

MILTON
HERSHEY
SCHOOL®

FOUNDED 1909

Brown & Gold

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

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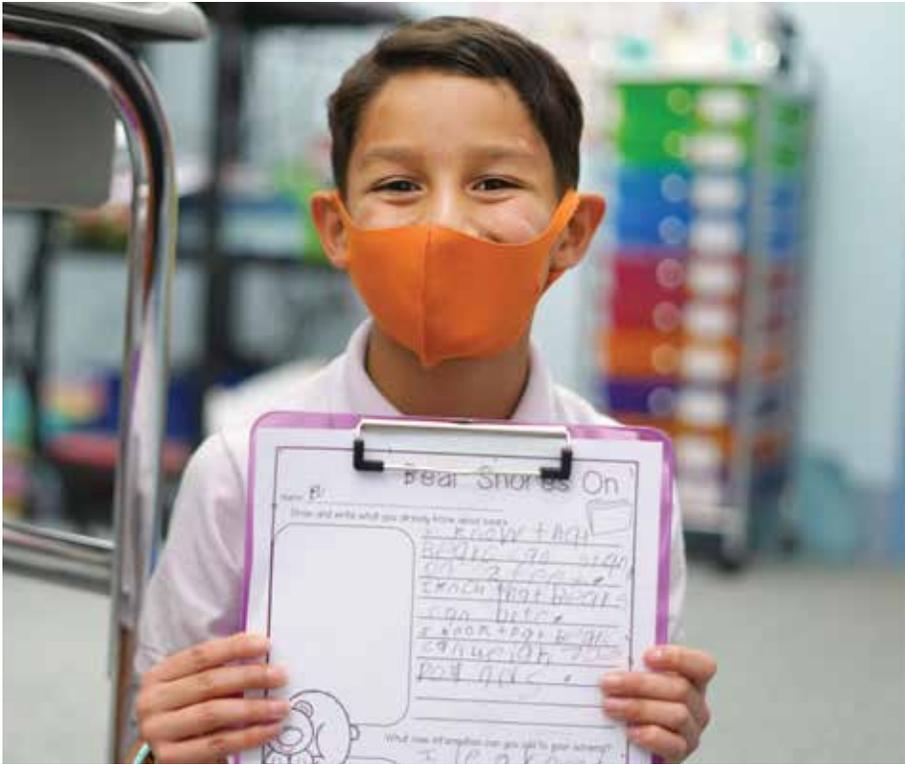
Above and Beyond

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Our Future in Focus

State of the

SCHOOL



When we began the 2020-21 school year, we did so with a comprehensive schoolwide Health and Safety Plan in place. That plan, along with the leadership of our COVID-19 Task Force, hard work from employees, and commitment of parents/sponsors, enabled us to safely conduct in-person classroom learning the entire school year—a rare feat for any school during the pandemic.

With all students back on campus, we quickly saw them flourish academically, socially, and physically thanks to in-person instruction and other best-in-class support services, including all-inclusive health care, academic and behavioral health interventions, and enrichment opportunities.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our MHS community remained focused. As a result, we graduated the largest senior class in history and worked on making campus safer and more inclusive than ever. We also established an Early Childhood Education Initiative with Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning that is poised to change the educational landscape for low-income children.

Our success as a school has always been driven by our ability to develop and execute solid schoolwide plans that combine the needs of our current students with the Hersheys' guiding vision. In the fall of 2020, we unveiled our next five-year strategic plan, the MILT Plan. While the onset of our strategic plan has also involved navigating the pandemic, we have already begun making strides in the plan's four key areas: Modeling Character and Well-Being, Innovating Career-Focused Education, Leveraging Impact, and Teamwork to Strengthen Community Alignment and Engagement.

We could have never accomplished everything we did this past school year without the overwhelming support of our parents/sponsors, staff, students, and alumni. I am so thankful for our MHS family and am proud to lead our home and school forward to new heights.

Sincerely,



PETER G. GURT '85
MHS President



Our

STUDENTS

For low-income families, the pandemic hit especially hard. According to a study by Georgetown University and the University of Oklahoma–Tulsa, many low-income parents faced job and income loss as well as food insecurity since the pandemic began—all affecting their financial, physical, and mental health and that of their children. As learning opportunities shrunk across the country with the shift to remote instruction, these parents also struggled to help young learners.

Throughout the 2020-21 school year, Milton Hershey School focused on being the reliable resource parents/sponsors needed while they navigated the pandemic themselves. This meant a commitment to keeping their children safe, learning in person, and benefiting from full access to all our school's wraparound services and resources, like food, clothing, a nurturing home life, medical, dental, psychological, behavioral, and social work.





SPOTLIGHT

Small business owner and parent/sponsor Cait Gabriel credits MHS as the safest place for her son Bobby to be during the pandemic. Long work hours impact Cait's time at home so she appreciates the structure and safe environment at MHS.



MHS students are so fortunate to be learning in person. We are so grateful for all that MHS does to keep Bobby safe and encouraging him to be his greatest self.



**Cait
GABRIEL**

MHS Parent/Sponsor



During the 2020-21 school year, MHS reached a peak enrollment of 1,984 students, the maximum number of students we could responsibly serve while adhering to physical distancing requirements. This number included 266 new students. The average family income for new students was \$23,574—11% below the federal poverty guideline of \$26,500 for a family of four.

MHS is focused on maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. Our diverse student body includes students from a broad spectrum of religious, ethnic, racial, and geographic backgrounds. Our work to ensure all students feel affirmed, supported, and valued has resulted in a five-year average retention rate of 91.4%, higher than that of our peers.

