Students Now Have the Flexibility to Find the Perfect Seat

Goldilocks taught us that when selecting a seat, not all are “just right.” So, creating a classroom environment that allows each student to find their own “just right” is a key step to reach full academic and social-emotional potential. The Morris Educational Foundation has funded flexible seating options for students in all K-5 schools and all sixth grade English Language Arts classrooms to help create a comfortable environment and boost achievement.

Teachers have already noted improvements in students’ focus, ability to regulate emotions, and quality of productivity. They find students are excited to come to class, more likely to complete tasks, and are more comfortable physically. More engaged learning is taking place as students focus on mastering skills. more on page 2>

MEF and MSD Family Author Experience Kicks Off Love of Reading

What do writers and ninjas have in common? District second graders contemplated this question in October during the fall installment of the new Morris Educational Foundation (MEF) and Morris School District (MSD) Family Author Experience. The Author Experience brought second graders and their families together with children’s book author Corey Rosen Schwartz for two evening events, one at Normandy Park and one at Alfred Vail. Schwartz shared her book The Three Ninja Pigs and not only challenged students to answer this question, she also challenged them to show their ninja moves with the help of a martial artist. more on page 3>

A BIG WIN FOR THE MSD: MACKEY PENDERGRAST NAMED SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR FOR THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY!

The New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA) has chosen Mackey Pendergrast, Superintendent of the Morris School District, for New Jersey’s Superintendent of the Year. Mr. Pendergrast will now represent the State as a candidate for the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Superintendent of the Year Award, which recognizes the talent, vision, and impact of our nation’s public school leaders. He was named Morris County Superintendent of the Year in June and Region I Superintendent of the Year for North Jersey in September.

This distinction comes at the start of Pendergrast’s fifth year as superintendent of the Morris School District and his ninth year overall as a superintendent. He began his public school teaching career as a high school history teacher and varsity basketball coach for the Summit Public Schools and held positions in central office administration for the Westfield Public School District and the West Morris Regional High School District before becoming superintendent of West Morris in 2011.

Board of Education President Lisa Pollak and Vice President Nancy Bangiola said they were “absolutely thrilled but hardly surprised” by their superintendent’s recent accolades, including the state’s top honor. more on page 3>

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MSD Selected for Equity and Excellence Showcase at National Press Club

The national spotlight was on the Morris School District on October 16, when Superintendent Mackey Pendergrast joined nine other public school leaders from across the U.S. at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. for the Equity and Excellence: Innovation in American Public Education showcase. The showcase was organized by Digital Promise, a nonprofit dedicated to improving educational opportunities and outcomes through innovative practices and technologies. Superintendents and other public school administrators, education policy makers and thought leaders, and representatives from the press attended the event to learn how school districts are addressing the equity gap and positively impacting the lives of marginalized students.

Mr. Pendergrast highlighted the District’s multi-strategy approach to closing achievement gaps in reading and writing at Frelinghuysen Middle School. He explained, “Four years ago, state standardized test scores revealed marked disparities in student performance among our demographic subgroups, with students of color, economically disadvantaged students, and students with IEPs performing lower than white and non-economically disadvantaged students. At the same time, discipline data showed disproportionately higher numbers of behavioral referrals, detentions, and suspensions for African-American and Hispanic students. Principal Joe Ugilaro and I determined that, in order to create impactful, lasting change at the middle school in terms of equity, access, and achievement, we needed to take the broad view and confront both the reading and writing gap as well as the climate gap.”

A study just published by the American Educational Research Association (AERA) validates their approach; Stanford University Professor Francis Pearman and colleagues have now documented the relationship between race disparities in school discipline rates and academic achievement between black and white students nationwide. (See Pearman et. al. “Arts Achievement Gaps Related to Discipline Gaps: Evidence from National Data.”)

Mr. Pendergrast’s demonstration at the Equity and Excellence Showcase outlined what he and Mr. Ugilaro call “The Architecture of a Cohort Vision for Education—the integration of a comprehensive set of strategies along three fronts: the transformation of student culture and climate, emphasizing the centrality of positive student-student relationships; the elevation of reading and writing instruction, and the move from an every-other-day schedule to a daily schedule of English Language Arts classes; and the universalization of “blended” learning, which couples technology-based and face-to-face instruction, so that students have equal access to the skills and resources necessary for the 21st century.”

