



# UPPER ST. CLAIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

## ANNUAL REPORT: 2024



### Dr. John T. Rozzo ..... ..... Superintendent of Schools

The 2024 Annual Report for the Upper St. Clair School District offers a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the successes, growth and innovation that have taken place throughout the past year. These accomplishments are a testament to the unwavering dedication of our students, staff and community in the pursuit of educational excellence.

Within these pages, you will find highlights that showcase the diverse achievements in academics, arts, athletics and community engagement. Our district's website, [usc.sd.k12.pa.us](http://usc.sd.k12.pa.us), provides ongoing updates about the incredible things happening in our schools. Throughout the year, we feature stories and photos of academic milestones, service projects, performances and athletic achievements that contribute to our vibrant school community.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering a learning environment that inspires every student to reach their full potential. The foundation of our success is built on relationships — among our students, staff, families and community members. These partnerships strengthen our district and create a culture where every student feels supported and valued.

Since I began my role as superintendent in 2018, I have witnessed firsthand the deep sense of pride that our community holds for its schools. This shared commitment to providing the very best education for our students continues to be our guiding principle. It is an honor to serve as superintendent and to work alongside such a dedicated community.

Thank you for your continued trust and support in helping us achieve our mission of shaping the future of each and every student in Upper St. Clair School District. Together, we will continue to build on our successes and create opportunities for all students to thrive.