1,984
students

Elementary Division

348

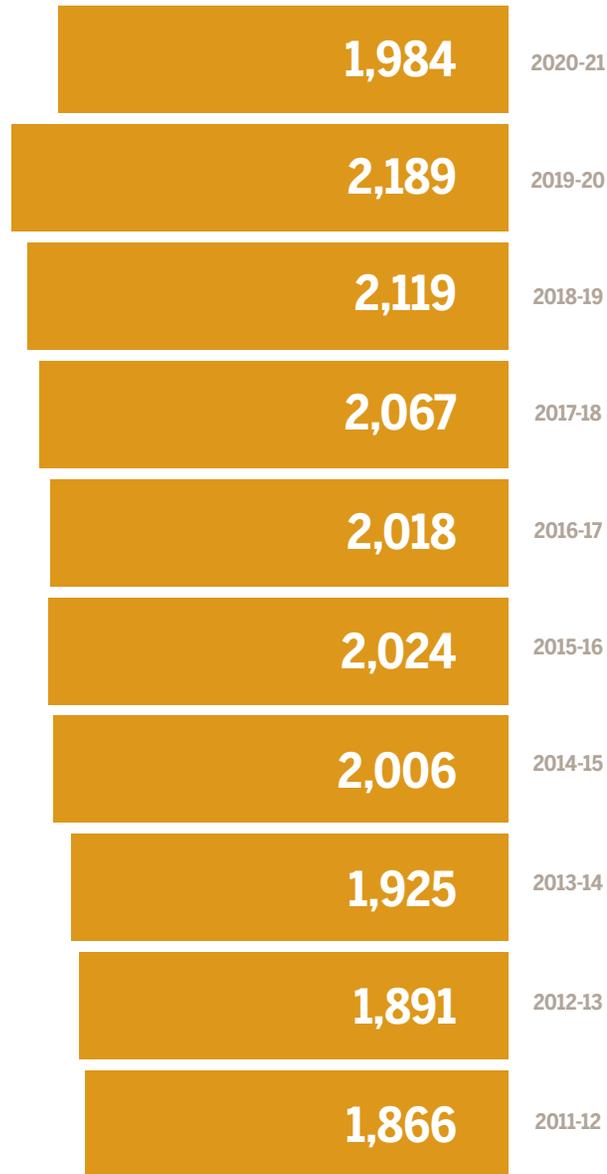
Middle Division

658

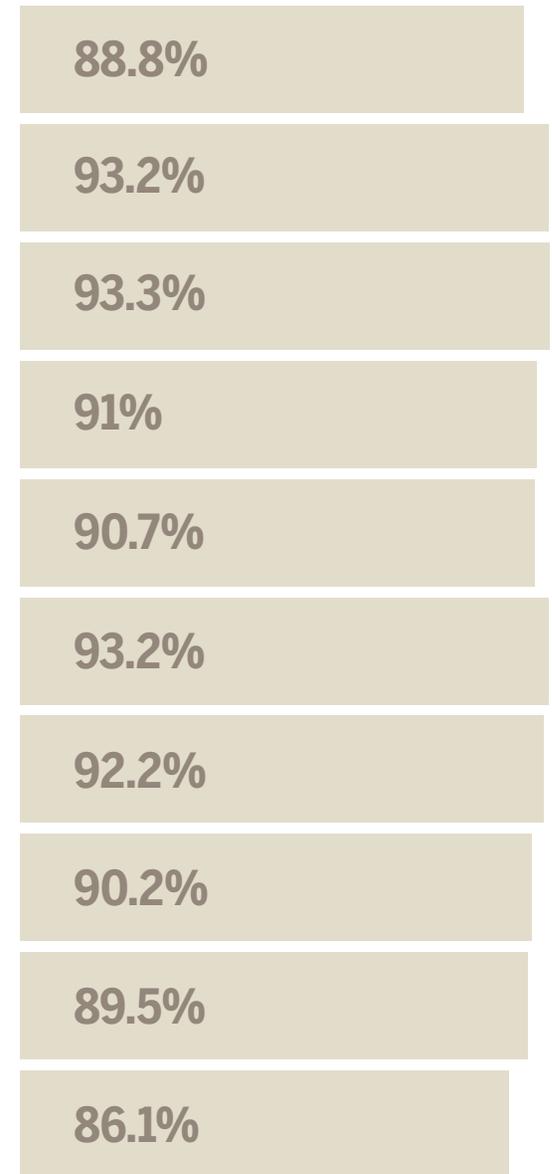
Senior Division

978

Peak Enrollment Statistics

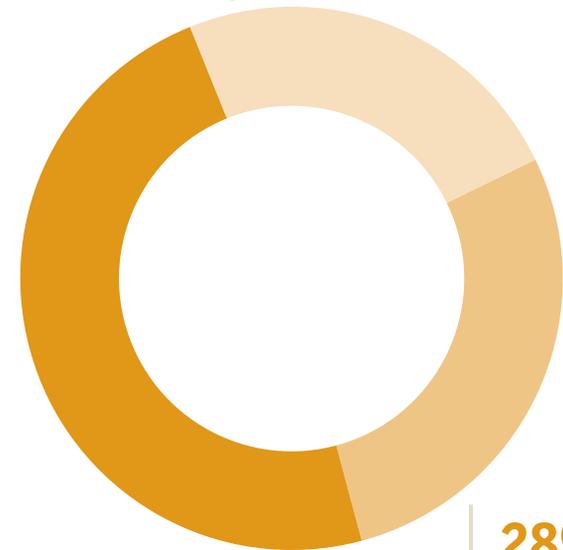


Student Retention Rates



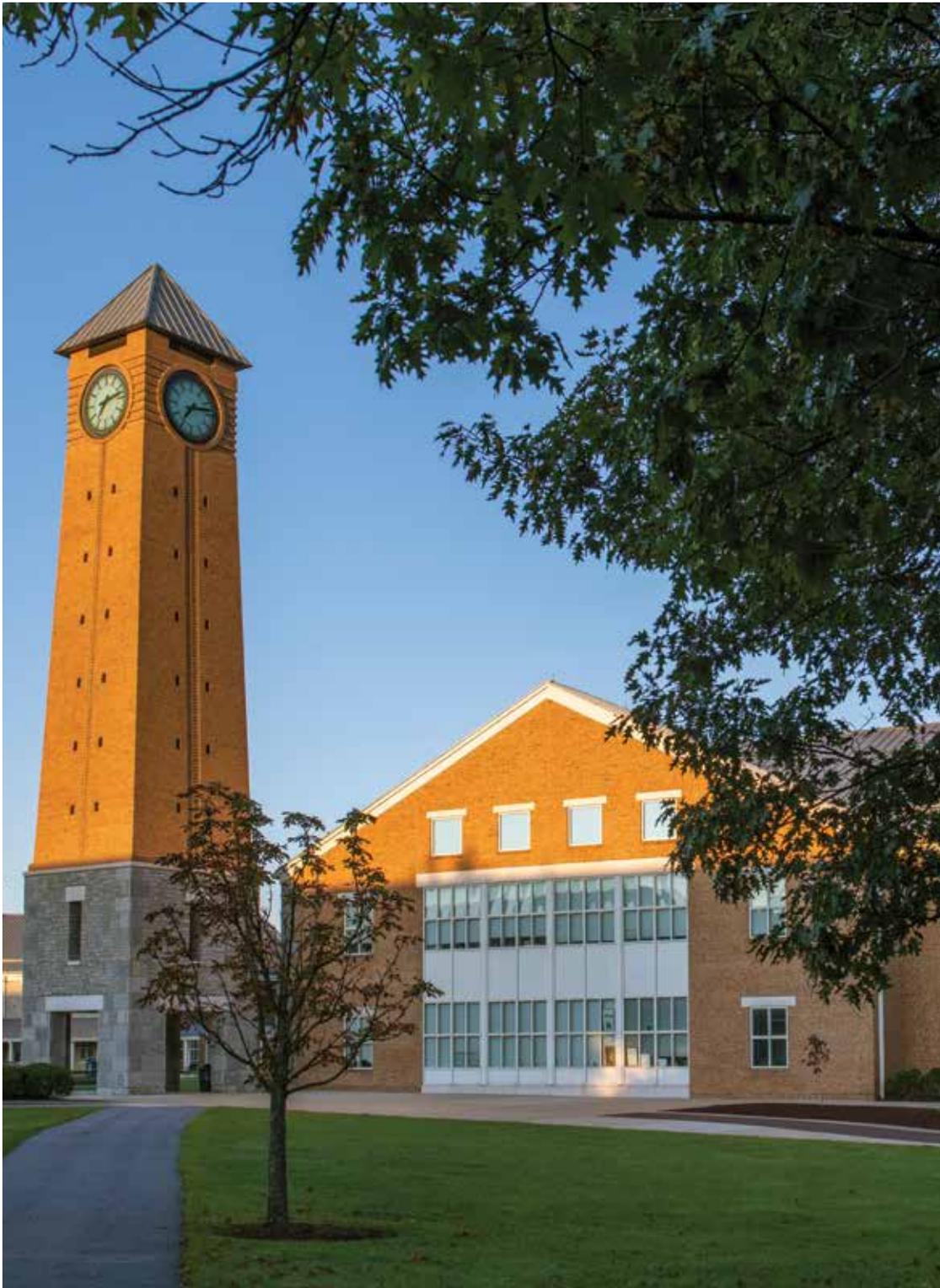


24%
students from Dauphin,
Lebanon, or Lancaster
counties



48%
students from
other PA counties

28%
students from
