

2016 Annual Report

CUSTOMIZING LEARNING | NURTURING POTENTIAL | DELIVERING EXCELLENCE



From the Superintendent

As we take time to reflect on 2016, it was a year of strategic and intentional progress in many aspects of the Upper St. Clair School District. Much of our accomplishments and initiatives are the direct result of our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and corresponding goals that were adopted by the Board of School Directors in January 2016.



We are enormously fortunate to have a school board, administration, faculty and staff who work cooperatively, collaboratively and respectfully for the benefit of our students and the greater community. Adopting and embracing a framework of common goals and a shared vision ensure that we are all rowing in the same direction and reaching our destination more quickly.

The following pages provide a snapshot of 2016 – including information regarding student achievement, district finances, significant accomplishments and our goals and initiatives for 2017 and beyond.

It is truly an honor to serve as Superintendent of Schools for the Upper St. Clair School District. Our community's collective commitment to high quality education is simply unmatched. It is with great pride that I present the 2016 Annual Report of the Upper St. Clair School District.

Sincerely,

Patrick T. O'Toole, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



2017 Goals

USC School Board: 2017 Goal Statements (adopted Feb. 13, 2017)

The USC Board of School Directors has adopted the following Goal statements for 2017 in its ongoing effort to **Customize Learning, Nurture Potential** and **Deliver Excellence** in all that we do for the students, families, staff and community of Upper St. Clair.

Customizing Learning & Nurturing Potential in 2017:

- 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 at the high school, continuous improvement at Boyce and Fort Couch, expansion of technology resources at the elementary buildings and improved infrastructure throughout the district.
- 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 in 2017:

- Evaluate the leadership succession plans to address the administrative needs of the district resulting from personnel changes, budget limitations and personnel development.
- Energize the Total Leaders staff development initiative to support and grow new leaders.
- Inject an entrepreneurial spirit of innovation, collaboration and problem-solving in student programs including leadership academies, STEAM and more.
- Engage the expertise of alumni and other external professionals to assist students and staff with field expertise and career guidance.
- Update district policies related to changes in law and practice.
- Oversee the leadership transition for district Finance and Human Resources management as well as the Board Secretary function.

Facilities & Finance in 2017:

- 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 insufficient state/federal funding.
- Expand our Advancement function to supplement traditional funding of school programs, such as curriculum enhancements, professional development and technology investments.
- Decide on the scope of the identified capital improvement and investment projects to be completed while continuing to develop an advancement plan that addresses the means of funding the projects.
- Continue to make improvements to learning space design and furniture that supports the Strategic Plan Goals related to 21st century teaching and learning and, thus, attracts grant and private funding.

Strategic Plan Visioning Team Goals: 2015 - 2020 (adopted Jan. 2016)

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

- Develop and implement Beliefs for Student Learners to guide programmatic and instructional decision-making.
- Establish consistent Professional Learning Community practices that are in alignment with our Beliefs for Student Learners.

Safety & Security

- Examine and prioritize safety and security needs for the district's physical plants.
- Systematically monitor and adjust policies and procedures to maximize the safety and security of students and staff.
- Enhance the implementation of programming and services that respond to students' personal well-being and safety concerns, as well as those that enhance student relationships and connectivity to school.

STEAM

- Increase the depth and breadth of STEAM curriculum offerings and improve the integration of STEAM across the curriculum.
- Enhance inquiry-based instructional practices and project-based learning opportunities.
- Equip teachers to educate students in STEAM areas by ensuring that they obtain STEAM content, pedagogy and technology experience through professional development.

Technology

- Determine the best practices and strategies for expanding 1:1 learning opportunities.
- Define the necessary infrastructure, tools and human capital to support the district's tagline, "Customizing Learning, Nurturing Potential and Delivering Excellence."
- Research and implement best practices for self-directed, self-paced and personalized learning in blended and online environments.

