



Boyertown

WINTER 2016

ESSENTIALS

To enable all students to succeed in a changing world.

BOYERTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Preparing Our Students for Success



Richard Faidley, Ed.D.
Superintendent

As the calendar year comes to a close and the holiday season is upon us, I am reminded to pause for a moment to thank everyone who helps to make the Boyertown Area School District a place where all students can succeed in a changing world.

In this issue of Boyertown Essentials, we highlight student achievement,

innovative curriculum, and community partnerships. The implementation of Learning Academies at Boyertown Area Senior High is an example of all three. As you may remember, District and Boyertown Area Senior High administration, along with a steering committee, have been working to develop our new Learning Academies.

The Learning Academies will provide a rigorous curriculum that will prepare all students for a career or college. Students who choose to tailor their curriculum to follow a Learning Academy will graduate with a Seal of Distinction from their chosen Academy. The following Academies will be offered: Career Tech Center (CTC); Global Communications, Business and Leadership (GCBL); Health and Human Services (HHS); Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); and Visual, Performing and Fine Arts (VPFA).

While the Learning Academies structure will begin with the 2017–2018 academic year, the Class of 2021 will be the first class to have access to the full experience. Current high school students will have access to classes within the Learning Academy curriculum; however, these students will not have the opportunity to graduate with a Seal of Distinction. Students who don't wish to enter a Learning Academy will have the option of following the traditional high school curriculum.

For the Learning Academy structure to be successful, the District's close partnerships with employers in the community will remain critical. It is through these partnerships that our students receive internships, externships, job-shadowing opportunities, career-fair experiences, and much more.

As at the collegiate level, the high school's internship program was designed to help students explore a career or job interest in a hands-on manner. Through this experience, students develop

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Students Today; Physicians & Medical Scientists Tomorrow

When you ask Boyertown Area Senior High School students Jenny Shabrach and Kristin Brintzenhoff what they did over summer break, you won't get the typical family vacation story. Instead, Jenny and Kristin will tell you they attended the 2016 Congress of Future Medical Leaders in Boston, Massachusetts.

Sponsored by the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists, the 2016 Congress of Medical Leaders is a three-day conference founded on the belief that the country must identify prospective medical talent at the earliest possible age. Through the conference, industry leaders come together to help these students acquire experience and skills to take them to the doorsteps of their future careers. In order to attend the conference, students must be nominated by an educator.

At the conference, students were mentored by luminaries in a variety of medical and scientific fields as well as leaders from government and the public sector, including Nobel laureates and leaders in scientific research and cutting-edge technology, as well as from private industry. Students were also given the opportunity to watch live surgeries and procedures and network with professionals and other students.

Kristin, a junior, enjoyed a little bit of everything from the conference. "It was an amazing experience. Hearing the speakers explain their journeys inspired me to push even harder. If they can overcome obstacles and reach their goals, so can I!"

Kristin, who currently takes a multitude of Advanced Placement and honors courses, is thinking about pursuing a career in dermatology or pediatric neurology.

Jenny, a senior, enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with students from across the country. "Kristin and I were very fortunate to have been nominated for the 2016 Congress of Medical Leaders. Not only did we learn so much at the conference, but we now have dedicated professionals who continue to send us resources to help us reach our goals."

Jenny also takes multiple Advanced Placement classes and is thinking about pursuing a career in neuroscience research.

The Boyertown Area School District is proud to be able to provide our students with unique opportunities to advance their education.

Preparing Every Student for Success After Graduation

In an effort to best prepare all students for postsecondary success, the Boyertown Area School District is dedicated to fostering career awareness and preparation. Administration, school counselors, and teachers work together to develop and implement a curriculum that provides students with the skills to reach their career goals after graduation. This article features a comprehensive look into the District's current and future career awareness and preparation initiatives.

At the elementary level, counselors address the skills necessary for success in school and the world of work: cooperation, teamwork, active listening, and problem-solving. These skills, plus many others, are taught through classroom activities and lessons.

The Career Portfolio Program is a comprehensive project to help students think through and plan for their future education and career. In seventh grade, students begin developing a career portfolio with the help of Career Cruising, an interactive career guide featuring multimedia interviews with real people in a variety of careers, in-depth occupational profiles, and information on colleges and universities. They also begin thinking about their education and career goals.

This online tool, paid for by the District, enables them to build and plan their futures through self-assessments, online career-interest surveys, skills assessments, and financial aid and college planning timelines.

In eighth grade, students complete a Career Matchmaker activity on Career Cruising that connects their interests and skills to potential career choices. The results are then saved in their career portfolios. In ninth grade, students create resumes in their English classes, which they upload onto their portfolios for future use.

In high school, as graduation grows closer, students' career portfolios dig deeper. As sophomores, they take the Pre-ACT, a practice test that provides information on improving academic achievement and career preparation.

During health classes, students research three careers that interest them and write career and life goals based on the results from their Pre-ACT. Sophomores regularly revisit their resumes, updating them to reflect new skills and interests. All sophomores are also required to participate in the Digital Driver's License Program, which educates them on nine themes of proper technology use. To earn their "Digital Driver's License," students complete a series of online courses as well as a culminating essay on proper technology use.

Students revisit the Career Cruising Career Matchmaker activity during sophomore year to see how their skills and interests have developed.