With gratitude and respect,

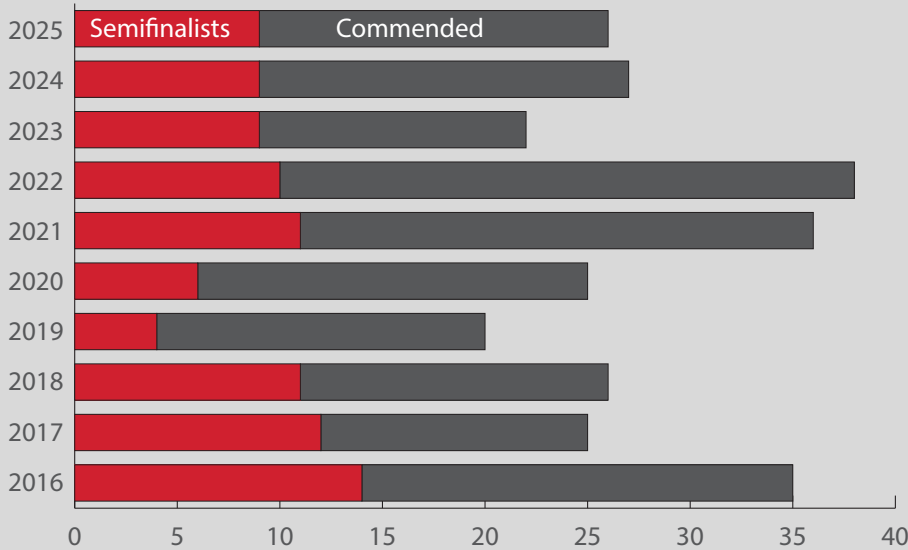
Dr. John T. Rozzo  
Superintendent





# Our Students

## National Merit Scholarship Program

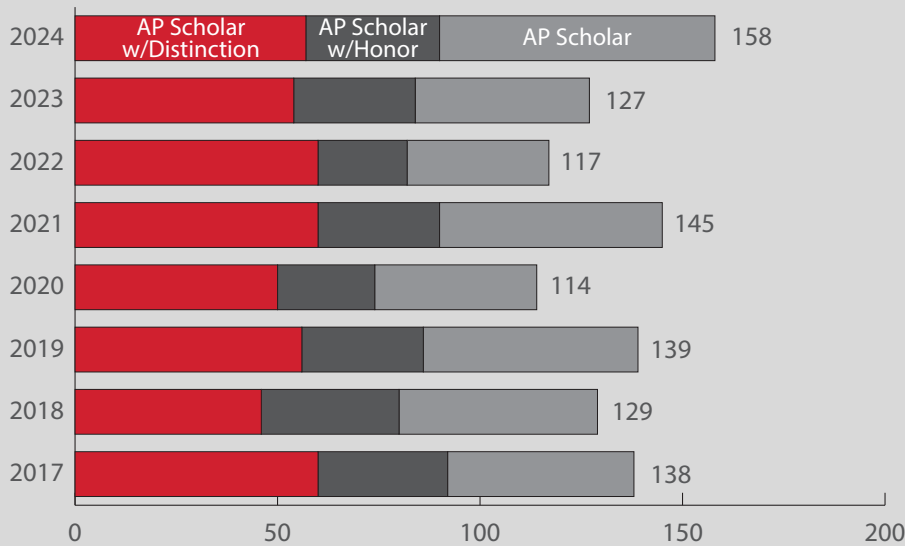


Students enter the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT – the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test – during the fall of their junior year.

**Semifinalist:** scores in the top 1%

**Commended Students:** scores in the top 3%

## AP Scholars



**AP Scholar with Distinction:** average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more exams

**AP Scholar with Honor:** average score of 3.25 or higher on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams

**AP Scholar:** scores of 3 or higher on three or more exams

- Upper St. Clair School District's elementary and middle schools ranked among Pennsylvania's best schools by U.S. News & World Report. Its lists of **2025 Best Elementary Schools and Best Middle Schools** were released in November 2024. Boyce and Fort Couch are the highest ranked middle schools in the region. Boyce is ranked No. 2 and Fort Couch No. 7 among Pennsylvania's 2,387 middle schools. Only one other school in the region broke the top 10. Among Pennsylvania's 3,216 elementary schools, Upper St. Clair's three elementary schools all rank within the top 1% of schools. Baker Elementary ranks No. 23; Eisenhower Elementary is No. 24; and Streams Elementary rounds out at No. 31.

- Upper St. Clair School District was named among the 2024 **Best Communities for Music Education (BCME)** for the ninth consecutive year.

- Upper St. Clair High School ranks among the **top 2% of high schools in the nation** according to U.S. News & World Report. The report ranks USCHS 426th in the nation, ninth in Pennsylvania and second in the Pittsburgh region.

- Six USCHS musicians were selected for **Pennsylvania Music Educators Association All-State** honors: Isaac Bernstein, Orchestra; Miriam Gutensohn, Orchestra; Gabe Pacella, Jazz Ensemble; Carlee Santel, Band; Lauren Tenney, Band; Daniel Tung, Orchestra.

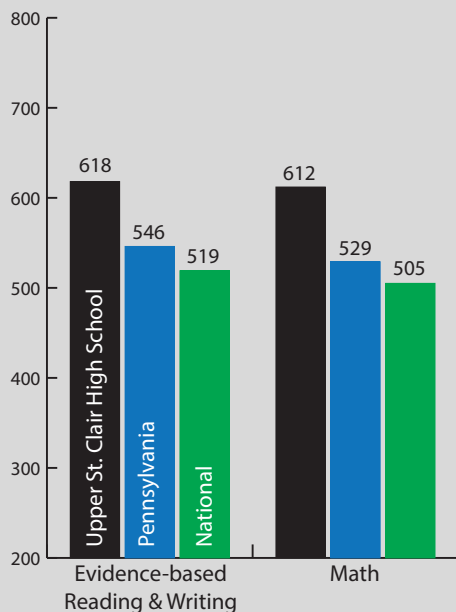
- Fourteen USCHS students were selected for the **Health Professionals Prep** program at the University of Pittsburgh Schools of the Health Sciences.