The High School Experience

- Establish a systematic process for teachers to collaborate, plan and deliver instruction that is responsive to the unique needs of all learners.
- Customize structures and learning opportunities to meet the academic and developmental needs of each learner by creatively using time, schedules and resources.
- Provide a comprehensive school experience in which students feel healthy, safe, engaged, supported, challenged and empowered.
- Leverage technology to create learning opportunities that empower students to become active learners in a dynamic and interconnected world.





Budget & Finances

The Upper St. Clair Board of School Directors approved the 2016-17 final budget totaling \$76,208,222 in June 2016. The budget included a millage increase of 1.3033 mills – resulting in a final millage rate of 24.3388 mills.

“This was a challenging budget year for the Upper St. Clair School District and many school districts throughout Pennsylvania,” Dr. Patrick T. O’Toole, superintendent, said. “In order to preserve our quality educational program, difficult decisions were necessary to make it financially sustainable for both the short- and long-term.”

The spending plan represents an increase of nearly \$3.5 million or 4.8 percent over the 2015-16 budget. More than half of the increase – nearly \$2 million – is attributed to mandated increases to the Public School Employees Retirement System and increases to health care costs.

“The main driver of our budget problems is the state-mandated PSERS payments,” Dr. O’Toole said. “This pension fund has been underfunded since the great recession of 2008-09 to the point that districts now pay more than 30 percent of their total payroll to this fund. The commonwealth reimburses 50 percent of this amount, leaving little money for Pennsylvania to distribute to schools for basic education services. As a result, local taxpayers are forced to pick up the tab.”

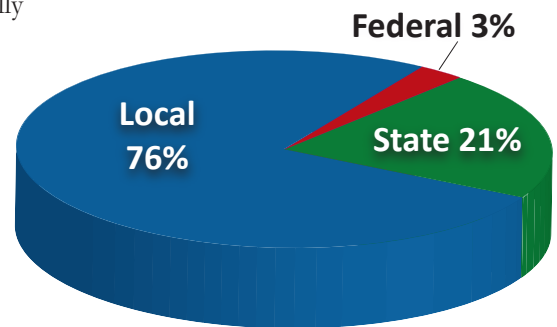
The 2016-17 budget includes faculty and support staff reductions totaling more than \$635,000 in annual savings. These cuts were made through attrition – the result of not replacing staff that retired or resigned.

“Budget cuts are never easy. Unfortunately, business as usual would result in a cost trajectory that we simply cannot afford,” Dr. O’Toole said. “Education is a people business – more than 75 percent of our budget is salaries and benefits, which includes the mandated pension contribution. The steps we’ve taken to control our personnel costs will enable us to allocate additional resources for student programs and needed facility improvements.”

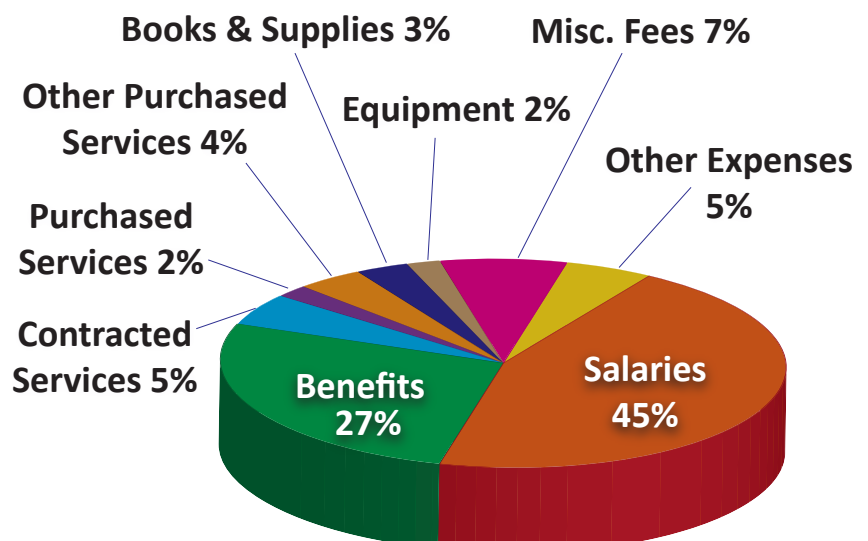
In the last five years, the mandated PSERS contribution has increased from 8.65 percent in 2011-12 to 30.03 percent in 2016-17.

