



## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

2020 brought an unprecedented level of change and uncertainty. We had so many opportunities to lean on our three Big Rocks of Culture, Inclusive Excellence and Personalized Learning. In March, when Governor Mike DeWine closed schools none

of us could fully imagine what would happen over the next nine months. We distributed Chromebooks to 1,062 students.

We launched a birthday bus so Comets could celebrate their special day even though we remained in lock down. We held a virtual graduation and personally delivered diplomas to the Class of 2020. We made sure that every family facing economic hardship was fed.

We are forever grateful that voters supported our schools at the ballot box this spring - even after that vote was delayed. Despite the financial impact that COVID-19 has had on our schools, we remain steadfast in keeping our commitment to ensuring that the levy lasts at least five years while continuing to invest in safety and mental wellness, and working to reduce our class sizes.

Over the spring and summer, a team of incredible Mason staff moved mountains to ensure that our students and families had the opportunity to choose to come to school in-person or online. And, while our online learning option and in-person learning are not perfect, they are safe and have created opportunities for students that will last much longer than the pandemic.

### SIGNIFICANT 2020 MILESTONES

- **Online Learning Option for All MCS Families** - As part of our commitment to creating learning environments that are safe and supportive for all learners, we created new online learning options this year in grades PK-12. Over 3,400 students attended school as online learners this year, supported by over 120 teachers and paraprofessionals. Students and teachers have found new ways to create community, engage in learning, and demonstrate understanding as we have all learned more about how to function and thrive in a virtual world. We are grateful for the many ways our students' caregivers have also partnered with us to make online learning possible.
- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Learning Experience Designer** - This year, we added a new member to our Learning Experience Designer Team. The DEI Learning Experience Designer helps provide our educators with the Inclusive Excellence resources they need to ensure that their classrooms honor diversity and are equitable, inclusive and just. Soroya Smith, who has been an amazing teacher at MECC for the last 12 years and a MECC DEI Leader last year, took on this new role to serve our educators.
- **Rapid Test Pilot** - In November, Mason City Schools was one of seven Ohio districts chosen throughout the state to participate in a rapid coronavirus test pilot public health evaluation. We were grateful for the opportunity to give public health officials more scientific data about what is happening in Ohio's classrooms. On December 30, Governor DeWine announced important changes to the classroom quarantine rules based on the evidence gleaned from the pilot which underscored the importance of wearing face masks. These classroom quarantine changes are helping keep more healthy kids in school, rather than needing to quarantine.

We are already deep into planning for what the 2021-2022 school year will bring. And, we know we aren't going back to "normal." There is a new normal. We are excited about not just what next year holds, but what education can look like in the future. This is an opportunity for us to invest more deeply in our relationships with each other as we design personalized paths that align with students' dreams and future careers. We are ready to intentionally create an environment that honors each learner's identity, and grows their leadership capacity.

If you would like to be part of a CommUNITY Conversation about the Mason Experience 2025, please send an email to [communityconvo@masonohioschools.com](mailto:communityconvo@masonohioschools.com).

Respectfully,

Jonathan Cooper  
CEO | Superintendent

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

MASON, OHIO  
PERMIT NO. 32

SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENT



MASON CITY SCHOOLS  
211 N. EAST STREET  
MASON, OH 45040



## MASON CITY SCHOOLS 2020 QUALITY PROFILE



### GROWING GREATNESS TOGETHER

#4 Best School District in Ohio | #83 Best School District in U.S.

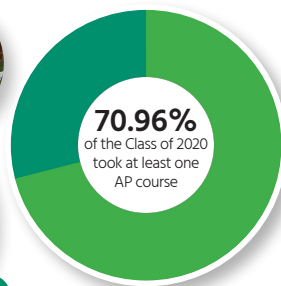
Niche.com

[www.masonohioschools.com](http://www.masonohioschools.com) | 513.398.0474 | 211 N. East Street Mason, OH 45040



## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

MCS students, both in-person and online, continue to perform at high levels.