other U.S. states



50%

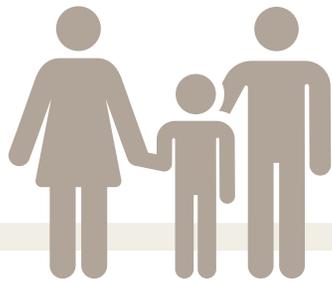
Male

50%

Female

20%

are raised by someone other than their biological parents.



The number of grandparents raising grandchildren nearly doubled among new students

6.9% in 2015-16 | 12% in 2020-21

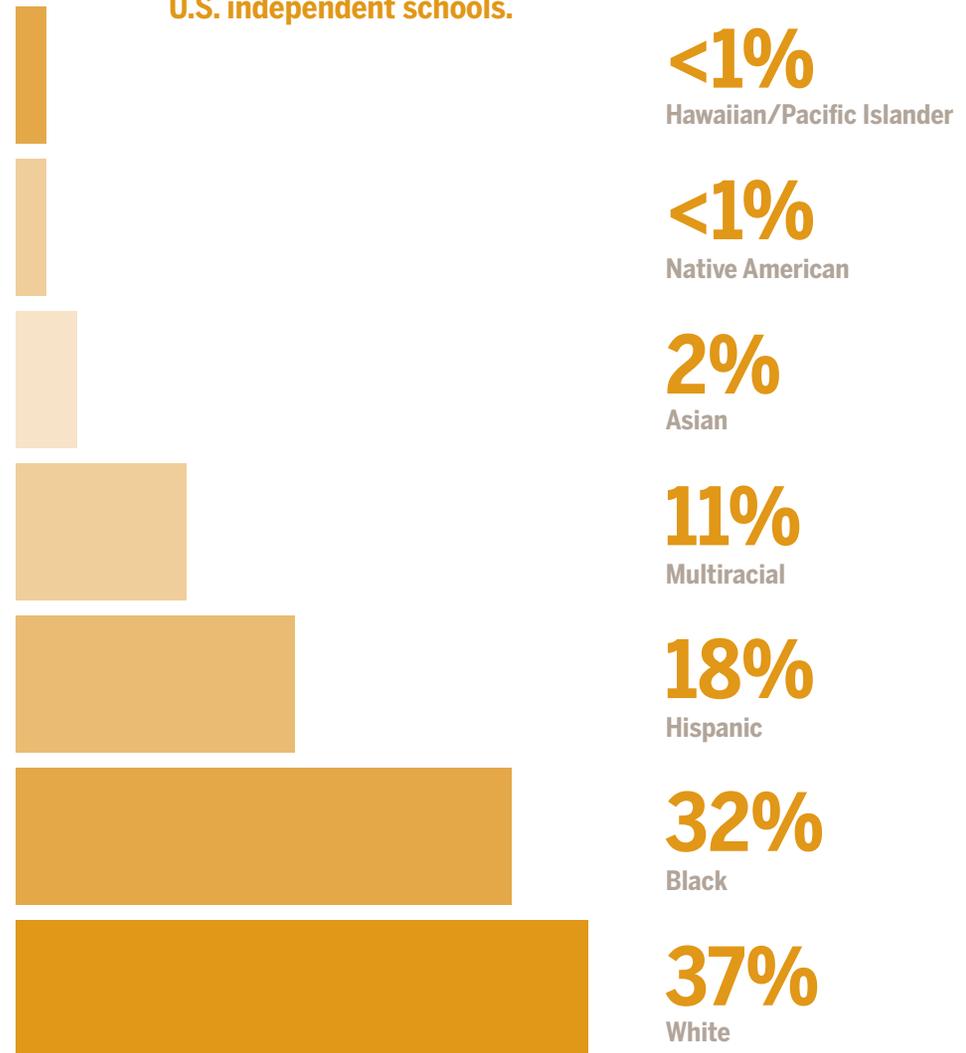




Our student diversity rate
in 2020-21 was just above

63%,

nearly double that of other
U.S. independent schools.