“The extreme increase in the retirement contribution, accompanied by flat state and federal revenue streams, has created an enormous financial burden for all Pennsylvania school districts,” Dr. O’Toole said. “However, we have an obligation to create a path forward that enables us to further our investment in innovative programs and in our facilities to ensure continued growth and sustainability.”

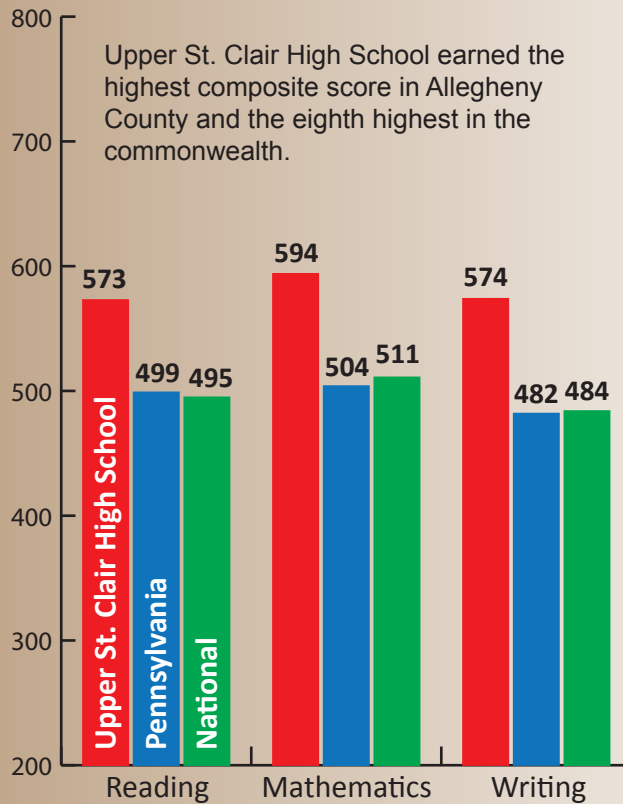
2016-17 Budgeted Revenue: \$76,380,902



2016-17 Budgeted Expenditures: \$76,208,222



SAT average scores



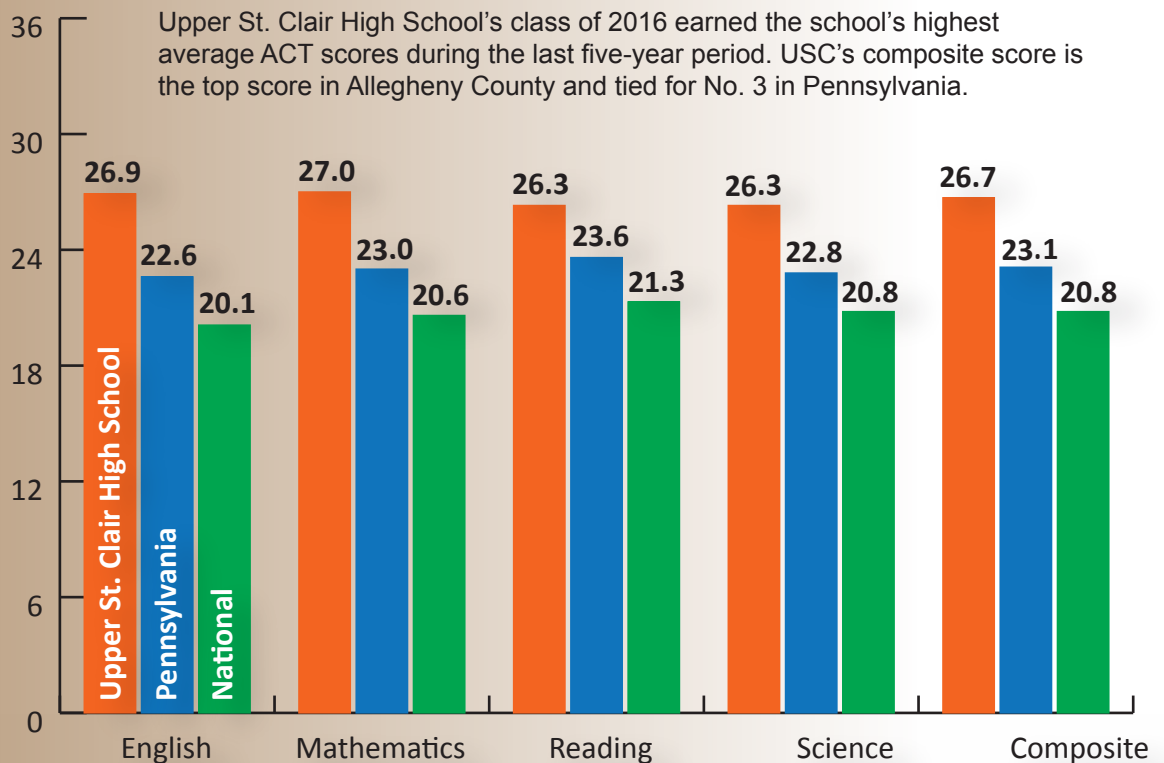
National Merit Scholarship Program

