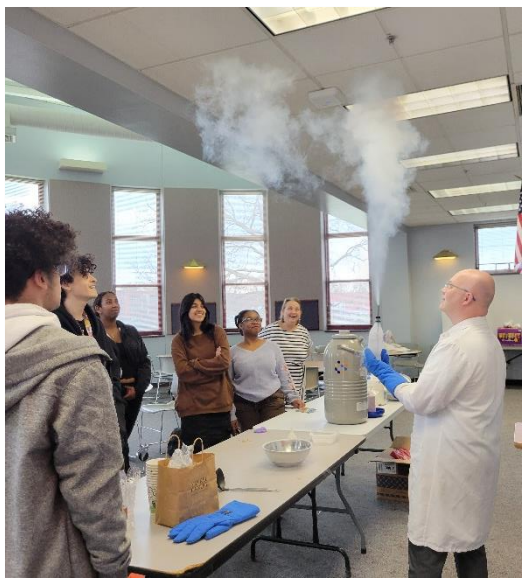


BTE Site Reflection

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

September 2024



Why BTE?

The BTE Lancaster program launched in September 2021 in the School District of Lancaster in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The initiative is a collaboration between Johnson & Johnson Consumer, J.P. McCaskey High School, and the site-coordinating agency, the Lancaster County STEM Alliance.

The program was designed to engage students in STEM²D and prepare them for post-secondary education and careers. During its three-year implementation period, the BTE Lancaster program offered participating students academic achievement and enrichment, career

exploration and readiness, post-secondary education exploration and preparation, and community engagement activities. Some of the activities for students included field trips, a bird migration and parasite identification activity, a team-building escape room activity, and a visit to the Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences where students interacted with, observed, and diagnosed a robotic patient based on its symptoms.

BTE is specifically designed to prepare students for their post-secondary journeys. Working together, Johnson & Johnson (J&J), secondary and post-secondary schools, and other community organizations and partners develop programs that feature academic enrichment, career exploration and readiness, and post-secondary education preparation activities. They aim to increase the number of students enrolling in post-secondary education and pursuing careers in STEM²D or healthcare.

BTE: A Catalyst for Post-Secondary Education & Careers

The BTE Lancaster program officially launched with 32 tenth grade students at J.P McCaskey High School with the goals to 1) increase the number of students who enroll in post-secondary education and 2) increase the number of students pursuing a career in the STEM²D sectors. The students were identified by the school district based on the following criteria: enrolled in the tenth grade, would benefit from a mentoring program due to economic status or low academics, were potential first-generation college students, and aspired to attend post-secondary education and/or STEM careers.

One BTE mentor highlighted the role that counselors in the recruitment process, “The counselors had a really good way of targeting and identifying students who needed support academically.” The School District of Lancaster is the largest school district with one of the highest poverty rates. However, given its size, it also has the most diverse group of students. “This makes it richer, fuller, and a more wonderful experience for teachers and students who attend the district. The school district did a really good job of identifying the students for this program,” says Site Coordinator Andrew Garner.

Impact of BTE

Over the program’s three years, BTE Lancaster maintained a retention rate of 66%, with 21 of the 32 students who started BTE in 2021 completing the program in 2023. Throughout the program, BTE Lancaster provided a range of workshops on college, career, and life skills, engaging activities, and community-building experiences. BTE partners explained that hands-on activities were key to keeping students engaged and motivated. “Their favorite activities were things that were hands-on, fun, and allowed them to get up out of their chairs,” shares one BTE partner. By listening to the student’s needs and interests, BTE was able to impact students by teaching them new skills and aid them in pursuing post-secondary education and career opportunities, “Many kids were interested in STEM, but they didn’t know which specific area, so we were able to show them all their options and explore the many different jobs.”

SITE PROFILE

Location

Lancaster, Pennsylvania,
USA

Grant Period

2021 - 2023

Sponsor

Johnson & Johnson

Coordinator

The Lancaster STEM
Alliance

Community Partners

School District of
Lancaster
Steinman Foundation
J.P. McCaskey High
School

Of the 21 students who completed the BTE program, 57% (12) graduated from high school and all enrolled in a post-secondary institution. Additionally, of the 21 students who completed the program, 43% (9) will be pursuing STEM degrees including mechanical engineering and programming, biology, nursing programs, and welding.

Sustainability

The BTE partners have partnered with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS), a nationally recognized mentoring program, to create a 2.0 version of the BTE program. This program will be a one-year program that meets once a month after school targeted for the 10th grade level. BBBS has requested district staff support for identifying and recruiting students and securing a classroom meeting space. BBBS will also provide mentors from local STEM employers to support the students and assist with programming, as well as provide mentoring curriculum and training for mentoring.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

66% of BTE students completed the program.

57% of BTE students enrolled in post-secondary education.

43% of BTE graduates are pursuing STEM degrees.

"[The students] deserve the help. If we can continue to help them and make a difference, be there to listen to their problems, and be somebody that they're comfortable with, it's important."

- BTE Mentor