The longitudinal data Mr. Pendergrast shared at the showcase illustrates the far-reaching impact of the District’s approach. “Our results are proof of concept,” he stated. “A four-year comparative summary of test scores from the NJ State standardized test in English Language Arts shows significant improvement across the board for all demographic subgroups (see chart below). For example, economically disadvantaged students receiving a passing score improved by 44 percentage points (from 18% in 2014-15 to 62% in 2018-19). African American students improved by 35 percentage points (from 30% to 65%), and Hispanic students improved by 51 percentage points (from 17% to 68%). Over the same time period, discipline rates for all demographic subgroups declined: behavioral referrals went from 788 in 2014-15 to 112 in 2018-19; suspensions from 175 to 18, and lunch detentions from a high of 1034 down to 34.”

Pendergrast called these results “remarkable,” and noted that it was the combination of coordinated strategies that proved so effective: “It’s no mistake that while suspensions and behavioral referrals have dropped dramatically, we have simultaneously seen a dramatic rise in student growth and achievement in reading and writing. All of the strategies we conceptualized and employed were necessary in concert, and it was the comprehensiveness and coherence of our approach that enabled its success. Simply reading and writing more is not enough to create the kind of improvement unless it is accompanied by the intentional use of data, careful and targeted integration of technology, sustained professional training and dialogue, investment in student participation and social capital, and a shift in culture and climate so that all students feel that they belong and have value in our schools.”

Pendergrast added: “What is more, these strategies were not conceived and implemented incidentally; they are aligned to our district mission and firmly rooted in our values. They are aligned to our district mission and firmly rooted in our values and resources necessary for the 21st century that all students can have equal access to the skills technology-based and face-to-face instruction, so that students have equal access to the skills and resources necessary for the 21st century.”

Fall 2019 Sports Round-Up

Boys Cross Country: Ranked 24th in NJ; 1st place Greystone Invite, 2nd place Garret Invite, 4th place Shore Conference Invitational, 3rd place NJAC Championships, 3rd place North I Group 4 Sectionals. Tobias Gaynor, 1st team All-Country; Theodore Kueker, 1st team All-Country; Jackson Haynie, 2nd team All-Country; Connor Starett, Honorable Mention All-Country.

Girls Cross Country: 2nd place Greystone Invite, 5th place Morris County Championships, 5th place Morris County Championships. Jessica Samms, 2nd team All-Country; Mait Lobeid, 2nd team All-Country; Meghan Young, 2nd team All-Country; Madeline Freeney, Honorable Mention All-Country.

Field Hockey: Advanced to quarter-finals in County Tournament and semi-finals in State Tournament. Britt Hillipter, 1st team All-Country; 1st team All-Country; Morgan Mastrocchio, 1st team All-Country; Lauren Herbster, 1st team All-Country; Danielle Hessels, 2nd team All-Country; Megan Mastrocchio, 2nd team All-Country; Sydney Familo, 2nd team All-Country; Elizabeth Schaefer, 2nd team All-Country; Honorble Mention Morris County; Emily Prachthausen, Honorable Mention Morris County.

Football: Jack Ham, 1st team All-Country; Jason Jones, 1st team All-Country; Joshua Garret, 1st team All-Country; Morgan O’Neil, 1st team All-Country; Aiden Jordan, 2nd team All-Country; Patrick Fitzgerald, Honorable Mention All-Country; Jon Mastracchio, Honorable Mention All-Country.

Boys Soccer: Advanced to semi-finals in County Tournament and quarter-finals in State Tournament. Henry Acosta, 1st team All-Country; 1st team All-Country; Jafet Mora, 1st team All-Country; 2nd place Morris County; Sydney Familo, 1st team All-Country; Diego Izaguirre, 1st team All-Conference, 1st team All-Country; Miguel Manion, 2nd team All-Conference, 3rd team All-Country; Mauro Ruhalter, 1st team All-Conference, 2nd team All-County; Madison Sliver, Honorable Mention All-Conference; Olivia Scott, Honorable Mention All-Conference; Kathryn Duff, Honorable Mention All-Conference, NJ.com top 25 sophomores in the State.

