



CLUB NEWS

Fall 2025



back to school ready
with new backpacks!

Back to School at BGCL Means Homework Help, Hoops & Hot Meals Every Day!

The school year has arrived, and at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, that means our afternoons are packed with opportunities for youth to learn, grow, and thrive. Every day after school, members can count on us for the support they need—whether that's finishing homework in a quiet, focused space, enjoying a healthy hot meal, or letting off steam with friends on the basketball court.

Our programs go beyond academics, offering leadership opportunities, skill-building activities, and the kind of encouragement that builds confidence for life. From preparing 8th graders for the high school transition to connecting teens with college and career resources, we're here to help every young person dream big and work toward their goals.

At BGCL, fall isn't just a season—it's a launchpad for success, friendships, and unforgettable memories. It's when members discover new passions, set ambitious goals, and find the encouragement to chase them. From the first day of school to the last whistle on the court, we're here to cheer them on, help them grow, and make every afternoon count. This fall, like every season, the Club is more than a place to go—it's a place to belong.

MESSAGE FROM MARKUS



Dear Friends and Supporters,

This past summer, the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence provided a season full of growth, fun, and opportunity for our members—thanks to the incredible support of our volunteers and donors.

As we turn the page to a new school year, we are excited to

continue offering programs that help our young people succeed in the classroom and beyond.

Looking ahead, the holiday season will bring even more opportunities to give back and ensure every child has the resources and encouragement they need to thrive.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership and invite you to join us in making this school year and holiday season bright for the youth of Lawrence.

With warmest regards,
Markus Fischer, Executive Director

What's Happening this Fall!

- ✓ Homework help daily
- ✓ Supper served nightly
- ✓ Swim team season begins
- ✓ 8th grade application support
- ✓ Keystone Club planning starts
- ✓ Basketball tryouts in October
- ✓ College Fair on 10/11
- ✓ Halloween Party on 10/24



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF LAWRENCE

A Summer to Remember at BGCL

This summer at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence was one for the books—a vibrant, adventurous season where learning met laughter and every day brought something new. From hands-on exploration to action-packed field trips, BGCL was the place to be.

Hands-On Learning & Creative Exploration

Innovation and creativity were everywhere this summer, from the science lab to the stage. Members became budding scientists with Thermo Fisher and explored climate education through hands-on visits from Change is Simple, whose mobile science lab brought sustainability to life.

Another highlight was our annual PB Summer Fun Fest, sponsored by Alliance Sales & Marketing. From designing colorful t-shirts to robot demos with the Massachusetts State Police, and even a surprise helicopter landing, the day was packed with excitement and joy—held in loving memory of Paul Bologna, whose legacy continues to inspire this tradition.

During our Slice of Bread Loaf two-week writing program, young writers shared their voices through poetry, performance, and storytelling—proving that BGCL is where every member can be bold, creative, and seen. Creativity also took center stage at our 2025 BGCL Talent Show, where 18 incredible performances lit up the room with music, dance, and applause. These moments showed just how brightly our members shine when given the chance.

Adventure, Athletics & Summer Fun

Summer at BGCL was also full of movement, exploration, and memories. Members enjoyed daily swim sessions, stayed active in Skateboard Club and Adventure Club, and spent pool days with friends. The swim team and Keystone teens both headed to Cape Cod for retreats filled with bonding, beach time, and leadership growth.

Field trips brought even more excitement, from the thrills of Canobie Lake Park to hands-on learning at the Giving Garden at Rolling Ridge. Back at the Club, Teen Nights kept the fun going each night with laughter, games, and connection.



Fueling Growth & Community

Throughout it all, members stayed fueled and focused with lunch served every day—keeping energy high for all the fun and learning. Some members even had the chance to attend enriching and adventurous summer camps, bringing even more variety and opportunity to their summer break.

As the school year begins, we're carrying forward everything this summer gave us—confidence, creativity, connection, and community.

Want to See More Summer Highlights?

Scan the QR code below to read our summer blog posts!

Don't miss out on all the fun your support made possible!



Hard Work Pays Off: How BGCL's Academic Basketball Program Is Changing Lives—On and Off the Court

At the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, Academic Basketball turns a love of hoops into a life-changing pathway. It's competitive basketball deliberately tied to school accountability, healthy choices, and everyday mentorship—so effort on the court lifts grades, confidence, and leadership off it. The impact shows up in report cards, in college acceptances, and in the way older members model the standard for the next generation.