A total of 25 Upper St. Clair High School seniors were recently recognized by the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Twelve were named Semifinalists - scoring in the top one percent of all test takers - and 13 earned recognition as Commended Students.

Students enter the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT – the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test – during the fall of their junior year.

ACT average scores





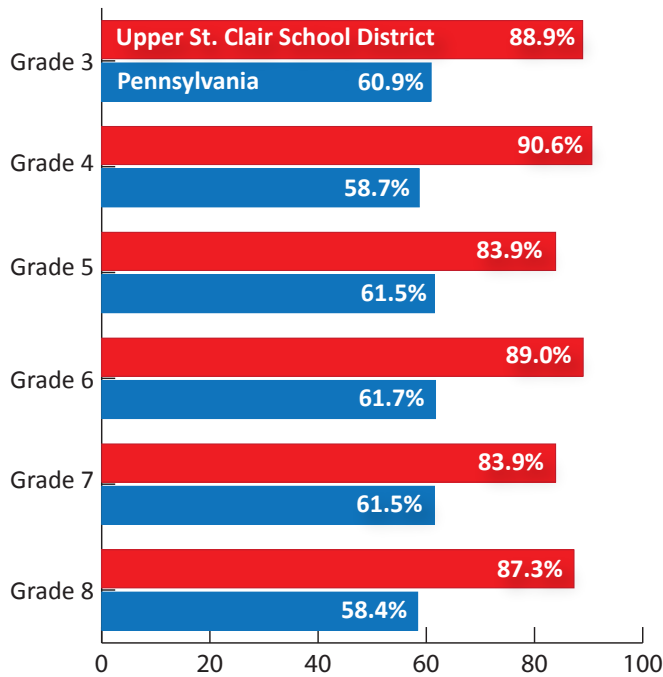
Student Achievement

The annual Pennsylvania System School Assessment is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment, which is used to measure students' attainment of academic standards. Students in grades 3 through 8 are assessed in English Language Arts and math. Students in grades 4 and 8 are also assessed in science.