One of the most exciting Career Portfolio Program activities for sophomores is the Annual Business Visit. In conjunction with the Berks Business Education Coalition and Junior Achievement, all students visit a local business during the school day. The visit focuses on employability skills and culminates with debriefing sessions and reflective writing.

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Alumni Spotlight: BASH alum transitions to life as artist with new record deal

By BASH senior Harrison Otto, The Cub Editor-in-Chief

Having coffee is usually taken as a casual activity, but for Mr. Josh Hish, an invitation for coffee from the Silverado Records CEO meant everything was going to change.

DJ and artist Josh Hish, a native of Bechtelsville, has recently signed a record deal with Silverado Record Company for his blend of two not so similar genres: Country and Electronic Dance Music (EDM).

"I've decided I'm going to expand what I do. I'm going to shift from being a DJ and playing other people's music to creating my own music," Josh said.

Josh now resides in Nashville, where he turned his passion for music and performing into a full time gig.

At the age of 12, he was inspired by the DJ at his mom's wedding reception who let Josh observe him up close as he worked. Although he was already involved with percussion in band at school, Josh was hooked on becoming a DJ.

"It intrigued me that based on the way he played certain songs, the crowd responded to what he was doing. It was almost as if he was controlling the crowd, and I really thought that was unique and kind of cool."

By age 16, Josh was toting around a trailer full of all his own professional DJ equipment, and was making money too. His first gig was at his grandparents' anniversary, but later he would be playing at numerous junior high dances and weddings. Before he was 18, DJing became Josh's livelihood.

"Doing something that I love, and performing, well I kind of just ran with it."

Josh graduated from Boyertown Area Senior High in 2006, then went on to attend college in Chicago. He had taken a class called Club DJ 1, but nobody there was getting any real experience- except Josh. He had taken it upon himself to start performing in many local clubs, even though he was still 18.

"In college is where I learned my craft and I really got into the club industry there. It's a lot different than what you see at a wedding."

He explained how after moving to Nashville in 2011, he started to DJ at places and private events all over the city.

In 2013 Josh struck gold. One night after work, he was at home listening to music when he realized the beat from Blake Shelton's "Boys 'Round Here" sounded very similar to the beat from the well-known pop song, "Teach me How to Dougie."

"I sat down one night after work at my computer, and I literally took the two songs and mashed them together. That's where it all started."

Josh began to make mash-ups of more country songs with EDM tracks, and played them in clubs where he performed. People started to hear his remixes, and his shows became a hit in Nashville.

In 2014, Josh was invited by country artist Brantley Gilbert to go on his "Let it Ride" Arena tour only two days before it was scheduled to begin.

"We played for 35,000 people right here in Nashville with a filled up crowd at the Bridgestone Arena- it was wild," he said. Being on Tour was a big change of pace for Josh, who was now



performing all over the country with a big name artist. "It's so much fun being out on the road for the first time. I went from being at my desk job on Monday to being on the tour bus that Wednesday."

Josh was making his music his full-time job. In the spring of 2015, Josh went with Chase Bryant on the "Take it On Back Tour" and toured again in 2016 with Dustin Lynch. In addition, Josh has played at some of Country Music's most popular festivals, such as Stagecoach and Country Thunder.

Ever since his record deal with Silverado, Josh says he has had to make a big transition. Instead of mixing other people's content, he now has to focus on recording and producing his own music with the help of his team.

"Right now we are in the studio working on my new EP. There will be new music coming very shortly."

Josh says the hard part for him wasn't the production or writing, which he had been doing for most of his life, but rather the chance to show off his talent to a wider audience.

"The biggest challenge was finding someone to believe in me and pay to send me to a studio to create my own music," he said. "It's all about having a team. Nobody can do it on their own."

Josh has been busy performing live as well.

During Stagecoach last year, he performed a collaboration song with country artist Filmore in front of thousands of fans. "That's when the game changes, when they're singing your song and not someone else's. It's our music, and people love it," he said. During the festival they even had a dance team choreograph and learn the song to perform each day. "We looked out, and there were hundreds and hundreds of kids dancing to our song in synopation. It was one of the best things that has happened this far in my career."

Besides music, Josh enjoys the comfort of being outdoors. He describes himself as an avid mountain biker, and he also loves to kayak.

"I'm actually a big outdoors guy," he said. "Growing up in Boyertown, my buddies and I were pretty country."

While things may be changing for Josh, he still has intentions for making something of himself and following his passions.

"I knew right away that if I wanted to make something of myself, I had to find a way of doing it differently. That's how it's always worked for me."

BASH Director of Bands Nationally Recognized

Boyertown Area School District is proud to announce that Boyertown Area Senior High School's Director of Bands, Mr. Brian Langdon, has been named a 2016 National Music Education Idol as part of the MusicEd Idol competition, sponsored by 21st Century Fox and the Give a Note Foundation. Mr. Langdon is one of 20 teachers selected out of 500 applicants nationwide to receive a \$1,000 grant for his school's music program.

The competition invited students to nominate educators who inspire them to dream big and follow their passion for music. Mr. Langdon was nominated by senior Caroline Lewis, who crafted a video testimonial that featured interviews with students, parents, and alumni explaining the impact Mr. Langdon has had on dozens of lives.

