Birmingham Covington School

The BCS Advantage

. . . a dynamic and collaborative learning community.
Welcome to BCS

Birmingham Covington School (BCS) is a 3-8 district wide school of choice for families residing in the Birmingham Public Schools District. We are designed to offer a clear choice in educational structure and philosophy to parents/guardians and children seeking a rigorous academic challenge. We emphasize the connections among academic subject areas and foster inquiry and collaboration. Students experience not only the basic skills in key academic disciplines but also focus their efforts on the integration and application of knowledge.

BCS has a special emphasis on comprehensive science and technology instruction based on the Association for the Advancement of Science report, Project 2061 and enGauge: 21st Century Skills. Instructional strategies and student activities include discovering practical solutions to scientific problems and student-generated questions. As students practice the principles of scientific inquiry, design and application, they develop an increasingly complex understanding of the relationships among science, technology, history, communications and the human experience.

The BCS Advantage

Research and experience have validated the effectiveness of interdisciplinary learning and teaching for students. BCS emphasizes the interdisciplinary connections among academic subject areas and fosters inquiry and collaboration for students. BCS organizes students into multi-grade structures to allow flexible configurations during instruction. Teachers deliver instruction in two-year academic cycles (grades 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8). Students typically remain with the same team of teachers for the duration of each two-year cycle allowing for continuity of instruction and familiarity with individual learning styles.

Integrated learning is a critical element in all classrooms at BCS. Every BCS learner will experience project-based learning with a focus on inquiry and design throughout their six years at BCS. Classes such as Engineering Technology, Engage and Thinkering Studio offer hands-on opportunities for students to demonstrate 21st Century skills both within the classroom and on a global scale. BCS students also participate in service learning opportunities throughout their six years, providing them with an opportunity to dramatically affect their local and global communities while developing leadership skills and a strong sense of character.

Futurists agree that in order to compete effectively in today’s global environment, 21st Century students must think critically, problem solve, collaborate across networks and demonstrate initiative, curiosity and imagination. With the vision to “inspire students to lead in the global community through a passion for learning, innovating, and inquiry & design,” BCS has developed an adaptive learning model which aligns with the BPS Strategic Plan to “inspire learners through educational excellence for a lifetime of global opportunities.”
BCS Pride

• BCS was recognized by GreatSchools.org as one of “The 50 Best Middle Schools in the US,” based on several distinct criteria including providing a “rich school experience that prepares students superbly well for high school, college, and life.”
• BCS offers daily, school-wide enrichment through our extended day Choice Hour program.
• The BCS PTSA is an integral part of our educational design, connecting students and staff to the community and helping to further the mission as a world-class learning community with a focus on science and technology in the digital age.
• In an effort to provide our 3/4 students with a real world hands-on experience that explores key science concepts, BCS teachers and students have engaged in hydroponic gardening and participate in the DNR’s Salmon in the Classroom project.
• Along with rigorous academic courses and a variety of co-curricular opportunities, BCS students in grades 3-8 participate in Engineering Technology classes, as well as classes based in inquiry and design (project-based learning-PBL) called Engage and Thinkering Studio.
• The Moral Compass is the foundation of who we aspire to be with a focus on displaying a high degree of character within the 3E’s: Education, Each Other, Environment.
• School accolades include the 2015 Michigan Teacher of the year and the 2015 district middle and elementary school teachers of the year. Also, BCS was named a Pathfinder School and Mentor School by Microsoft due to teachers integrating technology, service learning and PBL.
• BCS students and staff have made national presentations including Microsoft Educator Network, Birmingham Learning Conference, MACUL, ISTE, Governor’s Summit on Education, Galileo Leadership Consortium, Character.org, Boston Learning Conference, Michigan Innovative Schools Conference and Oakland Count Effective Practices Conference.
• A team from Edutopia’s Schools that Work visited BCS in 2016 for a case study spotlighting the innovative teaching and learning at BCS. The case study along with five accompanying videos were released in April 2017 and can be found at http://edutopia.org/article/birmingham-covington-building-student-centered-school.
• Character.org awarded BCS teachers Promising Practices awards in 2014, 2016 and 2017 and a team of teachers and students were invited by to present at the October 2014 annual conference in Washington D.C.
• Character Connections provides opportunities throughout the year for students in cross-grade level teams to connect, learn, collaborate and problem solve toward building character and enhancing our positive school culture.
• Service learning is a key component at BCS. We began what will be a lasting partnership with a village in Zambia through Project COPE. Since the 2013-2014 school year, our community has raised collaboratively over $20,000 to help the village of Chilupula augment their agriculture industry and the education community.
• For additional Points of Pride visit http://bcsonline.info/Why_BCS/Points_of_Pride.html.
BPS is proud to have earned district accreditation through AdvancED. This voluntary method of quality assurance is designed to help educational institutions boost their ongoing performance efforts for the benefit of their students.

The BPS AdvancED district accreditation means that the district is united in providing the highest level of educational excellence possible for each of our students.

Inspiring learners

In 2013, the district embarked upon a process to create a new Strategic Plan. The goal creation involved stakeholders throughout the district and took place over several days. Joined by parents, community members, students, staff members and administration and board members, the following four goals were established:

1. All BPS learners will continually excel in a learning environment that is engaging, global and free of achievement gaps.
2. All BPS learners will be engaged every day, in every way, through a world-class education to discover their passions, unleash their potential to be successful and contributing members of their communities.
3. All BPS learners will demonstrate empathy. As ethical leaders, they will embrace opportunities that positively impact the world.
4. BPS will design and implement a dynamic educational organization that create unlimited opportunities for student learners.

These four goals support the district’s Mission Statement:
“By ensuring educational excellence, we challenge and inspire all learners to positively impact their world.”

District Points of Pride

• Listed among 50 high schools with top SAT scores
• Ranked No. 1 district in Michigan by Ninch.com in 2017
• News and World Report top ranking high schools in 2016
• 85 percent of teachers hold advanced degrees
• Instructional Specialists and Reading Specialists in all elementary schools
• Eleven National Schools of Character
• Strong Community Education programming
• Championship athletic teams utilizing state-of-the-art equipment and fields
• Upgraded facilities and collaborative students spaces