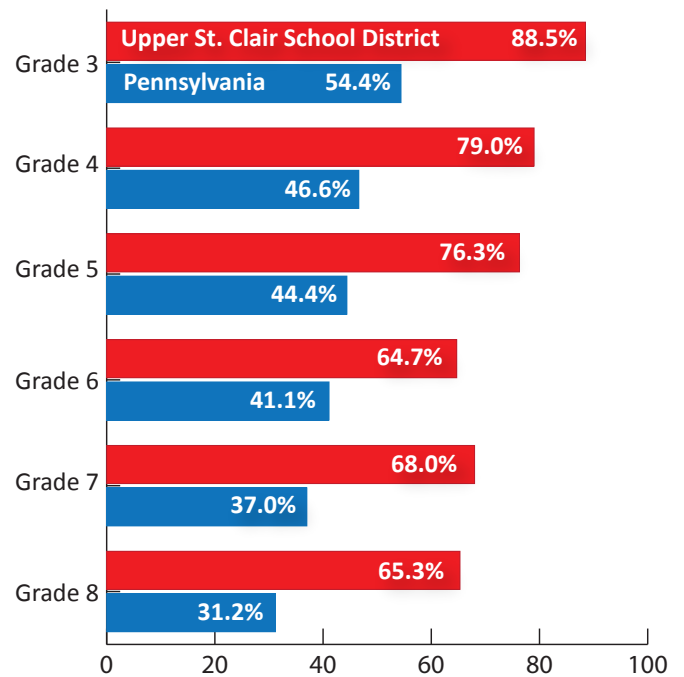
The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to measure proficiency in the subject areas of Algebra I, literature and biology. Exams are administered as students complete each course. For most students, biology is completed in grade 9; literature in grade 10; and Algebra I ranges from as early as grade 6 through grade 9.



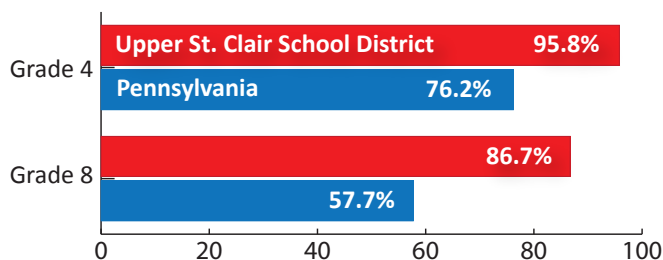
PSSA: English Language Arts



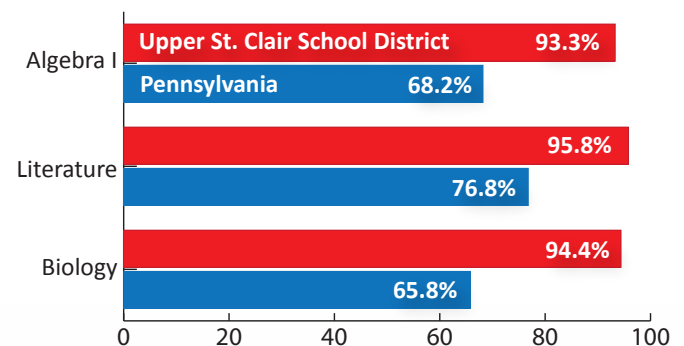
PSSA: Mathematics



PSSA: Science



Keystone Exams



Student Achievement

Class of 2016....Where are they now?

Allegheny College
American University
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Belmont University
Bethany College
Bloomsburg University
Boston College
Bowdoin College
Bryant University
Bryn Mawr College
California University of Pennsylvania
Canisius College
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
Community College of Allegheny County
Cleveland State University
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
College of William & Mary
College of Wooster
Cornell University
Davidson College