"Boyertown Area Senior High is very fortunate to have Mr. Langdon as a teaching professional in our music department. His outstanding work with our music students is a testament to the

reciprocal respect he has from his students through the rapport he builds with them. Mr. Langdon has done an outstanding job in working to promote a positive school climate through music education, and his musicians are key contributors to the climate of our building and to our communities that comprise the Boyertown Area School District," said Boyertown Area Senior High School principal Dr. Brett Cooper. "We are very fortunate to have his services as a music educator for our school and for the students of our community. On behalf of the administration, faculty, and staff of Boyertown Area Senior High, I would like to congratulate Mr. Langdon on this honor."

Mr. Langdon explained that the grant money will go toward buying more drums for the band or new microphones and recording equipment for the school's music production course.

"We appreciate the continued support of 21st Century Fox to reach more students in more schools with the power of music," said Ms. Jane

Mell Balek, Chief Executive Officer of the Give a Note Foundation. "This is a wonderful opportunity to shine a spotlight on great music programs, which benefit students in all US schools. These stories cannot be told enough, and we encourage communities to support their local schools' music programs and the teachers who make them possible."

Since 2011, 21st Century Fox businesses have donated more than \$1 million to underfunded music programs in schools across the country as part of the company's commitment to support the next generation of artists and creators.

"We were so inspired by the students who submitted nominations and the music educators who motivate them every day to work hard and achieve their dreams," said Ms. Shira Oberlander, Executive Director of Social Impact for 21st Century Fox. "We are thrilled to support these teachers in their work to make a difference in students' lives."

Grant Received to Purchase Library Books

This year, the Boyertown Area School District was honored to receive the Robert Lesko Memorial Library Grant, which includes \$1,000 to be distributed to the District's library programs. Mr. Bob Trainer presented the check on behalf of the Boyertown/Oley Valley Retired School Employees Association (BORSEA), whose members raise money to present educational grants to local school districts.

Each of the ten schools in the District received \$100, which school librarians used to purchase books.

"Through the generous donation of \$1,000 from the Boyertown/Oley Valley Retired School Employees Association, our District libraries are able to provide additional resources that benefit all children in our school district," says superintendent Dr. Richard Faidley of the Boyertown Area School District. "The BORSEA organization and its members continue to impact the educational environment in our school district. I am extremely honored that we continue to have support and generosity from our retired employees. This is one example of how much BORSEA cares about our community and its students. Thank you, BORSEA, for your generous donation."



Climbing Wall Provides Valuable Lessons

From new technology to new after-school programs, the 2016–2017 school year has introduced students across the Boyertown Area School District to exciting new learning opportunities. One of the most anticipated is enabling students at Colebrookdale Elementary School to reach new heights: a brand-new rock-climbing wall.

Standing 8 feet tall and 32 feet long, the new rock wall is engaging students of all ages. The unique structure of the wall, which is much longer than it is tall, allows students to traverse from side to side while maintaining a close relationship to the padded floor below. As they climb, they are supported by a designated spotter. Together, students learn valuable lessons and new skills while establishing a passion for physical activity.

Rock-climbing contributes to physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development in children. It also offers opportunities for valuable lessons about teamwork and problem-solving. Students increase their self-confidence as they take positive risks, reaching for different holds and traversing to different parts of the wall.

The rock wall also benefits students with sensory, physical, cognitive, or communicative disabilities. Rock climbing is a physically demanding activity that requires concentration, motor planning, and sequential thought, among other things; staff work to develop specialized learning plans that utilize the wall in ways that emphasize these skills.

The wall is also being incorporated into lesson plans. Teachers have been trained on its benefits, including the unique opportunity to incorporate action-based learning techniques into the curriculum. For example, its dry-erase surface allows written communication such as words and diagrams, allowing students to practice vocabulary or math skills as they climb.

"The rock-climbing wall has been a great addition to the entire school," says Colebrookdale Elementary School physical education teacher Mrs. Darla Leib. "The wall can fit into almost every part of the elementary curriculum. From math to language arts, our teachers and students will both benefit from this new addition."

Students and staff members are excited to use the rock wall in years to come as a fun way to learn and grow.

Third grade student Zachary Rosen acts as a spotter for classmate Colin McComb.



Preparing for Success After Graduation *Continued from page 1*

As students enter their junior year, they are invited to participate in the Job Shadowing Experience. This is an excellent opportunity to gain firsthand experience in a career that interests them. Students are required to work independently to plan, schedule, participate in, and reflect upon their day on the job. The Job Shadowing Experience may be completed over the summer, during the school year, or in conjunction with a class or club. This unique opportunity is designed to provide students with an up-close look at what a “real job” is like and what education, skills, and experiences they need to enter that field after graduation.

During their junior year, students are required to take the practice SAT (PSAT), after which they receive a comprehensive score report indicating their college and career readiness. Students are also required to update their resumes by the fourth quarter of their junior year, adding their Job Shadowing Experience and other new skills.

Each senior is required to develop and present an eight-to-ten-minute presentation on what they did and learned from their career portfolio project. This project develops public speaking, self-confidence, and time-management skills—all crucial in post-secondary education and workplaces.

“The Career Portfolio graduation requirement for all Boyertown Area Senior High students is designed to provide meaningful career-oriented experiences throughout every student’s high school tenure,” says principal Dr. Brett Cooper. “This is done through providing students with maximum opportunities to research careers and access career and college experiences through local businesses and institutions of higher learning, facilitating an educated, informed decision as to what next steps need to be taken to ensure success beyond high school. Our teacher advisors, school counselors, administrators, and support staff work together with parents and community to guide our students in this very important endeavor.”