# Our Students

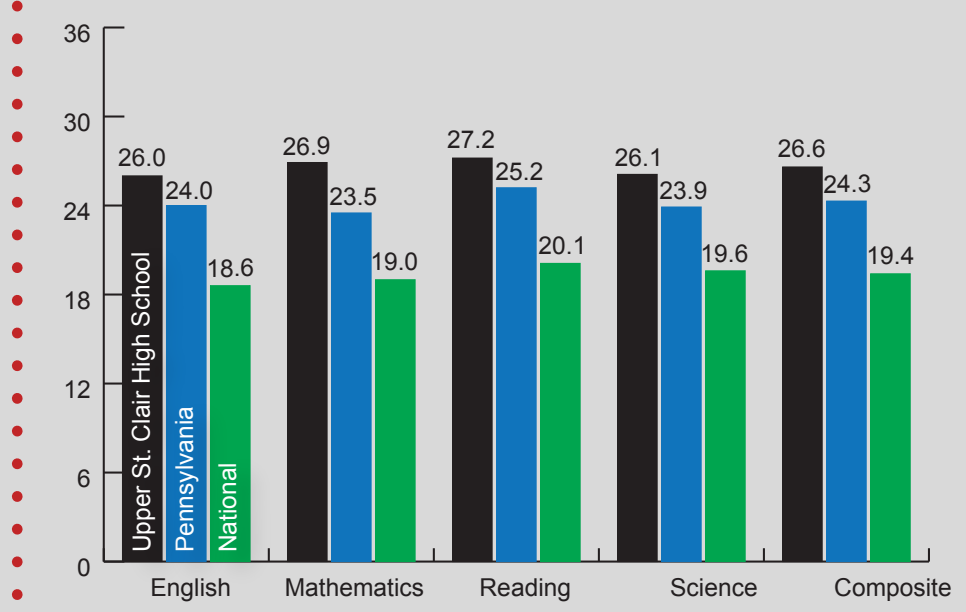


- Two Fort Couch Middle School students placed first in the **Crescendo International Music Competition**. Flutist Arjun Kairi and guitarist Aanya Jha won in their respective instrument categories.
- A team of Fort Couch Middle School students finished first in the 2024 Pittsburgh Regional **Future City Competition** and fifth at the international competition in Washington, D.C.
- Montage, a student-produced literary arts magazine at Upper St. Clair High School, earned first place recognition in the Annual **Scholastic Yearbook, Magazine and Newspaper Contest**, sponsored by the American Scholastic Press Association.
- USCHS student Nikhita Thakuria was one of six junior award winners honored at the **Women of Achievement Awards**, sponsored by the nonprofit Cribs for Kids.
- USCHS Student Council was recognized as a 2024 **National Gold Council of Excellence** by the National Association of Student Councils for its exemplary record of leadership, service and activities that improve the school and community.
- USCHS students performed **four sold-out shows** of the musical, “Newsies.”
- 2024 USCHS graduate Isaac Bernstein was named a **2024 Coca-Cola Scholar**.
- Three Upper St. Clair **Future Problem Solving** teams qualified to compete at the 2024 State Bowl, where a team of juniors placed second in Pennsylvania.
- A team of Fort Couch Middle School eighth graders placed first in the 6-8 Division of the regional **STEM Design Challenge** – advancing to the state-level competition
- The USCHS Speech & Debate team won its third title in a row at the **2024 Pennsylvania High School Speech & Language State Championships**.
- Siblings Kaaveri Patil and Aarav Patil were named finalists in the 30th Annual **Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Contest** for their scene from “Hamlet.”
- Eighth grader Raana Parchuri was crowned **Champion of the 74th annual Western Pennsylvania Spelling Bee** – marking his third time winning the regional event.
- Three USCHS juniors earned award medals at the **Family, Career & Community Leaders of America State Leadership Conference**.
- USCHS senior Nate Grabowski was inducted into the **National Technical Honor Society (NTHS)** at Parkway West Career & Technology Center.