Whole

CHILD CARE

While every MHS student comes from poverty, that's only part of their life circumstances before enrolling. Poverty also contributes to the accumulation of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), defined as traumatic events children experience before the age of 18. These ACEs have become more prevalent and complex as a result of the pandemic.

Research shows that ACEs can put a child at greater risk for physical and mental health problems throughout their lifetime. At MHS, our approach to whole child care focuses on the effective ways to help children cope with and reduce the effects of ACEs by providing them with stable support, resources, and the strategies to persevere and succeed.

Our teams of experts and professionals provide wraparound care, at no cost, that addresses traumatic events and helps students counter the negative impact ACEs can have on their health and futures.



ACEs that impact MHS students

- **17%** experienced homelessness
- **48%** experienced family drug or alcohol issues
- **32%** have been victims of domestic violence
- **56%** have a family member incarcerated
- **52%** have mental health issues in their family
- **33%** attended 3+ schools before MHS
- **17%** experienced food insecurity

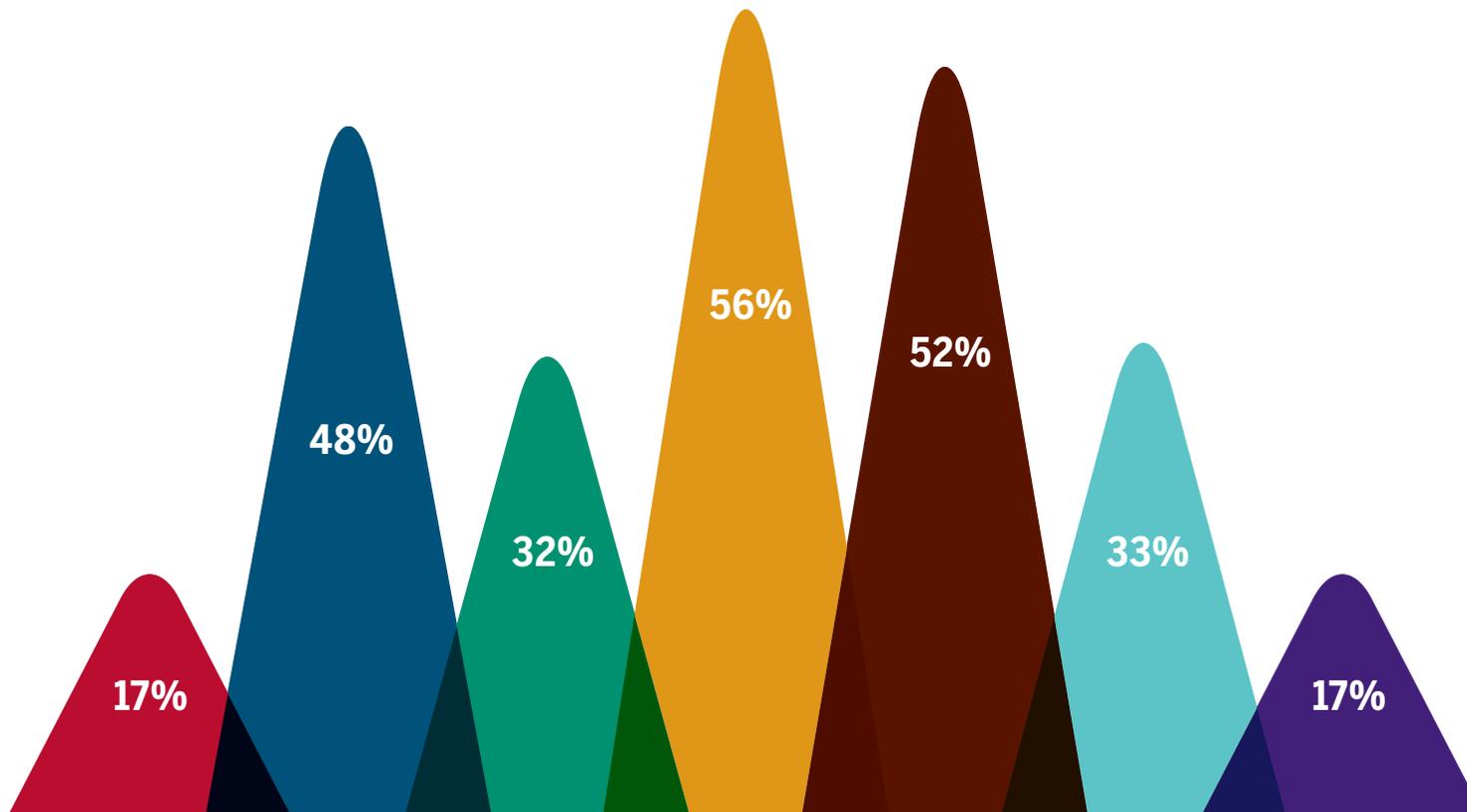
56%

experienced 1 or more of these stressors

52% experienced 1-2 of these stressors

32% experienced 3-5 of these stressors

17% experienced 6 of these stressors



Impacts of ACEs



Chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood.



Decreased education and job opportunities.



Toxic stress that changes brain development and affects attention, decision-making, learning, and response to stress.



At least 5 of the top 10 leading causes of death are associated with ACEs.



Economic and social costs to families, communities, and society totals hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

Note: All data based on new students enrolled during 2020-21 school year.