Sustaining that transformation is the New Balance Foundation. Powered for over 20 years by this steadfast partner, the program is stronger than ever. Their unwavering support keeps the core pieces in place—practice, required study hall, weekly teacher reports—and enabled the expansion to include Healthy Living classes, now a requirement for every participant. New Balance Foundation employees also volunteer on-site throughout the year, modeling community-minded leadership and signaling that the broader city believes in our members' potential.

On the ground, that commitment shows up as a clear, consistent routine for our youth. They practice three times a week, with a dedicated hour of study hall before or after. There are no cuts—every member gets a jersey and the same high expectations. Alumni who once wore our jerseys now coach and mentor, visiting schools, conferring with teachers, and holding players to the same standard on homework as on defense. That's why struggling students become captains, tutors, and graduates. As our alum and current Director of Operations, Manny Ayala, puts it, "It's more than basketball, it's a family."



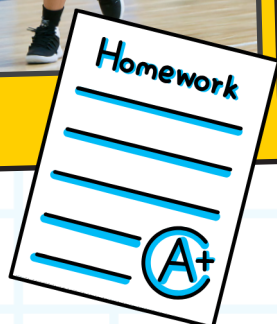
The same standard carries into how members fuel their bodies.

Healthy Living, made possible by the New Balance Foundation, turns information into daily action. Across eight sessions each season, members cook and taste recipes drawn from Boston Children's Hospital's Fit Kit, read labels, compare portions, and learn a simple truth: what you put in your body fuels how you learn, how you play, and how you lead. Progress is visible, with the PACER fitness test tracked from season start to March so kids can see improvement. As Siana shares, "The PACER test pushed me to go harder every time, and I saw myself improve."

Every piece comes together to bring about stories like Wesley O.'s. His journey shows how the program shapes focused, well-rounded youth. A member since age seven and now a Central Catholic sophomore, he used the program's structure to push into tougher classes, win election as class vice president, and join cross-country and track after the PACER challenged him. "Overall, I think it has shaped who I am and what I do—making me a better person, helping me make better decisions, and keeping me on the right path," Wesley says.

Four words engraved on a plaque in our lobby capture the culture that makes results like these possible: **Hard Work Pays Off**. Thanks to the New Balance Foundation, that promise is becoming higher grades, prestigious scholarships, healthier habits, stronger teams—and young leaders who give back, uplifting Lawrence and beyond.

Want the full story? Scan the QR to read the complete piece and see how Academic Basketball is changing lives on and off the court every single day.

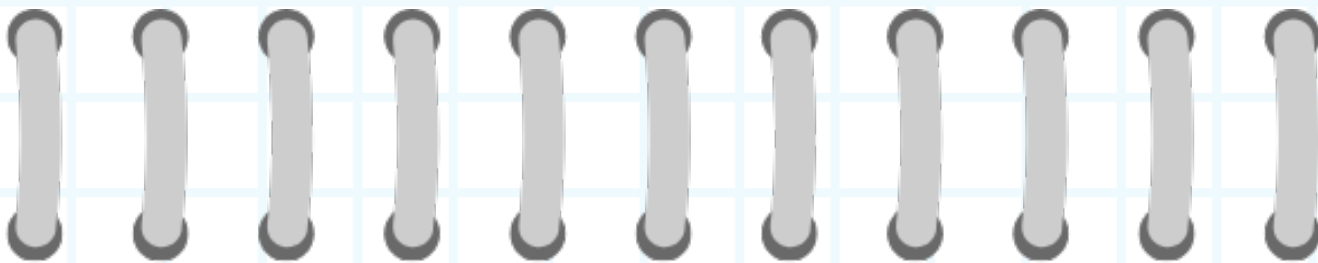




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**"Every child deserves a safe
place to learn, grow, and belong."**

Fuel Bright Futures at BGCL



This fall, our Club is full of possibilities—from classrooms to courts to creative spaces.

And behind it all is your support:
*every backpack, every breakthrough,
every bright future begins with you.*

MAKE A DONATION
(Scan here to donate online)

