Overview of Boston Public Schools International Programs

The Boston Public Schools (BPS) promotes global education through its course curricula as well as through its programs abroad. BPS offers student exchanges, study tours, language immersion experiences, and service-learning trips. These programs promote mutual understanding and appreciation as well as ensure that our students are culturally responsive and globally literate. In addition, these programs reinforce and support our vision of a BPS graduate as outlined in our Acceleration Agenda.

Our vision of a BPS graduate includes:

• Loves to learn, views the world as a classroom without walls, and thinks critically about the issues within it.
• Acknowledges and respects people with diverse backgrounds, histories, and perspectives.
• Contributes confidently and positively in professional and social settings, both independently and as a member of a team.
• Demonstrates resourcefulness and resilience in the face of setbacks and obstacles, relying on personal assets and support from others to achieve goals.
• Participates actively in a democratic society as a responsible, courageous leader who challenges injustice.

Goals

Last year approximately 1.3% of our travel-age students studied abroad on a BPS program. As in years past, these students were clustered in a handful of schools. Our plan for the upcoming years is to increase the overall number of students participating in international programs as well as to broaden the base of participating schools.

Our goals are as follows:

1. Provide more quality international experiences
2. Strengthen existing international programs to deepen student learning
3. Ensure that there is equity and access to international programs across the district

Dear friends of the Boston Public Schools,

Each year nearly four million people travel to a foreign destination from Boston’s Logan Airport. Our city is a global hub, but most of our children have never experienced countries and cultures beyond the United States or the country of their birth. We know that our students have a deep desire to learn more about the world around them, but for the majority of our families, the costs associated with international travel are prohibitive.

Through the hard work of our teachers and the generosity of our foundations, BPS offers students the opportunity to travel the world—learning about new cultures and making international connections that will drive the 21st century. We are teaching our students to see the world as a classroom without walls, to become informed and active participants in critical global issues, and to be proud ambassadors of the wonderful city we call home. International exposure prepares our students to be culturally responsive adults as well as prepares them to compete on an international scale.

Today we are able to grant an international educational experience to one in every 70 students—each trip costs about $2,500. This investment is recouped many times over when the students return from their travels inspired, motivated, and excited to become citizens of the world. With your help, we can offer this enriching experience to even more students every year. Thank you for your interest and for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Carol R. Johnson
BPS Superintendent

Our students return as different young men and women—no longer satisfied to be passive observers, but rather, compelled to be the change the world around them so desperately needs. The lesson they learn is one you will not find in any book or classroom.

Mary Skipper — TechBoston Academy headmaster

This was a life-changing experience in so many ways. I was able to work as a pharmacist, an English teacher, and a construction worker. I met wonderful people and went through beautiful experiences.

Marilyn — Edward M. Kennedy Academy student

Going to Europe with this trip has changed my life. Before I left, I thought Boston was the center of the universe. Now I know that it is a small place in a large world.

Sarah — Boston Latin School student

Students return from this 11-day immersion in Central and Eastern Europe with a genuine sense that they have ‘walked’ in the steps of history. They are eager to share what they have seen with others — fellow students, families, the community.

Judi Freeman — Boston Latin School teacher

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Marilyn — Edward M. Kennedy Academy student

I tried new things on this trip to Spain because you expected us to, and I knew that if I didn’t try new things you’d be disappointed in us. And every time I tried something new, I liked it. And I feel like for the rest of my life I’ll try new things, even in Boston.

Neha — Charlestown High School student

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I learned so much in Ghana — how to weave kente cloth, about the Peace Corps, about how easy it is to make new friends a world away. I am more independent and stronger than I ever thought I could be.

Alanna — Another Course to College student

Boston Public Schools International Programs would not be possible without the help of our generous sponsors. To learn more about how you can support or become involved in these programs, please contact:

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