 community and staff members, as well as students.
- Some significant changes to our school leadership team took place in 2015, resulting in new leadership at the High School and Boyce Middle School. Our Central administrative team experienced changes within the Department of Student Support Services, as well as the appointment of a Supervisor of Customized and On-Line Learning (page 7). We are enthusiastic about the vision and skills these new leaders bring to the team.
- In 2015, our 1:1 Learning Initiative was expanded to grades 5 through 8. Every middle school student is now provided an iPad to support the high-quality instructional practices employed at our middle schools for decades.
- We are proud of our students who continue to demonstrate high levels of achievement, shown by the test scores on page 5. Numerous student and staff awards for 2015 are described on page 6.
- Finally, we are thankful for our community support for education as state money, earmarked for USCSD, has been delayed by the budget discord in Harrisburg. A snapshot of the fiscal challenges we face, including extraordinary increases in state pension costs, are shown on page 4.



PATRICK T. O'TOOLE, ED.D.  
Superintendent



High School student Kriti Shah wins technology award.



Senior Emma Hasco celebrates the PIAA State Championship.



# GOALS OF THE USC BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS ADOPTED JANUARY 25, 2016

## THE USC BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING GOAL STATEMENTS FOR 2016:

### CUSTOMIZING LEARNING AND NURTURING POTENTIAL

- Take action on the Strategic Plan Goal (2015-2020) related to Safety and Security.
- Take action on the Strategic Plan Goal (2015-2020) related to Technology with specific emphasis on the 1:1 implementation in grade 9 for 2016-17, continuous improvement based on 2015-16 implementation in grades 6 to 8, and improved infrastructure.
- Take action on the Strategic Plan Goal (2015-2020) related to Professional Learning Communities with a continued focus on our Beliefs of Student Learners and with additional emphasis on the High School teams.
- Take action on the Strategic Plan Goal (2015-2020) related to STEAM with curriculum recommendations that expand opportunities, especially at the elementary and middle school levels and address learning space configurations for STEAM instruction.
- Take action on the Strategic Plan Goal (2015-2020) related to the High School Experience through collaborative processes that enhance our responsiveness to social/emotional learning needs of students, the structure of time, and a growth mindset for all teaching and learning practices.

### DELIVERING EXCELLENCE

- Evaluate the new leadership structure for Student Support Services to maximize and enhance the delivery of services.
- Energize the Total Leaders staff development initiative to support and grow new leaders.
- As required by the state, determine the best process for implementing the new teacher evaluation model mandated by the state.
- Update District policies related to changes in law and practice.



High School student Maya Narayanan works on a project during the Summer STEAM Academy.



High School student Sahil Doshi presents his innovative carbon-dioxide powered battery, PolluCell, to President Obama at the White House Science Fair.

### FACILITIES AND FINANCE

- Continue community engagement and public education advocacy efforts to address the negative impact of additional unfunded state/federal laws and mandates, such as significant increases to the District's pension (PSERS) costs, and decreased state/federal funding.
- Although given a projected budget shortfall, continue to Customize Learning, Nurture Potential, and Deliver Excellence in all that we do for the students, families, staff, and community.
- Expand our Advancement function to supplement traditional funding of school programs, such as curriculum enhancements, professional development, and technology investments.
- Prioritize the identified capital improvement and investment needs from McLean Architects while continuing to develop an advancement plan that addresses the means of funding the projects.
- Address the leadership transition for District Finance and Human Resources Management as well as the Board Secretary function.
- Explore improvements to learning space design and furniture that supports the Strategic Plan Goals related to twenty-first century teaching and learning.





## 2015-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Upper St. Clair School District has completed the required comprehensive planning for public school districts in Pennsylvania. In addition to the required planning, a robust strategic planning process began in September 2014 when the District announced that it was seeking applicants to participate on a Comprehensive/Strategic Plan Visioning Team.

The Visioning Team consisted of more than 140 USC students, parents, teachers, administrators, business representatives, and professional and support staff members whose responsibilities included assisting to develop recommendations for the District's vision, mission, shared beliefs and goals.