Tennis: 2nd place conference, 2nd place Morris County Tournament; Grace Starcher, 1st team All-Conference (1st singles), MCT finalist; Wayne Valley champion; Alex Fischer, Honorable Mention All-Conference, MCT 1st singles champion, Wayne Valley champion; Alex Fischer, Honorable Mention All-Conference; Wayne Valley second singles champion; Madison Sliver, Honorable Mention All-Conference; Wayne Valley tournament champion.

Volleyball: Sydney Rosseter, 2nd team All-Conference; Brooke Atkins, Honorable Mention All-Conference.

Save the Date! Audition for Morristown ONSTAGE’s 20/20 Show!

The Morris Educational Foundation is proud to present our 13th annual Morristown ONSTAGE’s 20/20 Show! on February 26, 2020. This year’s theme, 20/20, Seeing a Believing, celebrates vision, hope, and achievement. The Mayo Performing Arts Center will host our unique showcase of singing, dancing, and instrumental talent of all ages. Morristown ONSTAGE is the feel-good community event of the year that celebrates Morristown and the Morris School District and its unique place as a district of excellence.
Under Pendergrast’s leadership the District has seen the greatest number of students in Morris County enrolled in BC Calculus and Physics C (the highest level math and science courses offered). Pendergrast notes that these impressive shifts in student achievement reflect “greater access to exceptional opportunities for more and more of our students to engage their intellectуal curiosity and pursue their passions—which means they graduate from our district with better preparation for their futures.”

Other highlights of Pendergrast’s tenure include a flourishing of new programs in STEM, Computer Science and the arts; a preschool expansion of historic proportions; as well as comprehensive district-wide initiatives in social-emotional learning, equity and inclusion, communications and community relations, and student health, wellness and safety.

Pendergrast is widely known among colleagues as a leader in sensible and targeted digital learning. In 2014, along with 11 other superintendents, he contributed to the Obama administration’s National Education Technology Plan and was part of a consortium of exemplary superintendents invited to the White House to launch the Future-Ready initiative. Pendergrast firmly maintains that the right kind of technology integration will empower students and teachers and revolutionize learning outcomes. Along these lines, the Morris School District has devoted a record amount. Our offerings continue to grow as we work with partners to provide more scholarship options. If you are interested in supporting or creating a scholarship, please contact us at info@moredistrictfound.org.
WIDE-RANGING OPTIONS TO INSPIRE LEARNERS AND LEADERS

No matter what path they choose or what passions they pursue, students at MHS know they belong to a strong, vibrant, inclusive community that positions them for success in college, career, and citizenship.

FUTURE-READY SPACES MEAN STUDENTS ARE BETTER PREPARED

Our progressive spaces and state-of-the-art equipment mirror what students will encounter at top universities and in the workforce: engineering and architectural design labs, CAD lab, science labs, innovation suite, art and design studio, fabrication lab, wood shop and production room, CNC production room, makerspace classrooms, broadcasting suite, kinesiology and conditioning studio, and more!
# MSD Advantage
MORRISCHOOLDISTRICT.ORG

## Innovative Programming...
- Prestigious STEM Academy
- Award-Winning Theatre Arts
- Full-Spectrum Music Education & Performance
- Multidisciplinary Humanities Academy
- Accredited Leadership Program
- Pre-Professional Communications & Media Studies
- Cutting-Edge Engineering & Design

## Raising the Bar on Student Achievement

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<th>Number of Exams</th>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>84.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The # of AP exams taken has more than doubled while test scores remained constant. We're raising the bar without compromising our high standards and expectations!

## More of Our Students Enroll in Top-Level Courses

Our highest level math (BC Calc) and Physics (AP Physics C) have exceptional enrollments.