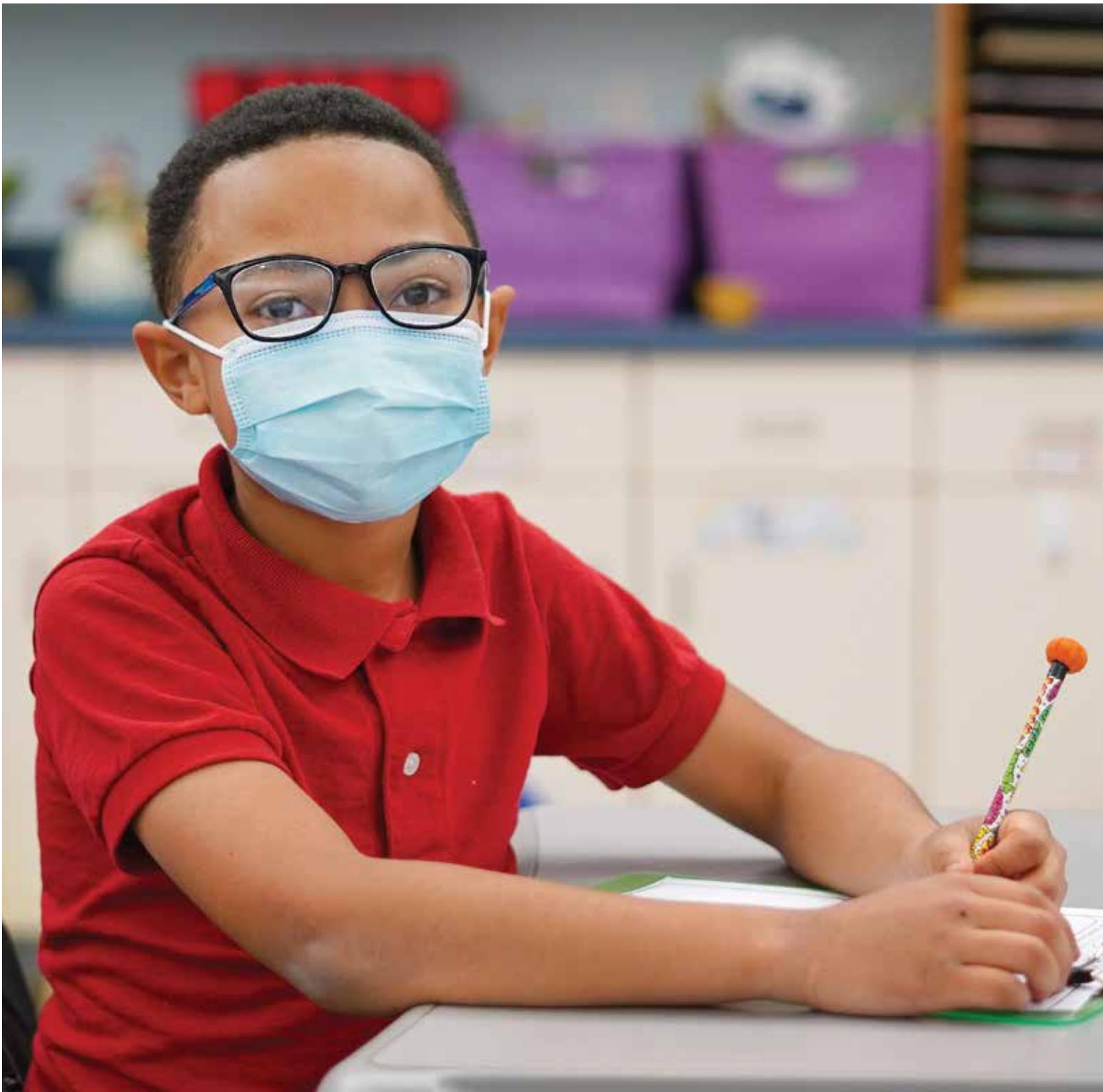
Source: www.cdc.gov

BEST-IN-CLASS

Care

In addition to providing exceptional physical care with best-in-class medical and dental care, food, clothing, and shelter, we also prioritize students' mental health. This includes providing students with psychological, behavioral, and social work services. By serving our students in person during the entire 2020-21 school year, our students benefited from the full array of services and support systems.





1,246

eyeglasses for students

1,041

eye exams

13,143

visits to MHS dental services

27,463

visits to MHS health clinics

3,223

immunization visits

THE MHS Model

The average family income for MHS students is \$23,574, so the school meets considerable financial needs by responsibly investing in each child. Because of that investment, no student pays for any services at MHS.

\$23,574

Average Family Income

\$26,500

Federal Poverty Level



YEAR-ROUND Care

During the 2020-21 school year, we revamped our school calendar and holiday schedule as part of our COVID-19 mitigation strategy that kept kids learning in classrooms all year. There were fewer but longer breaks to help keep the MHS campus community safe while providing additional time for students to spend with family and loved ones.

Our Year-Round Experiences program continued its proud tradition of giving students from at-risk home environments a safe place to explore their interests and build on classroom learning while they remained on campus during breaks.

436

students participated in one or more weeks of summer YRE programming.



School Year

SUCCESS

Making the 2020-21 school year a successful one involved reimagining our programs and reinventing the classroom experience to safeguard our students and staff during the pandemic. We were intentional and focused on ways we could make the greatest impact on students' learning and social and emotional development while implementing COVID mitigation strategies. The result: students thrived when they returned to campus life and we built upon our offerings, especially those geared toward college and career readiness.

COLLEGE AND Career Readiness

The pandemic prompted us to create alternative ways students could participate in authentic work experiences. In the spring of 2021, we launched semester internships on campus where 47 high schoolers gained real-life work experience and sharpened their professional skills under the mentorship of MHS employees. Our goal is to grow the initiative so at least 90 percent of students in the Class of 2025 receive this experience.

We also welcomed back the Summer Spartan Internship program after a hiatus in 2020 due to the pandemic. We created hybrid internships for rising seniors in partnership with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts and the Hershey Trust Company. Students spent mornings virtually interning with their off-campus mentors and afternoons learning from MHS staff.

57 Senior Division students completed an internship in 2020-21.



My biggest takeaway

was the knowledge I gained from working with the Hershey Bears and specifically Zach Fisch, the Voice of the Bears. I can now apply these new skills into the sports media world.