This fall,  
**1,385 MHS**  
students  
enrolled in  
an average  
of **1.91 AP**  
courses.



of the class of 2020 is attending  
one of 145 American colleges or  
universities or one of four schools in  
England, Japan, and the Philippines



of college-bound graduates in the  
Class of 2020 chose colleges and  
universities in Ohio



Graduates received offers  
for more than **\$9 million** in  
scholarships and awards



37 graduates earned  
**Biliteracy Seals**,  
demonstrating proficiency in  
English & a second language



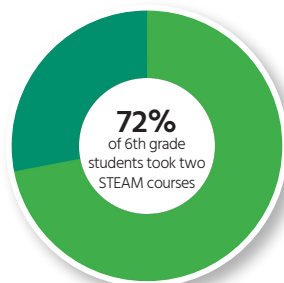
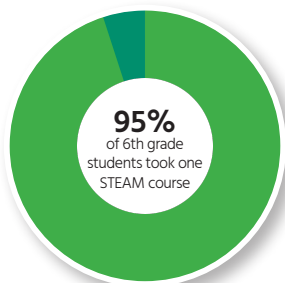
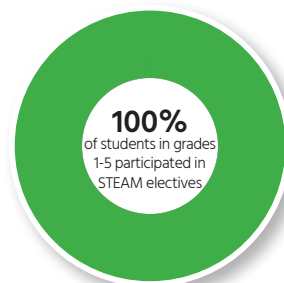
**5 languages** were  
represented in second  
language proficiency



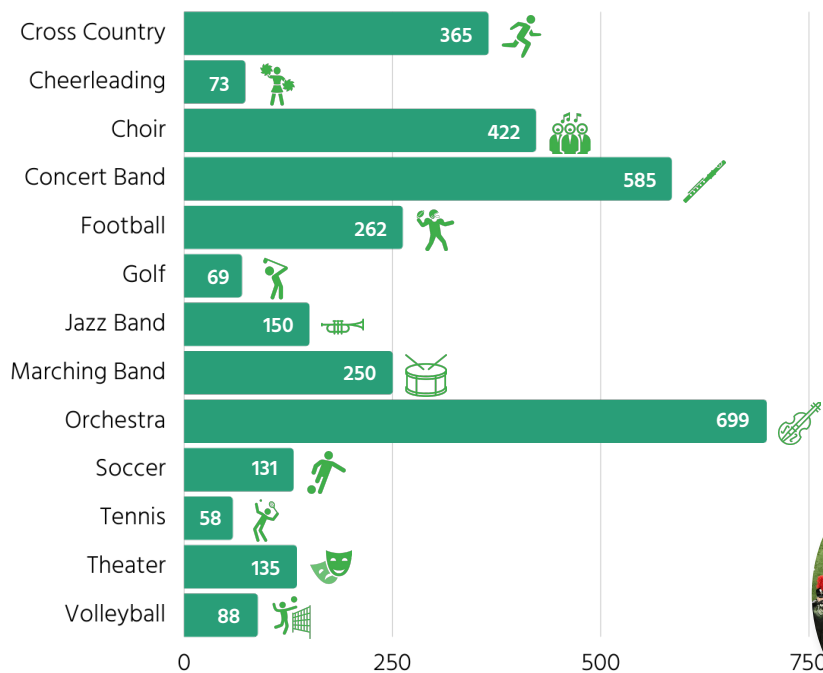
21 students earned  
**perfect ACT scores**



**61 National**  
**Merit Scholars** in the Class  
of 2020



## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



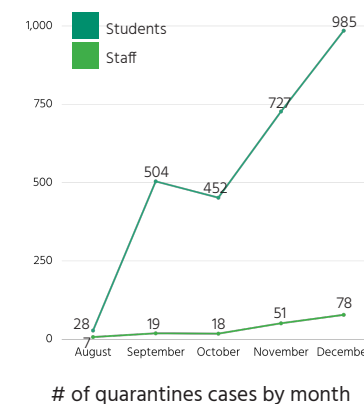
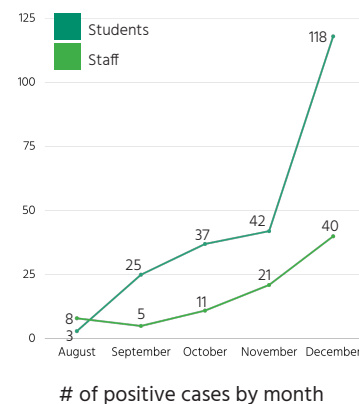
This fall, more  
than 3,435  
students  
in grades  
7-12 safely  
participated  
in school-  
sponsored  
extracurricular  
activities