Internship Opportunities

The Boyertown Area School District also offers many internship opportunities, both in District schools and in the community. This year, 20 students are participating in the Boyertown Area Senior High Internship Program. Nine dedicated students are interning at the Boyertown Area Senior High School; seven are in the IT Department, operating the student help desk; and two are running the school store.

Eleven students are interning within the community.

The Boyertown Area School District is constantly striving to meet its mission statement, to enable all students to succeed in a changing world, and the School Counseling Department its mission, to help students succeed academically, socially and emotionally in school and community

These internship experiences range from working with U.S. Representative Ryan Costello to working with the Douglass Township Police Department (Montgomery County). One student is even interning at Colebrookdale Elementary School, working with a kindergarten class.

As part of a career exploration, three Boyertown Area Senior High School students are volunteering at the Boyertown Area Multi-Service, helping in the food pantry, office areas, and senior center as well as on a project called “Coupons for a Cause,” which requires organization, teamwork, and project-management skills. This career exploration experience offers unique and invaluable skills for future careers.

Role of the Counselor

The District’s school counselors are dedicated to seeing their students succeed. They meet with students and parents individually to answer any questions about career and post-secondary planning. This often includes, but is certainly not limited to, reviewing transcripts and course selection, looking at individual programs and schools, and discussing financial aid options, applications, options for placement testing, and the role of extracurricular activities.

Counselors are also implementing REMIND, a service that lets them disseminate information to students via email and social media regarding scholarship opportunities, job opportunities, summer enrichment programs, and other valuable programs.

Each year, the Boyertown Area Senior High counselors host presentations and seminars to better prepare students for post-secondary success, such as Sophomore/New Student Orientation Night, Junior Information Night, Skills for Success Lessons, and Financial Aid Night.

New Programs

The Boyertown Area School District is developing many exciting new programs. The Road to Success Program will involve all junior-high students and

will be taught by the school counselors beginning in the 2017–2018 school year. This three-part comprehensive curriculum promotes academic, social/emotional, and career awareness through classroom lessons.

Classroom lessons at the sixth grade level focus on helping students adjust successfully to junior high. In seventh grade, the lessons promote health and personal development. At the end of the three-part comprehensive curriculum, classroom lessons at the eighth grade level focus on motivating students to challenge themselves and prepare for the transition into high school and life after school.

Learning Academies

At the high school level, the District is introducing Learning Academies, which provide a rigorous curriculum that will enable all students to be career or college ready. Closer partnerships with employers in the community will continue to provide internships, externships, job shadowing opportunities, career fair participation, and much more. Students in the Academies will be assigned an advisor or mentor to foster their personalized learning.

The following Academies will be offered at the Boyertown Area Senior High School: Career Tech Center; Global Communications, Business and Leadership; Health and Human Services; Science, Technology, Engineering and Math; and Visual, Performing and Fine Arts. The District chose these Learning Academies based on students’ interests and local labor-market needs.

The District is striving to develop and nurture partnerships with local businesses and organizations relevant to the themes of the Learning Academies. The goal is to offer a personalized learning environment for students by providing hands-on experiences with local businesses. The District’s first group of Academy students will graduate in June 2021.

“The Boyertown Area School District is constantly striving to meet its mission statement, to enable all students to succeed in a changing world, and the School Counseling Department its mission, to help students succeed academically, socially and emotionally in school and community,” says Boyertown Area School District K-12 school counseling coordinator Mrs. Marilee Cassidy. “In order to do this, the District looks at the career portfolio and career awareness activities as works in progress, focusing always on how to improve and better serve our students as they prepare for post-secondary life.”

Students Participate in Mock Election

Students at Junior High West and Junior High East participated in a mock election that was run by students for students and was led by the Youth and Government Club. It was a unique opportunity to learn valuable lessons on the civic voting process and the importance of democracy.

To create the most realistic setting possible, Berks County provided two voting booths at each location. Students were invited, one class at a time, to visit the booths and cast their votes. For simplicity, the booths were set up to allow students to vote for presidential candidates only. Students could also answer two opinion questions: whether to institute year-round school and whether to abolish school athletics. Members of the Youth and Government Club were stationed at each booth to ensure a positive voting experience.

The Boyertown Youth and Government Club was founded five years ago by teachers Mr. Taylor Howard and Mr. Tim Rothermel, school board member and past president Mrs. Jill Dennin, and Ms. Alicia Dinnell of the YMCA in Boyertown. The club now boasts 30 members and is designed to encourage civic engagement by teaching the core principles of democracy.

In addition to club meetings at their respective

schools, students travel to two Youth and Government conventions at Pennsylvania’s capitol. Through these events and meetings, the Youth and Government Club brings the workings of the state government alive and creates hands-on opportunities for students to discuss current state issues with state administrators, elected officials, and students from 35 schools throughout the state.

Freshman Rachel Drakas’s favorite aspect of the Youth and Government Club is the ability to experience firsthand what it takes to pursue a career in politics and government.

“The Youth and Government club provides amazing opportunities for students like me to practice what it’s like to be a government official. I don’t know of many clubs that offer opportunities like this!” says Drakas.

“There are a lot of students who don’t understand how government works,” says freshman Sophia Montayne. “The Youth and Government Club gives us a behind-the-scenes look and a true understanding of government.”

The results of the mock election mirrored Pennsylvania’s results, with both Junior High West and Junior High East students selecting Donald Trump as the winning candidate.