## 2024 SAT averages



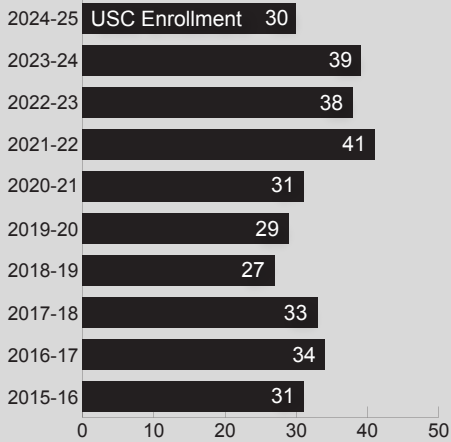
## 2024 ACT averages





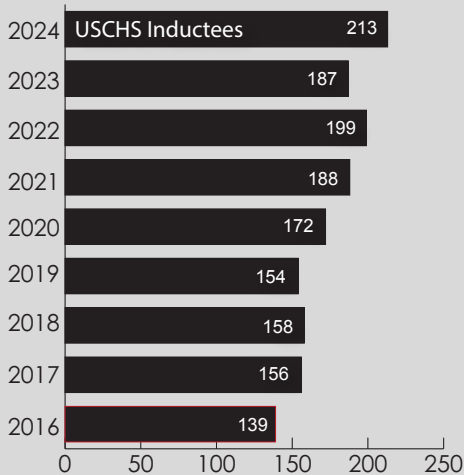
# Our Students

## Parkway West Career & Tech. Center



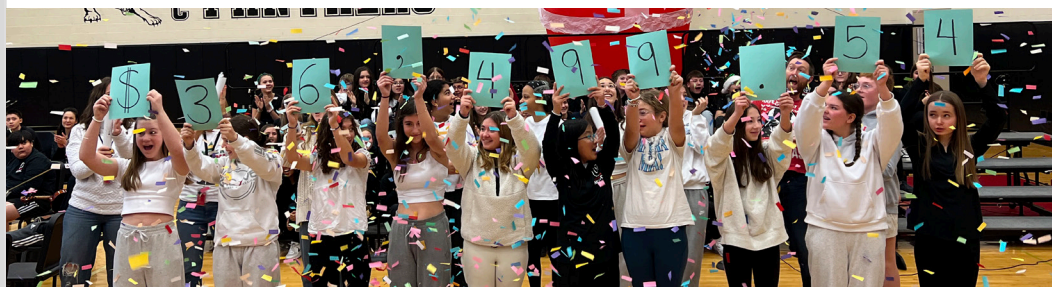
Parkway West's 16 programs prepare students for college and careers beyond high school: Auto Body Repair; Automotive Technology; Carpentry; Cosmetology; Culinary Arts; Cyber Security & Networking Technology; Diesel Technology; Electrical Systems Technology; Graphic Arts & Production Technology; Healthcare Occupations Technology; Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Power Motorsports Technology; Public Safety Technology; Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Therapy Technology; Veterinary Assistant Technology; and Welding & Fabrication Technology.

## National Honor Society



At 213, this is USCHS's largest number of new inductees and, representing 61% of the class of 2025, it is the largest percentage of a class on record. On average, 51% of juniors are inducted each year.