Drexel University
Duke University
Duquesne University
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Elon University
Emerson College
Flagler College
Fordham University
Franciscan University
Gannon University
George Washington University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Grove City College
Harvard University
Heidelberg University
High Point University
Indiana University, Bloomington
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Iowa State University
John Carroll University
Johns Hopkins University
Kent State University
La Roche College
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland College of Art
Mercyhurst College
Miami University, Ohio
Michigan State University
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University
Ohio University
Ohio Northern University
Otterbein University
Penn State University
Pittsburgh Technical Institute
Point Park University
Purdue University
Robert Morris University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rollins College
Saint Francis University
Saint Mary's College
Saint Vincent College
San Diego State University
Savannah College of Art & Design
Seton Hill College
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
Sonoma State University
Southern Utah State
Temple University
The Ohio State University



Trinity University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Akron
University of Alabama
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado, Boulder
United States Military Academy
University of the Arts
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Illinois
University of Kentucky
University of Mary Washington
University of Maryland
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Montana
University of Mt. Union
University of North Carolina
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Portland
University of Richmond
University of South Carolina
University of South Florida
University of Texas-Dallas
University of Toronto
University of Vermont
Utah State University
Vanderbilt University
Villanova University
Virginia Tech University
Wake Forest University
Washington & Jefferson College
West Chester University





Year in Review

2016 Highlights...

Advancement

- USC High School received a \$3,000 Environmental Education Grant Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to establish a recycling effort.
- As part of Reimagining the High School Initiative and through a generous contribution, the former Commons area was transformed into café321.
- SHOP@USC expanded its capabilities by purchasing a single sleeve pallet through a generous donation from Coldwell Banker.
- USC was selected as one of 13 schools and universities in the nation to receive an Active Learning Classroom Grant valued at \$62,000 from Steelcase Education - creating the Innovation Hub @ Boyce Middle School.
- A \$42,320 contribution from an anonymous donor family will enable USC to host a national Professional Learning Communities conference in July 2017. The contribution underwrites the registration cost for 80 USC faculty members – significantly advancing a goal of the USC 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

- Deputy Superintendent Dr. Sharon Suritsky was presented the Tri-State Distinguished Female Educator Award.
- Assistant Superintendent Dr. John Rozzo was recognized with the Penn State Alumni Society Leadership & Service Award.
- Chief of School Police Joseph Conners received the Champions of Learning Award from The Consortium for Public Education.
- USC High School Associate Principal for Program Planning and Innovation Dr. Timothy Wagner was named an Emerging Leader by Pennsylvania Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

District Awards & Recognitions

- USC received Best Communities for Music Education Designation by NAMM Foundation.
- “Newsweek” ranked USC High School #113 in the nation and #5 in Pennsylvania.
- “U.S. News & World Report” ranked USC High School #638 of 29,070 nationally and #11 in Pennsylvania.
- Boyce and Fort Couch middle schools were named Pennsylvania Don Eichhorn Schools to Watch for the fourth time – a feat accomplished by only two other Pennsylvania schools.
- Scott Burchill was hired to serve as Director of Business & Finance effective Jan. 3, 2017, following the retirement of Frosina Cordisco.
- The district and the USC Education Association – representing nearly 300 teachers, guidance counselors and school nurses – approved a new six-year collective bargaining agreement through 2021-2022.

Capital Projects

- High school stadium turf replaced during the summer of 2016.
- Capital Projects Review Ad Hoc Committee established. Presented recommendations for architectural services and community input.
- McLean Architects approved for preliminary architectural services for capital improvements projects.
- Capital Projects Community Forum held – Nov. 29, 2016.

Leadership

- Superintendent Dr. Patrick O’Toole was honored with Clarion University’s Distinguished Alumni Award.

CELEBRATE OUR
USC SCHOOLS
Partnership Program

Platinum

**Community Foundation
of Upper St. Clair**

Silver
Boenning & Scattergood, Inc.
Tucker Arensberg, P.C.
Victorian Finance LLC

Bronze
Cohen and Grigsby, P.C.
McLean Architects LLC

If you are interested in making a contribution to the Upper St. Clair School District, please contact Sheila Gorgonio, director of advancement, at 412-833-1600 ext. 2826 or sgorgonio@uscsd.k12.pa.us