Junior High West YAG members Maddy Tyson and Daniel Goffredo enjoyed the mock election process.

Pennsylvania Philharmonic Orchestra Performs for BASD Students

This past November, Junior High West hosted the musicians of the Pennsylvania Philharmonic in their presentation of the program "Inspiration!" The professional orchestra, led by Maestro Michael Butterman, performed two concerts — one for students at Junior High West and Junior High East students who play in the band and orchestra and one for all fifth grade students in the Boyertown Area School District.

Through the music of Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Bernstein, and Mussorgsky, the orchestra demonstrated how composers are inspired by other artists, writers, and other creative individuals.

Michael Jordan, director of bands in the Boyertown School District, stated, "The interactive

experience the Pennsylvania Philharmonic provides is a great way for children to get involved with music. We hope that these performances inspire more students to explore music on an emotional level."

What makes the Pennsylvania Philharmonic truly unique is its ability to be completely interactive and transparent with audiences. Catering to the younger generation, the Pennsylvania Philharmonic focuses its tours to reach children who may not have the opportunity to see a live classical performance. Each concert is infused with education, as the maestro and orchestra take the time to educate and involve students in the world of classical music performances.

Ninth grade students SarahAnn Ward, Ashlee

Bennett, and Paige Wenhold are members of Junior High West's orchestra.

SarahAnn plays the violin, mallet, and chimes. She found the performance to be very moving, "Everything the musicians did had a purpose," SarahAnn said. "I almost cried."

Ashlee Bennett and Paige Wenhold play the violin. Both girls enjoyed the performance, calling it "graceful and inspiring"

All three girls agreed that it was obvious that the musicians put in hours of practice.

Boyertown Area School District believes in the importance of music education and provides opportunities such as this in an effort to inspire students to pursue their dreams.

BASH Honors Veterans

For more than two decades the Boyertown Area Senior High School has dedicated November 11, Veterans Day, to honoring and serving local veterans. From fundraisers to luncheons, students and staff members spent the day organizing and hosting activities that highlighted veterans for their unwavering service.

During the school day, more than 20 different veterans and active-duty military, some of whom are current teachers, shared their experiences with students.

Many students participated in a Push-Up Contest that raised more than \$1,600 for a war monument to be installed on campus. The "Veterans' Wall of Honor" will honor all veterans who have worked at or attended Boyertown Area Senior High School.

Speakers, students, and local veterans joined together for the District's annual Veterans Day Luncheon, where they enjoyed a delicious meal donated by Moyer's Catering and meaningful conversations. Special performances from the Boyertown Area Senior High School Concert Choir and Strings Ensemble made the day even more memorable.

Boyertown Area School District would like to thank our community's veterans once again for their service.



BASH NJROTC Unit Executive Officer, Stephanie Russo (12-NJ) enjoyed sharing lunch with one of the many veterans at the annual luncheon.

Picture Perfect



The Boyertown Area School District would like to congratulate Junior High West students Gabrielle Ziegler and Kelsey Pittius for their accomplishments at the 2016 Senior High School Print Competition, hosted by the Berks Photographic Society.

Gabrielle was the first-place winner for her print, "Sweater Weather," and received \$750. Kelsey Pittius received an honorable mention and \$100 for her print, "Rising Sun."

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Preparing Our Students for Success

the background knowledge that is essential to make informed decisions about their futures. The program is supervised by Boyertown Area Senior High staff and the community employer. Students receive a grade and credit toward graduation corresponding with the number of hours spent working at their internship. We are proud that we can provide students with this opportunity to enhance their high school experience and prepare for their future.

We currently have 20 students participating in the Boyertown Area Senior High Internship Program. Nine dedicated students are interning at Boyertown Area Senior High; seven are in the IT Department, operating the student help desk; and two are running the school store.

Some of the outside businesses hosting BASH interns include the Douglass Township Police Department (Montgomery County), the *Boyertown Times*, U.S. Representative Ryan Costello office, Colebrookdale Elementary School, and Hollister Company.

For more information on how we prepare every student for success after graduation, refer to the story on page 1. If you are a business owner who would like to partner with us, please call me at 610-367-6031 or email me at rfaidley@boyertownasd.org.

Third Graders Participate in Annual Egg Drop

It's an Earl Elementary School rite of passage: the annual Egg Drop. Each year, third grade students watch as the product of a weeklong project is dropped from the school's roof. Egg Drop projects help students explore basic concepts such as gravity, force, and acceleration and combine problem-solving skills with basic principles of engineering and physics. Rules vary, but the general idea is to have students design a container that will allow an uncooked egg to fall safely without breaking.

Mr. Joe Bauer, third grade teacher at Earl Elementary and a coordinator for this STEM-oriented project, participated in his first Egg Drop in fifth grade. He says, "My fifth grade science teacher was a big influence, not only for my continued interest in science but for my interest in becoming a teacher. It's the first memory I have demonstrating how a hands-on project can affect the students involved."

Third grade curriculum at Earl Elementary School includes a section on outer space, and many of the concepts taught help the students as they work on their projects at home. At Earl, the rules are simple; nothing breakable, no liquids or flammable components, and no more than four pounds in weight or twelve inches in diameter. The simplicity of the rules allows for an outpouring of creativity from the students and brings families together as teams. Often, older siblings who participated in the project previously become teachers themselves as they help in the design process.