- Four USCHS juniors completed the **Westinghouse Science Honors Institute**, a regional science and engineering program.
- Nine USCHS students earned recognition for 24 original pieces in the annual **Scholastic Art & Writing Competition**. Awards include two Gold Keys, five Silver Keys and 17 Honorable Mentions
- Seven USCHS seniors were selected as 2024 **Outstanding Young Citizens** by Trib Total Media. Isaac Bernstein, Leona Chen, Boshi Dong, Hunter Maher, Anna Makoul, Liam Park and Mahir Parmar were among the 109 students from 47 area schools.
- Four USCHS students advanced to the **Future Business Leaders of America (FLBA) National Leadership Conference** – Lylah Kateeb, Abhi Kanini, Arjun Suresh and Isabel Vilensky.
- Junior swimmer Victoria Zesch earned three medals at the **Special Olympics Pennsylvania's annual Summer Games** at Penn State University.
- Streams Elementary School raised \$3,291.08 to benefit Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh during the school's annual **Children for Children** initiative.
- Fort Couch Middle School students raised \$36,499.54 through the school's 30th annual **Reach Out** campaign in December 2024.
- A team of eighth graders finished second among 394 middle school teams in the statewide **STEM Design Challenge**.
- Junior trumpet player Carlee Santel was named first-chair at the Pennsylvania Music Education Association's All-State Festival – qualifying for the 2025 **All-Eastern Honors Band**.
- 2024 USCHS graduate Leona Chen was awarded a **National Security Language Initiative for Youth scholarship** to study Korean last summer in South Korea.
- The USCHS Speech & Debate Team finished sixth in the nation at the **National Catholic Forensic League Grand National Tournament** in Chicago.
- USCHS junior Auri Tarabishy finished second at the **Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esports Association State Championships**.
- Seven members of the USCHS Speech & Debate team earned **Academic All American** awards from the National Speech & Debate Association.
- USCHS junior Arth Italiya was one of three winners in the **national essay contest sponsored by IndustryWeek**.
- Upper St. Clair **Inline Hockey** won the high school and middle school Pennsylvania Interscholastic Roller Hockey League championships.



# Our Students

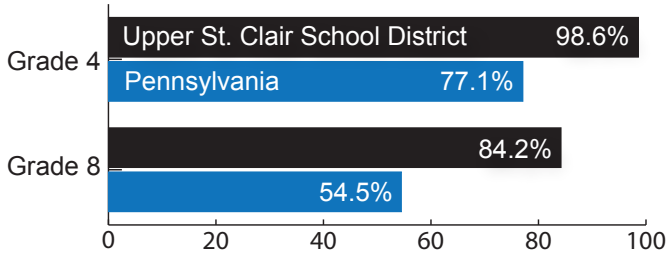


## 2024 Pennsylvania State Assessments

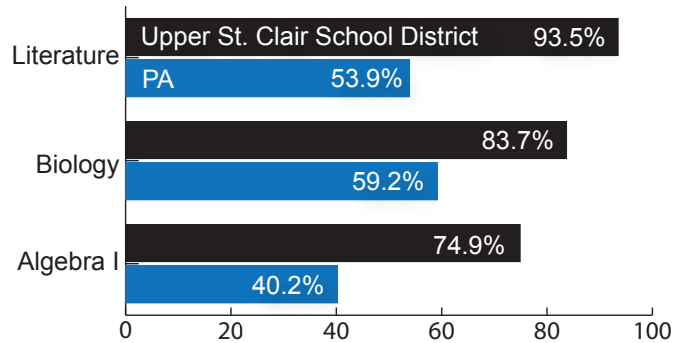
The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure students' attainment of academic standards. The standards identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels. Students in grades 3 through 8 are assessed in English language arts and math. Students in grades 4 and 8 are also assessed in science.

Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to measure proficiency in algebra, literature and biology. For most USCHS students, biology is completed in grade 9; literature in grade 10; and Algebra I ranges from as early as grade 6 through grade 9. The data below is for students in the Class of 2025 – regardless of when the Keystone Exam was administered.