**Jaison
NIEVES**

MHS high school student on his internship with the Hershey Bears



I have grown so much

from this internship and have had the opportunity to develop professional communication and time management skills, and gain independence.

Kayla
DENT

MHS high school student on her internship with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Marketing



I had the opportunity

to help the school prepare for a large Enrollment Day. This was special to be a part of because Enrollment Day is where new families start their MHS journey.

David
GODWIN

MHS high school student on his internship with MHS Family Relations



My favorite project

included writing blog posts for HE&R's website. They published three of my blogs and I cannot express how thankful I am for this experience and everything that I have learned.

Symyra
BYRD

MHS high school student on her internship with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Communications

SPOTLIGHT

The Hershey Project Pathways Program

The Hershey Project Pathways program marked its third year providing MHS Career and Technical Education students with real-world, hands-on learning opportunities with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts staff. MHS students designed, created, and refurbished unique projects for the launch of Hershey's Chocolatetown—a new region of Hersheypark. Among many projects, students restored an antique car and lighthouse, grew and planted flower displays, and designed a children's menu.

Additionally, MHS high school culinary student Vanessa Frimpong helped develop a chicken and waffles recipe inspired by founder Milton Hershey's favorite meal. The dish is now a featured item on The Chocolatier Restaurant's menu.



It feels good to be so young and able to contribute to something so big. When I go to Hersheypark, I can say, I did that.

Vanessa
FRIMPONG

MHS Student



The Pathways program has also created a collaboration between MHS horticultural staff and The Hotel Hershey's executive sous chef Mario Oliverio to teach Agricultural and Environmental Education students start-to-finish agriculture techniques. Students learned to grow hydroponic produce, which they sell at their student-run farmer's market. The Hotel also purchases more than 100 pounds of produce a week to serve at its acclaimed restaurants. Students are gaining a greater understanding of agribusiness and an appreciation for where food comes from.



“

The most impactful experiences our students will have are ones with very high degrees of real-world relevance and that's exactly what they have through this partnership.

**Dr. Jason
SMITH**

MHS Horticultural
Instructional Advisor

”



100%

of 2012-2021 graduates earned at least 1 industry-recognized certification

92%

of 2021 graduates earned at least 3 industry-recognized certifications

39%

of 2021 graduates completed an internship or co-op

100%

of students in grades 5-8 received a semester of CTE programming



208

high school students

earned college credits
during 2020-21

10th Graders
18 earned
college credits

11th Graders
81 earned
college credits

12th Graders
109 earned
college credits

STUDENT LEADERSHIP and Voice

The Compass Project, our school's initiative to help students develop and grow their character and leadership skills, continues to evolve to bring more opportunities to students. During the 2020-21 school year, we expanded The Compass Project to include Project Grow. Project Grow encourages students to collaborate with each other and MHS staff through forums that provide a safe space for students to share their opinions and be heard on campus. Topics discussed include student culture, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The goal is to expand Project Grow to elementary and middle school so more students are empowered and stronger student-adult relationships are developed.

200+

students participated



“

Teaching is far more than pluses and minuses, dates in history, or commas and semicolons—teaching is building trust-centered relationships that enable young people to embrace the course content.

Jason
MOFFITT

MHS Senior Division teacher

”

Class of

2021

Resilience, perseverance, and leadership defined the Class of 2021's MHS journey. When they faced challenges, these 237 seniors showed the community what it means to be Spartans. Together, they made up the largest graduating class in school history and celebrated each other during the virtual 87th Commencement Ceremony and Senior Celebration Car Processional. Teachers, staff, parents/sponsors, alumni, and Hershey community partners also joined the festivities while following state health guidelines.

A GROWING Alumni Family

With the Class of 2021, Milton Hershey School surpassed 11,000 graduates. The MHS alumni network is an ever-growing family where graduates refer to one another as Milt brothers and sisters and continue to support and encourage each other through college, career, and life beyond MHS.

11,000+

Graduates

“

MHS is full of genuinely encouraging people and impactful opportunities. There isn't another place that truly lets us heal from home struggles and lets us create a positive path for ourselves.



**Prince
SOKPO**

MHS Class of 2021

”





SPOTLIGHT

MHS parent/sponsor Rosanna MacKinnon wrote an open letter to school staff thanking them for their dedication in helping her son Victor Escobar '21 reach his graduation milestone. Rosanna wrote, "You have enriched the lives of our kids. You have created an environment of love, learning, and light." Victor is currently on the path to becoming an electrician at The Peterson School, using his MHS Continuing Education Scholarship to pay for his tuition.

“

Every time I walked through the doors of MHS, I couldn't help but feel gratitude for all you did for my son and still do for the kids.



**Rosanna
MACKINNON**

MHS Parent/Sponsor

”

Postsecondary Choices

Of the 237 graduates in the Class of 2021, 85% plan to pursue a form of postsecondary education.

57%
Four-Year College

20%

Two-Year College and
Technical School

9%

Workforce

8%

Diploma, Certificate Program,
or Apprenticeship

6%

Gap Year



BUILDING Independence

The overarching goal for all MHS students is that they go on to live fulfilling and productive lives after graduation. A combination of leadership, academic, and experiential opportunities places students on a path for success. One unique experience for MHS seniors is the Transitional Living (TL) program. In their final year, students move into apartment-style residences on campus to build a greater sense of independence and better understand community living and health and financial habits under the guidance of full-time TL staff.

“

TL is the place to grow. The program teaches essential skills that are all necessary for life after MHS.



**Dontrell
JONES-TOBIN**

MHS Class of 2021

”

15

seniors
completed college
programs

10 completed
Elizabethtown College
program

5 completed
PA College of Health
Sciences program

1,733

industry-recognized
certifications earned

93

completed an internship
or co-op



Class Snapshot

53

took Advanced Placement
courses

37

traveled internationally

54

enrolled during elementary
school

\$17.8M

in Continuing Education
Scholarships

43

in National Honor Society

20

in National Technical Honor
Society

Life After

MHS

Milton Hershey School's Graduate Programs for Success (GPS) Division builds bridges between high school and college, technical school, the workforce, or the military. This MHS support network does not disappear after graduation day. A team of experts, counselors, and mentors keep students connected to each other and the school as alumni.