Five Visioning Team meetings were held from March through October and five subcommittees were established. These included: Professional Learning Communities, Safety and Security, STEAM, Technology, and The High School Experience. The goals established by each of those subcommittees, as well as additional information regarding the Strategic Plan, can be found on the District's website at [www.uscsd.k12.pa.us](http://www.uscsd.k12.pa.us) under Quick Links, Strategic Plan.

We are grateful for the support from all our stakeholders who have provided input and guidance during the planning process.

## ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVES

At the start of the 2014-15 school year, a High School Innovation Hub was launched. The Innovation Hub contains two highly synergistic components – the FAB Lab and SHOP@USC (Showing How Opportunity Pays @ USC). In 2015, the District was very fortunate to receive the donation of an Amcom Digital Printing Press for the Innovation Hub. SHOP@USC provides students with significant disabilities and the students in the Life Skills Support Program with the opportunity to establish and run their own business.

A few major capital projects being considered in the future include the High School Athletic Complex, an irrigation system at Fort Couch Middle School field, a new swimming pool at the High School, and new District administrative offices.

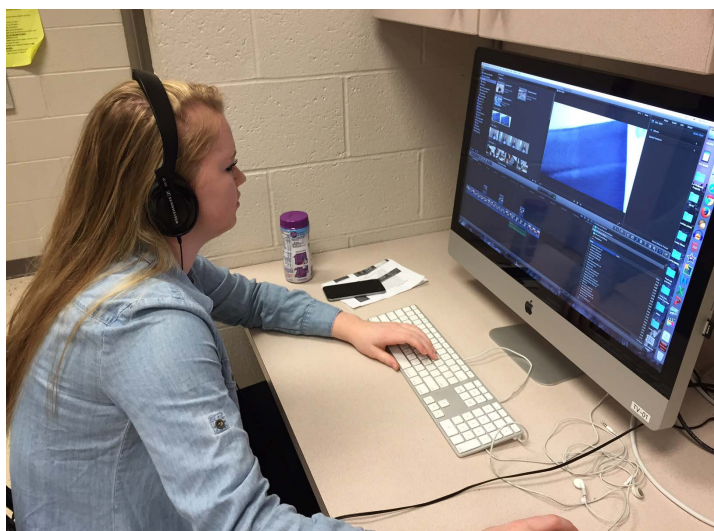
The Office of Advancement continues to connect community members with new and exciting opportunities to support strategic, integrated, and visionary initiatives that will significantly enrich the District's mission.

Whatever your K-12 interest, you can make a big impact in assisting the School District to accomplish the Goals of the USC Board of School Directors (see page 2). Help grow the 1:1 Learning Initiative. Fund the High School Experience initiative, including the state of the art FAB Lab and SHOP@USC. Contribute to the expanding STEAM initiatives. Or enhance your favorite school program.

If you are interested in making a contribution to the District, please call Sheila Gorgonio, Director of Advancement, at 412-833-1600 ext. 2826 or email [sgorgonio@uscsd.k12.pa.us](mailto:sgorgonio@uscsd.k12.pa.us).

## SAFETY AND SECURITY INITIATIVES

The Upper St. Clair School District continues its commitment to providing safe, secure and supportive school environments that enhance student learning. We continue to improve our safety and security efforts, including the areas of training for our staff, police and security personnel, updates to the physical plant, and utilizing the role of the Chief of School Police. The District's preparedness as a result of documented plans and safety drills has been greatly enhanced in the past few years. The District continues to work very closely with the Township police, and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Township Police Department was recently renewed.



High School student Leah Kern edits a video during a multimedia class.