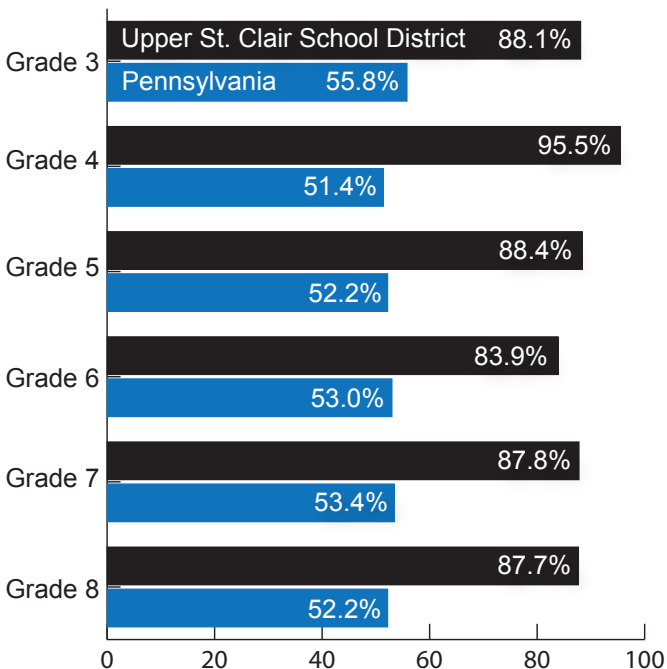
### PSSA: Science



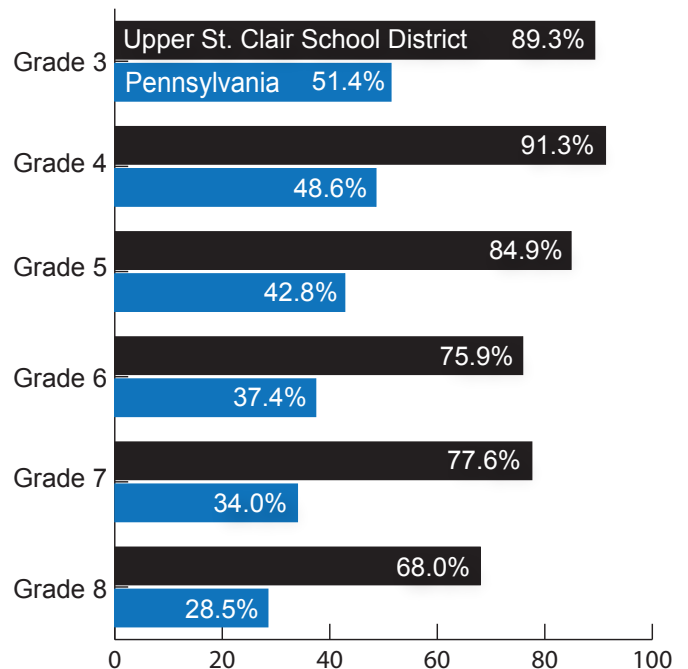
### Keystone Exams



### PSSA: English Language Arts



### PSSA: Math





# Our Students & Staff

## Varsity Athletics

### WPIAL Champions

- Boys Basketball
- Kaitlyn Connors  
Girls swimming –100 Freestyle
- Nazar Zoukovski  
Boys swimming – 100 Freestyle

### WPIAL Runner-Up

- Boys Swimming

### Section Champions

- Boys Swimming
- Girls Swimming
- Boys Tennis
- Football



## Our Staff

**Dr. Dan Beck**, assistant principal at USCHS, was selected as the 2025 Robert E. Lavelly Assistant Principal of the Year by the Pennsylvania Principals



Dr. Dan Beck

Association in conjunction with the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) National Assistant Principal of the Year program.

**Holly Fisher**, Baker school nurse and nursing curriculum leader, was among eight local nurses honored during the Pittsburgh Penguins Nurse Appreciation Night in November at PPG Paints Arena.



Ms. Holly Fisher

USCHS world language teacher **Cephus Moore** was selected as a Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction by The National Society of High School Scholars.



Mr. Cephus Moore

USCHS world language teacher **Jacob Reis** was selected as WTAE's Teacher of the Month for February. He joined the USC faculty in 2021.



Mr. Jacob Reis

USCHS Speech & Debate Coach **Ben Edwards** earned his fourth Diamond Award from the National Speech & Debate Association. To qualify for this recognition, Mr. Edwards earned more than 90,000 points throughout his coaching career that spans 20+ years.



Mr. Ben Edwards

**Dr. Jennifer Kirk**, USCHS counselor and curriculum leader, co-authored a chapter of the sixth edition of the Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling textbook, published by the National Association for College Admission Counseling.