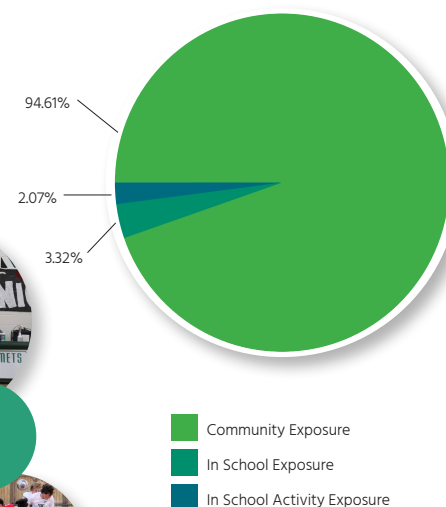
## COVID-19

Like communities around the nation, Mason City Schools saw increasing numbers of positive cases of COVID-19 during the fall and winter. From August through December, 94.6% of MCS positive cases were from community exposure, while 5.4% were from school-sponsored activity exposure or in-school exposure. Positive in-school cases were linked to instances where people were not wearing face masks, such as at lunch or in a specialized classroom where students are not always able to tolerate masks.

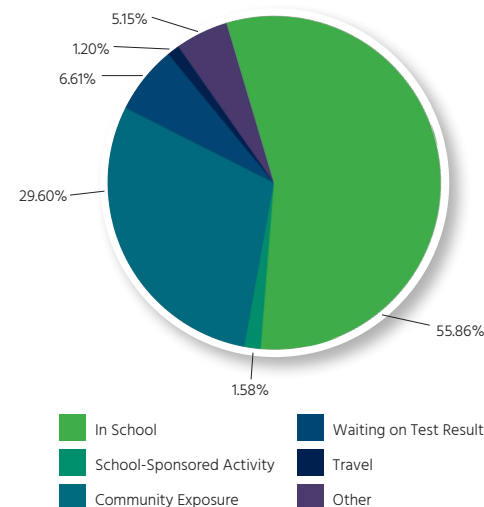
### August-December 2020



### COVID-19 Positive Cases Isolations by Category %



### Close Contact Quarantines by Category %



## MENTAL WELLNESS

Across the nation, children and adults have seen an increase in the percentage of mental health-related ER visits. We are grateful for our investment in our mental wellness team, and a strong partnership with Cincinnati Children's Hospital who provides therapists in all of our schools.

During 1st Semester:



students were referred  
for mental health  
services



student assessments  
demonstrated increased  
risk for suicide and self  
harm

## HEALTH & SAFETY

From March-December 2020



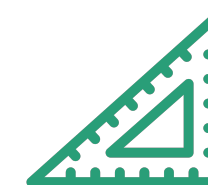
Child Nutrition Department provided **more than 26,445 free meals** (breakfast & lunch) for online learners.

Child Nutrition Department provided **257,100 free meals** (breakfast & lunch) for in-person learners.

Child Nutrition Department provided **10,635 lunch meals** for Warren County Educational Service Center sites.



Over **1,000 gallons** of  
**hand sanitizer** has been  
used in our schools.



Over **5,000 lineal feet**  
of **plexiglass** used to  
construct safety barriers  
for our cafeteria tables  
and receptionist areas.

## FINANCE

The pandemic impacted all aspects of the district's operations: a new online virtual school option, increased cleaning supplies and PPE, increased staffing costs for subs and contact tracing, and revenue losses.



As the state has dealt with this crisis, they made choices to cut public education - cutting over **\$3 million** in funding to Mason City Schools over the next two years.

Despite a total negative financial impact of over **\$4.5 million** from COVID, Mason City Schools is committed to making the 2020 operating levy last at least five years.