## Budget Analysis

Final Budget 2014-15			Approved Budget 2015-16	
	\$69,125,331	Revenue	\$72,365,878	
45.7%	\$31,800,846	Salaries	\$33,291,727	45.8%
24.2%	\$16,808,061	Benefits	\$18,619,650	25.6%
5.4%	\$3,784,367	Contracted Services	\$4,036,635	5.6%
2.3%	\$1,567,210	Purchased Services	\$1,643,159	2.3%
4.2%	\$2,931,596	Other Purchased Services	\$2,899,949	4.0%
2.9%	\$2,023,892	Books and Supplies	\$1,873,231	2.6%
1.8%	\$1,251,206	Equipment	\$1,436,455	2.0%
9.1%	\$6,303,290	Miscellaneous Fees	\$5,948,826	8.2%
4.4%	\$3,054,420	Other Expenses	\$2,996,065	4.1%
	\$69,524,888	Total Expenses	\$72,745,697	

## PENSION INCREASE IMPACT (PSERS)

School districts across Pennsylvania are required to contribute to their employees' retirement benefits through an employer contribution to the Pennsylvania School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS). Since 2006, the impact of the increases to the state mandated pension payment (PSERS) is shown on the accompanying chart.

Column B shows the percentage of payroll increase (from 4.69% to 25.84%) the District is required to contribute to PSERS. Column C shows that even after a reimbursement from the state of 50% of these costs, the District's required payment to the PSERS fund has risen from \$655,313 to \$3,610,507 annually. Column D shows the annual increases in total dollars. Finally, Column E shows the cumulative total of the PSERS cost increases since 2006 to be \$16,577,033. These mandated costs have been the main driver of our budget difficulties over the past ten years. The future does not look any better. The state projection for 2017 is an increase to 30.03% of payroll or \$620,381 additional dollars.

2005-06 Total Payroll: \$27,945,100				
PSERS Impact Since 2005-06				
A	B	C	D	E
Year Ended June 30	Employer Contribution Rate	Net PSERS Cost	Annual Increase	Cumulative Net PSERS Cost
2006	4.69%	\$655,313	—	\$655,313
2007	6.46%	\$902,627	\$247,314	\$1,557,939
2008	7.13%	\$996,243	\$93,616	\$2,554,182
2009	4.76%	\$665,093	(\$331,149)	\$3,219,276
2010	4.78%	\$667,888	\$2,795	\$3,887,163
2011	5.64%	\$788,052	\$120,164	\$4,675,215
2012	8.65%	\$1,208,626	\$420,574	\$5,883,841
2013	12.36%	\$1,727,007	\$518,382	\$7,610,848
2014	16.93%	\$2,365,553	\$638,546	\$9,976,401
2015	21.40%	\$2,990,126	\$624,573	\$12,966,526
2016	25.84%	\$3,610,507	\$620,381	\$16,577,033
Total Increase from 2006-2016			\$2,955,194	



## STUDENT TESTING DATA



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The annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards-based, criterion referenced assessment used to measure students' attainment of academic standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. This year, an entirely new PSSA exam, based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards, was administered to students across the state of Pennsylvania in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Please note the test and performance scores are entirely new, so an accurate comparison cannot be made to past assessments. Changes to the assessment include higher cognitive complexity; greater depth of knowledge, newly aligned curriculum, higher cut scores to meet proficiency, and new scale scores. These changes, particularly higher cut scores and limited time to develop new curriculum that is aligned with the new standards, have led to significantly lower performance scores throughout Pennsylvania. Despite the various changes, Upper St. Clair School District continues to far exceed the state averages.

### State Assessments by Grade Level 2015

Test	Grade Levels
PSSA Math	3-8
PSSA English Language Arts (ELA)	3-8
PSSA Science	4 and 8
Keystone Exams: Algebra I, Biology and Literature	Administered upon course completion

### PSSA Performance 2015

Grade	USC English/ Language Arts % Proficient and Advanced	State Average English/Language Arts % Proficient and Advanced	USC Mathematics % Proficient and Advanced	State Average Mathematics % Proficient and Advanced	USC Science % Proficient and Advanced	State Average Science % Proficient and Advanced
3	91	62	83	49	—	—
4	86	59	71	44	95	73
5	88	62	77	43	—	—
6	87	61	67	40	—	—
7	85	60	50	33	—	—
8	81	58	57	30	83	59