Dr. Jennifer Kirk

**Dr. Timothy Wagner**, USCHS principal, was named a 2024 Pittsburgh Penguins MVP (Most Valuable Principal) by the Pittsburgh Penguins, Grable Foundation, and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.



Dr. Timothy Wagner

**Dr. Rachel Andler** joined the Upper St. Clair administrative team in December 2024 as the district's director of special education. She previously served in similar roles in the South Fayette, Carlynton and Brownsville Area school districts.



Dr. Rachel Andler

Upper St. Clair School District was awarded the 2024 **School Operations Impact Award** by the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials. The award recognized the district's Building Leadership Team (BOLT) model. This effort was led by **Dr. Lou Angelo**, director of administrative services.



Dr. Lou Angelo

# Fiscal Responsibility



## 2024-2025 Budget

The Upper St. Clair School District budget for 2024-25 totals \$104,452,426, which included a 3.25% millage increase of 0.9631 mills – resulting in a final tax rate of 30.5970 mills.

Early in the budgeting process, the USC School Board approved a resolution limiting any possible 2024-25 tax increase to within the inflationary index determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The resolution capped any tax increase at 5.3% or 1.5705 mills; the approved spending plan is well below that limit.

Dr. John Rozzo, superintendent of schools, shared that district administrators and school board members worked hard to present a fiscally responsible budget. The nearly six-month-long process began in January.

“This budget preserved what we know works for kids,” Dr. Rozzo said. “There were no reductions in programs nor any reductions in staff.”

Stagnant funding, inflation, assessment reductions, the loss of pandemic funding have challenged school districts across Allegheny County and Pennsylvania. Upper St. Clair has not used pandemic funding nor fund balance to fund recurring costs in the general fund budget.

“A lot of the work that has happened over the last few years – in particular when times have been more challenging –

have positioned the district well,” Dr. Rozzo said. “We have not bankrupted the future of the district to get through the present time, even though some of those times were very challenging. Part of the reason why the tax increase was much less aggressive is because of the due diligence of the administration and the board over the last couple of years.”

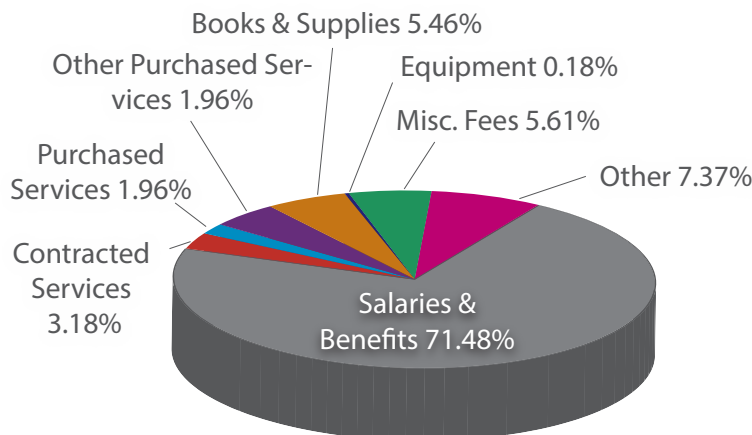
Scott Burchill, director of business and finance, cautioned school board members and administrators about the negative impact of assessment appeals and the need for a county-wide reassessment. During the 2023-24 school year, revenues decreased by more than \$1 million, which accounts for nearly half of the approved tax increase.

“A portion of the tax increase was to make up for the lost revenues from assessment reductions over the last 12 to 18 months,” Mr. Burchill said. “We need a reassessment and we need it quickly. Hopefully, it gets rectified soon.”