There are two third grade classes at Earl Elementary School and every student of every ability participated. Mrs. Trish Westermann, also a third grade teacher and coordinator of the project, says, "On drop day, the level of excitement was incredible. But leading up to the event, the students were just as excited. They would come to school,

smiling, and share updates with the class about their projects."

When the students came together on Drop Day, October 28, there were a vast variety of designs. Abigail Fretz, one of the participating third graders, used a shoe box lined with puffed rice. She explains, "I put the puffed rice into bags and placed them in a shoebox to make a nest. My mom taped it so it wouldn't fall out. All of the sides and lid were covered with cereal and a rubber band kept it closed."

On the day of the event, the Earl Fire Company came to the school with a firetruck and firefighters, who climbed to the roof of the school and dropped each project. Mr. Bauer says, "Involving the fire company raises the level of excitement and makes it feel like a community event. Other classes come outside to watch, and all of the parents are invited. The parents become kids again as they leave their lawn chairs to stand with their children while their design tests gravity."

There was a great feeling of camaraderie, respect, compassion, and support—and the students cheered for every single project. Abigail says, "I felt a little scared and nervous because I didn't know what would happen. I wasn't sure if my project was going to save the egg. I was surprised and happy when my egg didn't break." Not only was Abigail able to protect her egg, but she also got first place for landing closest to the target on the pavement below, a secondary challenge to the project.

The teachers especially enjoy the Q&A session that follows the event. Mr. Bauer says, "The kids come back after watching their project drop and they're so specific about the improvements they would make for a better design. I really feel that if they were given another week, they'd use it to improve their designs and be just as excited for the second



Third grade student Ava Reinert is excited to discover that her egg survived the drop from the roof of Earl Elementary School.

drop." During the session, students ask questions and discuss the concepts they learned through the process. Abigail says that one of the things she learned was: "Astronauts have to be very brave because they go all the way up into space and then fall back down again." It's no wonder students look forward to this project year after year.

School Performance Profile Highlights Success

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has released the 2015-2016 Pennsylvania School Performance Profile, a tool designed to measure the academic progress of all public schools. It offers a web-based resource for school districts and individual schools to communicate performance results to various stakeholders.

The School Performance Profile is designed to:

- Inform the public of the performance of each public school, comprehensive career and technical center, cyber charter, and charter school in Pennsylvania.
- Provide a building level academic score for teachers, as part of the teacher supervision process known as the Educator Effectiveness System.

- Offer a resource for school districts to communicate and compare performance, analyze performance indicators as related to achievement, and encourage best practices.
- Report federal accountability status for Title I schools.
- Provide parents and taxpayers with performance measures for the school/district of residence, neighboring schools/districts and schools/districts across the state.

Looking at the results, Boyertown Area Senior High is ranked third in Berks County, Junior High West is first in the County, Junior High School East is in the top five in the County, and three of the District's elementary schools are in the top five in the County.

"We are extremely proud that while we have been able to keep our per pupil spending low, our district's performance based on the School Performance Profile score is among the highest," Dr. Greg M. Miller, chief student achievement officer, stated. "In fact, we have the highest-performing elementary school and the third-highest-performing high school in Berks County."

Here in the Boyertown Area School District, we have a strong commitment to the continuous improvement and see the release of the newest information as an additional opportunity to reflect on the performance of each of our schools. Please be assured that we will be integrating this new information into our existing data analysis process to ensure we continue to improve.

Students on Quest to 'Caption Them All'

Students at New Hanover Elementary School recently combined their science unit on wetlands with the ever-popular Pokémon Go mobile game to learn how to write captions.

This summer the world was taken by storm with Nintendo's Pokémon Go, an augmented reality, GPS-based mobile game that challenges players to catch virtual creatures by visiting different locations. The unique design motivates players to get up and move around in hopes of becoming a top Pokémon trainer by "catching them all," the game's tagline.

As students came back to school, educators quickly became aware how much of an impact the game had on their students, and one educator saw this as an opportunity: What if Pokémon Go was the inspiration for a new educational program that

could be modified to fit every classroom? That educator was none other than Boyertown Area School District's own Technology Instructional Coach, Mrs. Michelle Hanna.

The inspired and resourceful Mrs. Hanna used Google Forms to create a program that incorporates game elements of Pokémon Go with curriculum content and began implementing the new program into classrooms across the District.

So when fourth grade students at New Hanover Elementary School were learning how to write captions for an upcoming iMovie project on the wetlands, Mrs. Hanna modified her program and visited their classrooms.

In groups of two, 54 New Hanover Elementary School students moved around their classroom look-

ing for Quick Response (QR) codes. Once they found a QR code, they used their school-provided iPad to scan it, which opened a video clip. Students then worked together to write a thoughtful caption for the video clip. When students submitted a correct answer, they were rewarded by capturing a Pokémon! The students were so motivated that they were all smiles as they journeyed around the room, on a quest to "caption them all!"

"Combining the game elements of Pokémon Go with curriculum content allows for students to actively engage with their classmates and their learning," says Mrs. Hanna. "The fact that this type of technology is available to our students is a testament to the District's commitment to integrating technology with the classroom and engaging all students."

News from the Foundation for Boyertown Education

Giving Back to Community

Office Technologies and First Priority Bank know the importance of giving back to the community. Mr. Greg Cavallo, owner of Office Technologies, has long been a supporter of education in Boyertown and surrounding school districts. Mr. Cavallo presented a check for \$2,500 to the Foundation for Boyertown Education to fund innovative and new programs in the Boyertown Area School District. Mrs. Tessi Melchior, Executive Director accepted the check on behalf of the Foundation.