### 2014-2015 Terra Nova District Median National Percentile

Grade	Reading	Vocabulary	Reading Composite	Language Mechanics	Math	Mathematics Computation	Math Composite	Total Score
1	79	81	86	—	71	65	74	81
2	81	72	85	78	75	75	79	83

### Keystone Performance 2015

Tested Area	USC % Proficient and Advanced	State Average % Proficient and Advanced
Algebra I	86	64
Literature	92	72
Biology	92	59

### ACT Mean Score Results 2015

	English	Mathematics	Reading	Science	Composite
Upper St. Clair	26.5	26.7	26.3	25.6	26.4
PA Composite	*	*	*	*	22.9

\*No composite score available

### SAT Mean Score Results 2015

Tested Area	SAT District Average Score	SAT State Comparison
Reading	570	499
Mathematics	589	504
Writing	566	482



Sawyer Weinmann, Ava Novak, Asha Segall and Bella Feliciano ready to take part in the Elementary Leadership Academy.



## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS



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### **Assistant Superintendent John Rozzo Received Outstanding Administrator Award**

– Dr. John Rozzo, Assistant Superintendent, was selected by the Pennsylvania Association for Middle Level Education (PAMLE) to receive the Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award.



### **Amy Pfender, Director of Student Support Services, Received Award from Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators**

– In May, Mrs. Amy Pfender was selected by the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) Women's Caucus for the Wanda McDaniel Honorary Membership Award.



### **USC High School Students Named Best in Nation in Verizon's Innovative App Challenge**

– A team of Upper St. Clair High School students was named Best in Nation in the 2014-2015 Verizon Innovative App Challenge.



### **Baker Elementary School Earned Second National Blue Ribbon Award**

– Baker Elementary School is one of 335 schools nationally to earn a 2015 National Blue Ribbon Award.



### **Additional awards and recognitions for the School District, staff, and students in 2015 include:**

U.S. News & World Report ranked USC as one of the best high schools in America – No. 1 in the Pittsburgh Region, No. 4 among Pennsylvania's 673 public, magnet, and charter high schools, and No. 400 of more than 21,000 high schools nationwide.

The 245 USC High School students who took the SAT College Entrance Exam in 2015 ranked No. 1 in the Pittsburgh region and No. 6 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with a combined average SAT score of 1,741.

A total of 32 high school students have distinguished themselves in the National Merit Scholarship Competition.

Dr. Dominick Frollini, High School AP Chemistry Teacher, was selected to receive the Kevin Burns Award from the Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh.

Frau Deanna Baird, K-12 World Language Curriculum Leader, was chosen for the Nominator's Choice Award at the Champions of Learning event sponsored by the Consortium of Public Education.

Mr. Andrew Lucas, Mathematics Teacher at Fort Couch Middle School and Middle School Mathematics Curriculum Leader, was selected by a students' online vote as the winner of the 2015 Blended School Students' Choice Award.

High School Social Studies Teacher Mr. Ben Edwards received the Richard P. and Dorothy Simmons Award for Excellence in the Study of Economics.

The USC High School Speech and Debate Program and its co-sponsor, Mr. Ben Edwards, earned significant recognition by the National Speech & Debate Association.

High School student Anthony Abinanti was awarded a National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) Scholarship to study Chinese in China during the summer of 2015.

The High School Boys' Tennis Team won the PIAA AAA State Championship.

The High School Girls' Soccer Team won its first ever PIAA AAA State Championship. In addition, senior Emma Hasco was chosen as the Pennsylvania State Player of the Year by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

The USC Girls' Volleyball Team was awarded the American Volleyball Coaches Association Team Academic Award for also excelling in the classroom. USC is one of only two schools in the WPIAL to receive the award. In addition, senior Samantha Amos was named to the Under Armour Girls High School All-American Team as the country's top Right Side Hitter.

High School student Kriti Shah was chosen as an Affiliate Award Winner in the National Center for Women & Information Technology Aspirations in Computing.

High School student Sahil Doshi presented his innovative carbon-dioxide powered battery, PolluCell, to President Obama at the White House Science Fair.

Fort Couch Middle School student Chloe Kondrich received the Pittsburgh Business Times Health Care Hero Award.