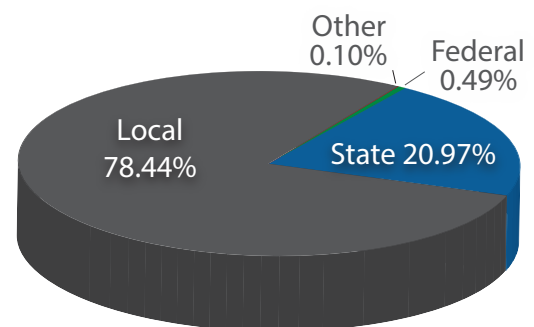
The budget supports several capital improvement projects throughout the district, including:

- ongoing roof replacement at USCHS
- HVAC systems throughout the district
- athletic wing renovations at USCHS
- district-wide safety & security enhancements
- new buses/vans, concrete repairs
- interior improvements to USCHS
- gym equipment.

## Expenditures: \$104,452,426



## Revenue: \$104,457,640





# Class of 2024

## Where are they now?

Allegheny College  
 Auburn University  
 Bella Capelli Academy  
 Boston College  
 Boston University  
 Bowling Green State University  
 Bucknell University  
 Cape Fear Community College  
 Carnegie Mellon University  
 Case Western Reserve University  
 Chatham University  
 Clemson University  
 College of Charleston  
 Colorado State University  
 Community College of Allegheny County  
 Community College of Beaver County  
 Cornell University  
 Davidson College  
 Denison University  
 Duquesne University  
 Elon University  
 Florida Gulf Coast University  
 Fordham University  
 Fordham University at Rose Hill  
 Gannon University  
 George Washington University  
 Georgetown University  
 Gordon College  
 Grove City College  
 High Point University  
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
 John Carroll University  
 Johnson and Wales University  
 Juniata College



- Valedictorians: Amanda Christine Aida, Ryan Arya, Alexandra Itzel Berkoski, Isaac Theodore Bernstein, Matthew Bordenstein, Natalie Marie, Campagna, Marco William Carone, Mustafa Taha Disbudak, Boshi Dong, Joseph Alexander Donnelly, Henry Lawrence Ginsburg, Alexandra Gianna Kramer, Leah Esther Levine, Colin Xingyun Liang, Hunter Fitzpatrick Maher, Anna Josephine Makoul, William Nicholas Manning, Leo Masse, Caroline E. Murphy, Mahir Navin Parmar, Rohit Sattuluri, Asha Puri Segall, Irene Yap and Isabella Zhang

Kent State University  
 Kenyon College  
 Lafayette College  
 Lehigh University  
 Louisiana State University  
 Marshall University  
 Miami University of Ohio  
 New York University  
 North Carolina State University at Raleigh  
 Ohio State University  
 Ohio University  
 Pennsylvania State University  
 Pennsylvania State University, Beaver  
 Pennsylvania State University at Behrend  
 PennWest California University  
 Pepperdine University  
 Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics  
 Pomona College  
 Princeton University  
 Purdue University  
 Queen's University  
 Robert Morris University  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 Roosevelt University of Austin  
 St. Joseph's University  
 St. Vincent College  
 Savannah College of Art and Design  
 Slippery Rock University  
 Southern Methodist University  
 Temple University  
 Tri County Technical College  
 Triangle Tech  
 Tulane University  
 University of Alabama  
 University at Buffalo, North Campus  
 University of Alabama  
 University of California, San Diego  
 University of California, Santa Barbara

University of Central Florida  
 University College  
 University of Colorado, Boulder  
 University of Connecticut  
 University of Dayton  
 University of Florida  
 University of Georgia  
 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
 University of Indianapolis  
 University of Kentucky  
 University of Maine  
 University of Maryland  
 University of Miami  
 University of Mississippi  
 University of Nebraska  
 University of New Hampshire  
 University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
 University of Notre Dame  
 University of Pennsylvania  
 University of Pittsburgh  
 University of Pittsburgh, Greensburg  
 University of South Carolina, Columbia  
 University of Southern California  
 University of Tampa  
 University of Tennessee  
 University of Vermont  
 University of Wisconsin  
 Utah State University  
 Vet Tech Institute  
 Villanova University  
 Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University  
 Wake Forest University  
 Walsh University  
 Washington & Jefferson College  
 Waynesburg University  
 West Liberty University  
 West Virginia University  
 Westminster College