INDIVIDUALIZED Support

Navigating milestones, like applying to college, choosing a major, or finding an apartment, can be difficult for first-generation college students or those from low-income backgrounds. When the pandemic created even more challenges, like travel restrictions, closed campuses, and online learning, the GPS team adapted to provide virtual experiences for high school students and graduates. College students received video calls and text messages to work through financial aid challenges and housing concerns. High schoolers participated in virtual tours, had meaningful conversations with MHS graduates currently in college, and were guided through the adjusted deadlines of the college application process.

SPOTLIGHT

With graduates attending more than 150 different institutions, the GPS Division had to be nimble and creative in supporting college students who were navigating the disruptions caused by COVID-19. When in-person meetings with MHS graduates on their college campus were shifted to virtual conversations, the team never lost sight of helping our graduates achieve their goals.



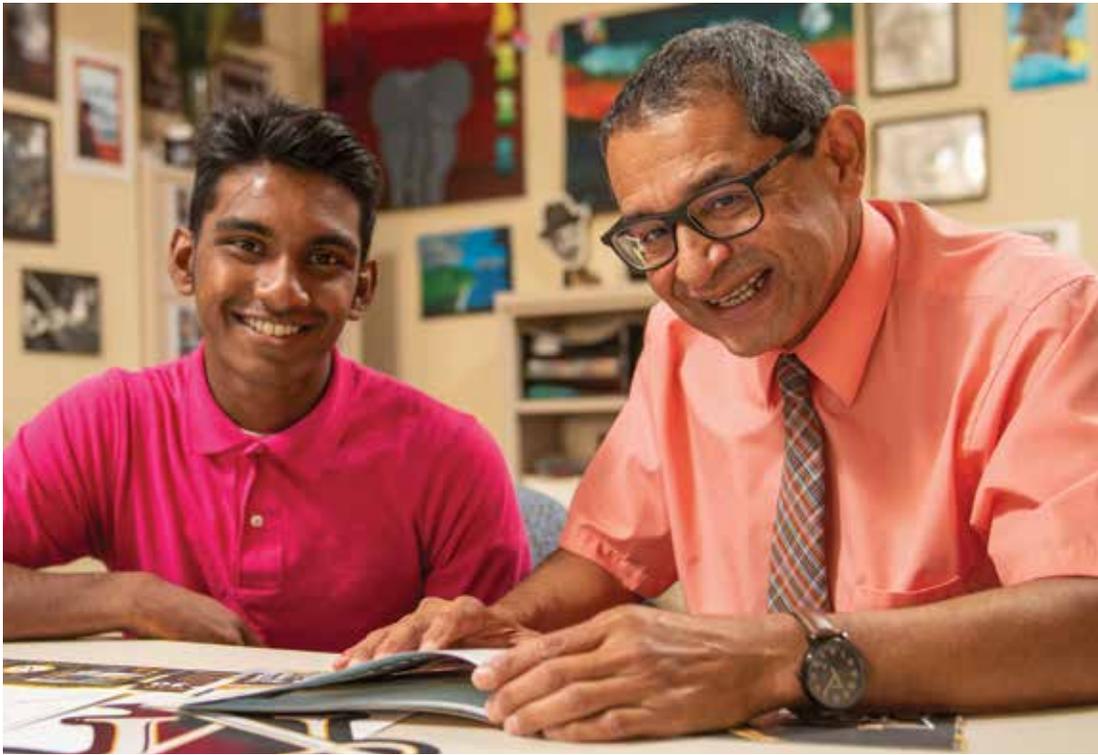
I've been able to do a lot more collaborating within our department, specifically among the higher education support specialists, college and career counselors, and seminar teachers. This has allowed us to get to know our students and their anticipated postsecondary goals.



**Unique
PATTERSON**

MHS Higher Education
Support Specialist





CONTINUING Education

MHS graduates have outpaced their peers in successfully continuing their education and staying enrolled. One reason for these positive outcomes is the level of college-related funding MHS offers. The Continuing Education Scholarship (CES) covers tuition and room and board, even at private colleges. Through this program, MHS aims to cover the majority, if not all, of our graduates' postsecondary expenses. To further help our graduates impacted by the pandemic, our GPS Division designed a specific support plan to reengage graduates on their academic journeys, including adjustments to CES guidelines to encourage graduates to reenroll in college.

Since 2010, the majority of MHS graduates **accrued the school's full scholarship amount.**

Since the launch of the GPS Division in 2017, college persistence rates have increased **↑ 6%** for MHS alumni.

On average, MHS students not only attend, but stay in college at higher rates than their peers.



80%
of MHS students in college persist to their second year.

National average is 76%*.

*Source: National Student Clearinghouse, 2015-18



77-88%

of MHS graduates have attended college in the fall after high school.



In comparison, college participation rates for low-income students are 33% nationally and 40% in Pennsylvania.

24 colleges and universities

partner with MHS on support agreements.

These postsecondary institutions have supports in place to help low-income, first-generation college students succeed and persist.



90%

of MHS alumni

are working or working and going to school.



As an MHS student, alumna Hannah Monette '16 found relief in knowing everything from food to medical care was never a worry. While attending Messiah University, the financial support from MHS and the GPS team's regular check-ins helped Hannah fully focus on academics and getting involved. Now, as a college financial aid counselor at Marywood University, she is helping her students the way her GPS counselors at MHS helped her.

“



As a product of a low-income family, I know the struggles of trying to figure out college on your own, but I had MHS as a support system and that motivates me every day in this role.

**Hannah
MONETTE '16**

MHS alumna

”

Nicky Ren '17 took full advantage of the MHS Continuing Education Scholarship to pay for his tuition, housing, and meal plans while attending Villanova University. He also was able to study abroad in Shanghai and Hong Kong, thanks to his CES funding. As a college graduate, Nicky is bringing the leadership skills he developed at MHS to his banking career.

“



MHS has served as a support system for me with all major decisions in my life, and I know that the school will continue to support me moving forward.