First Priority Bank presented the Foundation for Boyertown Education with an EITC donation in the amount of \$2,500. Mr. Greg Herb, Foundation Board Chairman, and Mrs. Melchior, accepted the check from Ms. Turie Sotzin, Vice President Community Development Officer at First Priority Bank and Mr. Ray Maillet, Assistant Vice President Business Development Officer at First Priority Bank.



Program Encourages Open Discussion and Teaches Coping Techniques

The Foundation for Boyertown Education is sponsoring a seven-week program about feelings and emotions for fourth grade students at Gilbertsville Elementary School.

The program, developed and presented by the Caron Student Assistance Program, is being presented by a Caron staff member and focuses on feelings and emotions of fourth grade students.

A leader in substance use prevention, Caron's Student Assistance Program provides comprehensive, customizable drug, alcohol, and nicotine prevention services and healthy living programming designed to help students lead successful lives. Caron partners with schools, parents, communities, and other concerned organizations, to ensure that students are equipped with tools and skills they need to achieve and thrive.

Lessons include conducting open discussions, discovering one's feelings, and coping techniques, as well as strategies to handle both positive and negative emotions. Additional topics included anti-bullying and problem-solving strategies, goal setting, and what it means to be a good friend. A recent lesson dealt with stress and what causes it and identified ways to relax and calm down in stressful situation.



Inaugural Golf Outing a Success

The Foundation for Boyertown Education's Inaugural Golf Outing was held on Monday, October 10, 2016 at beautiful Twin Ponds Golf Club in Gilbertsville. Over 80 golfers came out to golf in the inaugural outing and enjoyed a catered steak lunch by Moyer's Catering. More than 70 sponsors and golfers contributed to raise over \$13,684 to benefit the Foundation and the programs it funds. We are truly grateful to all our sponsors who made this tournament a success. Thank you all for your dedication to the children of our community.

For information on next year's outing contact Tessi Melchior at tmelchior@boyertownasd.org, or call 610-473-3499.

Save the Date!

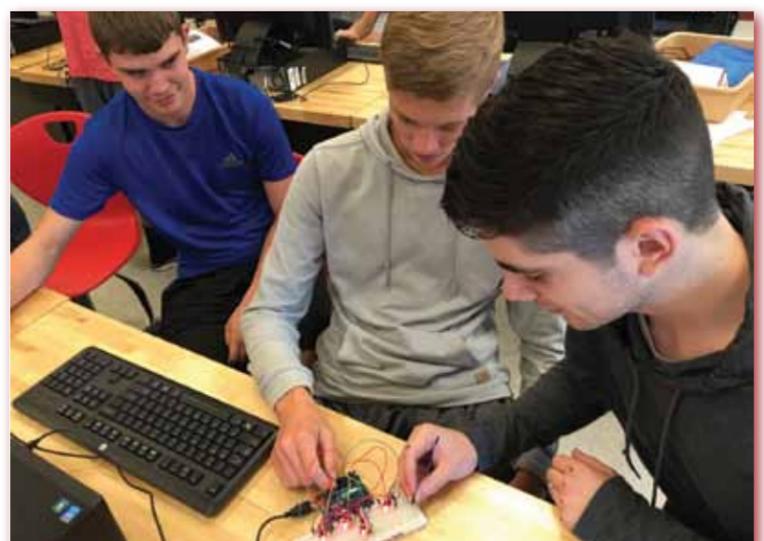
The Harlem Wizards will make their way to Boyertown Area Senior High on Saturday, March 11 at 2:00 p.m. for an exciting game filled with tricks, hoops and alley-oops!

Ticket prices are \$10 for students, \$15 for adults, and \$25 for courtside. A limited number of courtside tickets are available. For ticket information contact Tessi Melchior at tmelchior@boyertownasd.org.

New Class at BASH Introduces Students to Advanced Robotics and Automation

Mr. Chad Roth, Technology & Engineering Education Teacher at Boyertown Senior High School, instructs students on writing code to operate a traffic light in the Advanced Robotics and Automation Class. Units for this class will cover topics such as: Basic Electricity, Electronics, & Automation; Microcontroller and Programming Basics; Fundamentals of Robotics & Mechanics; Mechanical Design, Artificial Intelligence and Industrial Automation; Passive Driver Assistance Technologies, and Fully Autonomous Vehicles. The class begins with students learning how to write the code to make a traffic light operate under programmed patterns, including more advanced features such as pedestrian walk signals and emergency vehicle preemption systems, and will culminate at the end with students creating a fully autonomous vehicle.

Boyertown Area Senior High seniors Danny Van Keuren, Jake Keifer, and Tyler Kiogallon work together to wire a bread-board to operate a four-way traffic light.



Colebrookdale Elementary School Student Walks in Principal's Shoes for a Day

With a Boyertown Area School District badge around her neck and an official walkie-talkie in her pocket, fifth grade student Samantha Dolansky took to the halls of Colebrookdale Elementary School as principal for a day.

Being a principal was a little harder than Samantha expected. With the guidance of Colebrookdale Elementary School's principal, Mr. Michael Stoudt, Samantha experienced firsthand what it takes to be a principal. From paperwork to the morning announcements, Samantha's day as principal was full of excitement.