All commendations, recognitions, and awards can be accessed at the School District's website [www.uscsd.k12.pa.us](http://www.uscsd.k12.pa.us) under "Awards."





## ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP CHANGES

**Dr. Louis Angelo** was promoted to High School Principal in June 2015 after serving as High School Acting Principal from January through June. Previous to that time, Dr. Angelo was the High School Associate Principal from March 2012 through January 2015 and High School Assistant Principal from November 2006 through March 2012. Dr. Angelo replaced Dr. Michael Ghilani, who resigned from the High School Principal position in January 2015. With the influence of Dr. Angelo's leadership, USC High School will continue to grow as an organization that enhances the unique learning experiences of each student. Dr. Angelo's commitment to leadership qualities such as teamwork, integrity, and inclusiveness, and his track record of sharing these ideals with staff and students, have set him apart as a leader.



After Dr. Angelo assumed the High School Principal position, the High School Associate Principal title was changed to High School Associate Principal for Program Planning & Innovation, to which **Dr. Timothy Wagner** was appointed in July 2015. Dr. Wagner began his career in Upper St. Clair in August 2007 as an elementary teacher at Streams Elementary School. In August 2011, Dr. Wagner moved to Boyce Middle School as a language arts/social studies teacher. The following year in 2012, Dr. Wagner's assignment changed to teaching students in the gifted program at Fort Couch Middle School and the High School. Dr. Wagner also served as the Middle School Language Arts Curriculum Leader since August 2013. We are very fortunate to have Dr. Wagner overseeing program planning and innovation at our High School. Throughout his career in USC, Dr. Wagner has been an educator at every level (elementary, middle, and high school).

In the 2015-16 school year, the District's 1:1 Learning Initiative was expanded to all middle school students in grades 5-8. The first phrase in the District's tagline is "Customized Learning," which is one of the premier goals of USC School District. This was the guiding factor in creating the administrative position of Supervisor of Customized and On-Line Learning, to which **Mr. Bradley Wilson**, who had served as the Customization/Instructional Technology Curriculum Leader the previous two years, was appointed to in July. Mr. Wilson had been a social studies teacher at Fort Couch Middle School since August 2007.



Following the retirement of Ms. Eloise Stoehr as Supervisor of Pupil Services, the position of Director of Student Support Services was created. In January 2016, **Mrs. Amy Pfender** was chosen to fill this newly created position. Mrs. Pfender's employment with the School District began in August 2005 as a Special Education Teacher at Boyce Middle School. She assumed the position of Elementary Special Education Department Chairperson in the 2009-10 school year and relocated to Central Office when she was elected as Special Education Curriculum Leader. In March 2012, Mrs. Pfender was appointed as the Middle School Assistant Principal (grades 5-8) and was promoted to Boyce Middle School Principal in July 2013.

Also in January 2016, **Mr. Daniel O'Rourke** was appointed as Boyce Middle School Principal to fill Mrs. Pfender's position. Mr. O'Rourke had been a social studies teacher at Fort Couch Middle School from August 2008 until June 2013 when he was hired as the assistant principal at Carson Middle School in the North Allegheny School District.



## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED BY STUDENTS

Allegheny College  
American University  
Amherst College  
Arizona State University  
Baldwin Wallace University  
Bethany College  
Boston University  
Bowling Green State University  
Brigham Young University  
Bucknell University  
CA PolyState University San Luis Obispo  
California University of Pennsylvania  
Calvin College  
Carlow University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Case Western Reserve University  
Chapman University  
Chatham University  
Clarion University of Pennsylvania  
College of Charleston  
Columbus College of Art and Design  
Community College of Allegheny County  
Cornell University  
Denison University  
DePaul University  
Dickinson College  
Drexel University

Duke University  
Duquesne University  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania  
Elon University  
Emerson College  
Fairfield University  
Gannon University  
George Washington University  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Grove City College  
High Point University  
Indiana University at Bloomington  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Ithaca College  
James Madison University  
John Carroll University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Kent State University  
Lafayette College  
Loyola Marymount University  
McGill University (Canada)  
Mercyhurst College  
Miami University, Oxford  
Misericordia University  
New York University  
Norwich University