**Nicky
REN '17**

MHS alumnus

”

Above and

BEYOND

In moments of uncertainty, communities are tested. It is the people who step up and rise above adversity that make a difference at critical times. Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, MHS staff took their job descriptions to the next level with an unwavering focus and commitment. Because of them, we were able to continue in-person classroom learning, reimagine leadership development and character-building experiences, and ultimately, unite to ensure the health and safety of the school community.

EVERYDAY

Heroes

The 2020-21 school year shined a light on the everyday heroes throughout campus and the important work they do behind the scenes, within their job descriptions, and beyond. In a special mhskids.org series, we showcased many of the MHS heroes who make MHS a special place to live, learn, and work.



Leo Fulginiti's role as a CDL driver and utility worker completely changed during the pandemic. He and his team members stepped in to help in student dining rooms by delivering bagged lunches and disinfecting surfaces.

"I believe in teamwork and this year it's been important to lend a hand to anyone in need."

Leo
FULGINITI



Collaboration is key for Senior Division administrative assistant Hilda Dimopoulos. Hilda worked closely with departments across campus to make sure students had what they needed to be their best.

"We are truly a community that feels like a family. The school's mission anchors us, keeps us focused, and helps our motives stay consistent with those of Mr. and Mrs. Hershey."

Hilda
DIMOPOULOS



For behavioral support specialist Richard Little and his team, the past year has been all about adjusting, even personal schedules, to make sure students got the support they needed.

"My role is to provide students with the skills they can use to help navigate these challenging times."

Richard
LITTLE



Olivia Weidemann, the M.O.L.D. mentorship program advisor, prioritized her time and energy during the pandemic to help students and staff build relationships that encouraged students to persevere and succeed.

"I love this community and the opportunities we are able to provide to cultivate growth in our students at MHS and beyond."

Olivia
WEIDEMANN



I wanted men and women who love children to care for and educate them.



Milton S.
HERSHEY

Liberty Magazine,
September 13, 1924



AN INCLUSIVE Community

Fonati Abrokwa's appointment to Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion in 2020 reinforced our focus on making MHS even more equitable and inclusive. With the formation of the MHS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team and the Cultural Ambassadors, we are:

- identifying strengths and areas for growth
- evaluating curriculum
- providing additional student voice opportunities
- creating customized DEI professional development sessions

Just as MHS students come from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures, we believe in hiring diverse candidates to grow a community of compassion and inclusion.



The successes we have experienced thus far are encouraging, but we have more to do. We each play a role and I appreciate the ongoing support of our MHS family.

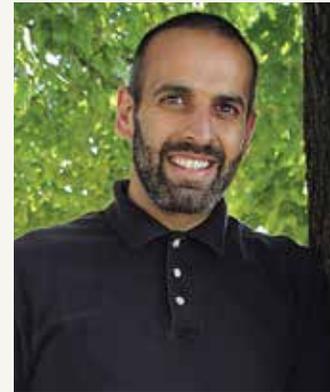


**Fonati
ABROKWA '01**

MHS Special Assistant to the President
for Diversity and Inclusion



A diverse population fosters creative collaboration with fresh ideas to stay current in today's society.



**Salim
HANNA**

MHS Recruiter



DIFFERENCE Makers

Being a mentor and role model for students is part of the job at MHS. During the 2020-21 school year, staff and Project Fellowship groups got creative in the ways they stayed engaged and connected to students.





45

first-year elementary students mentored by staff

221

staff members mentored
375 high school students

122

groups of employees from MHS and other Hershey entities participated in Project Fellowship

Our Future

IN FOCUS

The conclusion of the 2020-21 school year also marked the successful completion of the first year of our new five-year strategic plan, the MILT Plan. Despite the pandemic, we made significant advances in the plan's four key areas.

Among our most notable achievements was the development of our Early Childhood Education Initiative, Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning. By leveraging our impact, we will be able to serve more children than ever before, at no cost to their families. The \$350 million initiative will fund the initial development of up to six Early Children Resource Centers in Pennsylvania for children from birth to age 5 from low-income backgrounds. CHS will help address the critical and growing need for quality early childhood education and narrow the kindergarten-readiness gap between low-income students and their higher-income peers.

“

I know firsthand how critical it is for children from at-risk backgrounds to have access to quality education from an early age and look forward to building on the Hersheys' legacy through my work at CHS.



Senate
ALEXANDER '06, ESQ.

CHS Executive Director

”



**Catherine
Hershey Schools**
for early learning

Nurture. Play. Discover.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Achievements

Modeling Character and Well-Being

- Expanded The Compass Project to include Project Grow student voice forums
- Leveraged student leaders in strategic planning and as CTE ambassadors
- Improved preventive emotional, social, and behavioral supports through Sacred Values Systems of Support
- Delivered COVID-19 social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions to support students' well-being

Innovating Career-Focused Education

- Designed a career-focused education plan to ensure students graduate with knowledge of coding and computer science
- Launched transformation of pre-K through grade 8 career exposure with renewed lesson plans, speakers, and career portfolios
- Initiated school-day semester internships on campus
- Completed year three of the Hershey Project Pathways program with hands-on CTE learning experiences for students with Hershey entity staff
- Enhanced 11th-grade Career Expo experience with alumni presenters from all 16 national career clusters

Leveraging Impact

- Achieved an enrollment of 1,934 students
- Graduated the largest senior class in MHS history
- Developed Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning
- Identified Hershey and Harrisburg as the first two CHS locations
- Hired executive director to lead CHS

Teamwork to Strengthen Community Alignment and Engagement

- Adapted to virtual Family Weekends to keep parents/sponsors engaged
- Empowered parents/sponsors through virtual workshops to promote children's SEL skills
- Supported students through M.O.L.D. mentorship program
- Developed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion framework
- Launched the Many Spartans, One Mission Employee Engagement initiative





Milton Hershey School is one of the world's best private schools, offering a top-notch education and positive home life to children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade from families of lower income at no charge. Learn more at mhskids.org.

Milton Hershey School does not discriminate in admissions or other programs and services on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religious creed, or disability. Visit mhskids.org for more information.

View the digital version of the 2020-21 Brown & Gold Annual Report at mhskids.org/annualreport.

MILTON
HERSHEY
SCHOOL®