Samantha and Mr. Stoudt began their day by patrolling the halls. They quickly responded to requests they received over their walkie-talkies, which directed them to different parts of the building.

Then the pair headed over to the Education Center to deliver important paperwork. As a special treat, Samantha was introduced to the District's administration team. She met Superintendent Dr. Richard Faidley, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Rob Scoboria, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Melissa Woodward, Chief Human Resource Offi-

cer Mr. Steven Katch, and Chief Financial Officer Mr. David Szablowski. Samantha asked them questions about their jobs and the District they serve.

After her visit to the Education Center, Samantha enjoyed lunch surrounded by her teachers in the faculty room. "Mr. Stoudt does a lot of walking," Samantha exclaimed as she put her tray down. "Principals do so much, and I have only been principal for a day!"

Samantha won the opportunity to be Principal for a Day from Colebrookdale Elementary School's Annual Basket Raffle. Since she plans to become a teacher, Samantha explains, this experience taught her many valuable lessons about a career in education.

"Being principal means you carry a lot of responsibilities," Samantha says. "I have learned so much from Mr. Stoudt. Even though it was hard work, I have had a lot of fun!" Samantha and Mr. Stoudt worked together to ensure that all students and teachers had a productive and fun day.



Fifth grade student Samantha Dolansky had a wonderful time serving as principal of Colebrookdale Elementary School for a day.

Project Offers Unique Learning Opportunities at Pine Forge Elementary School

A space to imagine, build, learn, and collaborate is inspiring the minds of third grade students at Pine Forge Elementary School, through a new concept called maker spaces.

Maker spaces provide hands-on, creative ways to encourage students to design, experiment, build, and invent as they deeply engage in science, engineering, and tinkering. These spaces vary in design and can feature maker equipment ranging from 3D printers and laser cutters to Legos and cardboard. No matter the budget, a maker space provides hands-on learning for students of all ages.

When Pine Forge Elementary School third grade teacher Mr. John Hazel learned about maker spaces, he was instantly inspired by the idea of a collaborative work space that enables students to make, learn, explore, and share ideas. Motivated, Mr. Hazel decided to incorporate maker spaces into his students' weekly schedule.

As an introductory maker space project, Mr. Hazel

challenged his third grade class to create projects that represented themselves as learners. Students were given creative freedom to dream up a one-of-a-kind creation that was an extension of their passions. There were no guidelines on materials, size, or shape, which encouraged students to let their imaginations run wild.

After planning out their creations, students were asked to present an engineering prototype and pitch their idea to Mr. Hazel. If students could answer the question, "How does this project represent you as a learner?" Mr. Hazel approved their prototype and gave them the 'okay' to begin building. For an hour each week, students moved away from their desks to build and create in their new maker space.

After their projects were built, students were asked to write reports on how their projects represented themselves as learners. Mr. Hazel then showed his class how to upload their reports to Google Docs. After all of the reports were uploaded, Mr. Hazel

and his class used iPads to walk around the class observing their classmate's projects and reading their papers. Students then used sticky-notes to give each other compliments and words of encouragement as the final part of the project called the "Compliment Contest."

"This project quickly became a project of passion," Mr. Hazel said. "Students were self-motivated to learn, collaborate, and share ideas with their peers. Through this project, I witnessed students discovering their true passions and strengthening their desire to be lifelong learners."

Mr. Hazel and his third grade class are busy working on more maker space projects, and have plans to complete five projects by the year's end. Other schools across the District are also embracing maker spaces. Read about the District's maker space projects in upcoming editions of *Boyertown Essentials* and on the District's website and Facebook page.

Athletic Highlights

The Boyertown Area School District would like to congratulate the following student-athletes who recently signed their National Letter of Intent to play collegiate sports: Allison Bardman, lacrosse, Bloomsburg University; David Campbell, wrestling, Bucknell University; Jakob Campbell, wrestling, Bucknell University; Tiffany Diachynsky, lacrosse, Bloomsburg University; Hailey Heimbach, lacrosse, Coastal Carolina University; Patrick Hohlfeld, baseball, Philadelphia University; Abby Kapp, basketball, Bucknell University; Cara Megill, swimming, University of Rhode Island; Maddy Siejk, lacrosse, Lock Haven University; and Hannah Wentzel, lacrosse, University of Delaware.

The Boyertown Area School District would also like to congratulate the following student-athletes who have verbally committed to play a collegiate sport: Ivan Escott, swimming, Eastern Illinois

University; Kaitlyn Kada, lacrosse, Seton Hill University; Gillian Kasitz, cross country, Queens University of Charlotte; and Patrick Lance, swimming, Cleveland State University.

Boyertown Area School District is proud to announce that for the 10th consecutive year, the Boyertown Area Senior High girls soccer team has earned the National Soccer Coaches Association of America's (NCSAA) National Team Academic Award for exemplary performance in the classroom.

Coach Mr. Bill Goddard, proud of his team's hard work, said, "Our program is honored to receive our 10th straight NSCAA team academic award. We have had many extraordinary student-athletes in our program's 17-year history who understand how to balance academics with sport."



To qualify for the award, the team must have a minimum GPA of 3.25 for the entire 2015-2016 academic year. The team GPA is determined by adding every player's GPA, then dividing by the number of players.

Competing for the first time in almost five years, BASH varsity cheerleaders came in 3rd place at PIAA Pocono Regionals in Kutztown in November.