Ohio University  
Ohio Wesleyan University  
Pennsylvania State University, University Park  
Pittsburgh Technical School (2 year)  
Point Park University  
Purdue University  
Rice University  
Robert Morris University  
Saint Francis University  
Saint Vincent College  
Seton Hall University  
Seton Hill University  
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania  
Stanford University  
SUNY Geneseo  
Syracuse University  
Temple University  
The Ohio State University  
Trinity University  
University of Akron  
University of Alabama/Tuscaloosa  
University of California Berkeley  
University of California Los Angeles  
University of Chicago  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Colorado/Boulder  
University of Dayton

University of Delaware  
University of Florida  
University of Georgia  
University of Illinois Urbana - Champaign  
University of Kentucky  
University of Maryland College Park  
University of Michigan  
University of Mount Union  
University of North Carolina/Charlotte  
University of Notre Dame  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Richmond  
University of Portland  
University of Rochester  
University of Sciences in Philadelphia  
University of South Carolina  
University of Toronto  
University of Vermont  
Utah State University  
Villanova University  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Washington and Jefferson College  
Waynesburg University  
West Virginia University  
West Virginia Wesleyan College  
Youngstown State University





## Upper St. Clair School District

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### Administrative Staff

Dr. Patrick T. O'Toole  
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Sharon Suritsky  
Assistant/Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Dr. John Rozzo  
Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Frosina Cordisco  
Director of Business & Finance

Dr. Judith Bulazo  
Director of Curriculum & Professional Development

Mr. Raymond Berrott  
Director of Technology

Mrs. Amy Pfender  
Director of Student Support Services

Ms. Melissa Garvin  
Assistant Director of Student Support Services

Ms. Sheila Gorgonio  
Director of Advancement

Mr. Bradley Wilson  
Supervisor of Customized & On-Line Learning

Mr. Joseph Connors  
Chief of School Police

Dr. Patrick McClintock-Comeaux  
Baker Elementary School Principal

Mr. Mark Miller  
Eisenhower Elementary School Principal/Supervisor of Elementary Education

Dr. Claire Miller  
Streams Elementary School Principal

Mr. Daniel O'Rourke  
Boyce Middle School Principal

Mr. Joseph DeMar  
Fort Couch Middle School Principal

Ms. Erin Peterson  
Fort Couch Middle School Assistant Principal

Dr. Louis Angelo  
High School Principal

Dr. Timothy Wagner  
High School Associate Principal for Program Planning & Innovation

Ms. Christine Mussomeli  
High School Assistant Principal

Mr. Daniel Beck  
High School Assistant Principal

Mr. Jonn Mansfield  
Director of Transportation

Mr. Kevin Hillman  
Transportation Supervisor

### 2016 Board of School Directors

Mrs. Buffy Z. Hasco, President  
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Mrs. Barbara L. Bolas  
Mr. Phillip J. Elias

Mr. Patrick A. Hewitt  
Mr. Frank J. Kerber  
Mr. Harry F. Kunselman  
Mr. Louis P. Mafrice, Jr.

### Quick Facts

Graduation Rate	98%
Continuing Post-Secondary Education	95%
Four-year College	87.7%
Two-year Junior College or Business/Technical	7.3%
Armed Forces	5%
National Merit Finalists	8
National Merit Semi-Finalists	8
National Merit Commended	24
Students Participating in Advanced Placement (AP) Exams	452
Students Earning College Credit (AP Score $\geq$ 3)	90%
Professional Teaching Staff	
Full-Time	290
Part-Time	6
Professional Staff with Advanced Degrees	210
Paraprofessional Staff	
Full-Time	64
Part-Time	2
School District Tax Rate	23.035 mills
School District Tax Rate Ranking Compared with County	13th out of 42
District per Pupil Expenditures*	
Upper St. Clair	\$13,829
Allegheny County Average	\$14,673
*excludes debt service and financing activities	