## 2019 NJ Science and Math League Results

- #1 AP Chemistry Team
- #1 AP Environmental Science Team
- #1 Chemistry I Team
- #1 Math Team

#1 in Morris County!
Kendall Rogers, Morristown High School class of 2017, is a junior at Bowdoin College. As a religion major and member of Bowdoin’s men’s lacrosse team, he no longer lives in Morristown. However, Kendall belongs to the Morris School District, which helped honor the sesquicentennial.

According to Sue Young, President of the WVCA, “The WVCA has the privilege to ensure that the legacy of the Washington Valley Schoolhouse endures. ‘Time will never erase this little red, one-room schoolhouse has enriched,’ Young said, ‘the work that has been accomplished and the lives this little red, one-room schoolhouse has enriched.’”

Kendall encourages Morristown High School students to seek personally meaningful volunteer work, not just for college applications, but to truly connect with the community. He also highly recommends that all students take advantage of the broad array of classes offered at Morristown High School: “You never know where you will find your passion. It could be on the field, in the classroom, or with a community organization. I entered Bowdoin as a neuroscience major, but after I took one religion class, I realized I found another path. I encourage all students to explore many options to find their path.”

Happy Birthday! The community celebrates the 150th year of the Washington Valley Schoolhouses in Morris Township.

A variety of historic materials in the schoolhouse represent the time period, such as old textbooks, copy books, maps, lunch buckets, slates, and chalk, and pictures of school children and teachers. Visiting students are given a sample lesson to demonstrate the difference in expectations, subjects covered, and teaching methods.

According to Sue Young, President of the WVCA, the neighborhood pride in the schoolhouse and its central role in the lives of Valley residents throughout the years has helped preserve its place in the history of the Township. Mrs. Young says it has been a privilege to ensure that the legacy of the Washington Valley Schoolhouse endures. ‘Time will never erase the work that has been accomplished and the lives this little red, one-room schoolhouse has enriched,’” she remarked. The Morris School District extends the happiest of birthday wishes to this 150-year-old historic landmark. For more information about the Schoolhouse or to schedule a visit, please contact Sue Young of the WVCA at smy81@optimum.net.
The Morris Educational Foundation Thanks Our 2018-19 Donors...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>Morristown Education Foundation Thanks Our 2018-19 Donors...</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Morris Educational Foundation and the Morristown Festival of Books renewed their partnership to promote reading and literacy to each of the Morris School District’s 5,200 students. This fall they presented a $10,000 check for books for every PreK through grade 12 library in the Morris School District.

IN THE DISTRICT

Morristown High School Marching Colonials posed while warming up for competition with three new keyboard percussion instruments purchased through a grant from the MEF: a marimba, a vibraphone, and a xylophone.

Woodland students received an animated welcome back to school in September!

The Morris School District Board of Education recognized tutors from the Morris Tutoring Collaborative, a partnership of volunteer community tutoring programs in Morristown for Morris School District students that includes the Morris Educational Foundation, Presbyterian Church in Morristown, St. Peters Episcopal Church, the Church of God in Christ, and Bethel A.M.E.

The Morris Educational Foundation provided blanket grants to all ten Morris School District Schools to support cultural arts programming. Normandy Park students enjoyed a Spirit Tree residency last spring.

Each year the Morris Educational Foundation provides creative grants to all ten Morris School District Schools to support cultural arts programming. These programs allow our students to participate in life-changing experiences.

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Sloane Avenue students had fun working together on Thanksgiving-themed STEM challenges.

The MHS fall run of The Miracle Worker showcased the depth and intensity of our student-actors’ exceptional talents. Their superb performance was complemented by beautiful work in set design, costuming, hair and makeup, lighting, as well as by a stellar pit orchestra. Bravo to everyone involved in this unforgettable production!

Joe Longo, MHS ’44, hosted current MHS computer aided design, engineering design, systems technology, and wood design students at his business, Longa Electric, as part of MEF’s CAMP (Colonial Alumni Mentoring Program) Out.

Themed learning in action in Mrs. Haf’s fourth grade classroom! Students try out the newest interactive panel at Alexander Hamilton.

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