



**Michigan City
Area Schools**
Opportunity ★ Excellence ★ Pride



CONNECTIONS

A report to the community from
Michigan City Area Schools

Summer 2025

Mission

We are a diverse community of families, students, and staff who take pride in our schools, contribute positively to society, and prepare students for lifelong success.

Vision

Michigan City Area Schools: High expectations. Supported students. Innovative paths to success.

Our Pillars are:



Clear and
Consistent
Communication



Educating the
Whole Child



Meeting the
Needs of Diverse
Learners

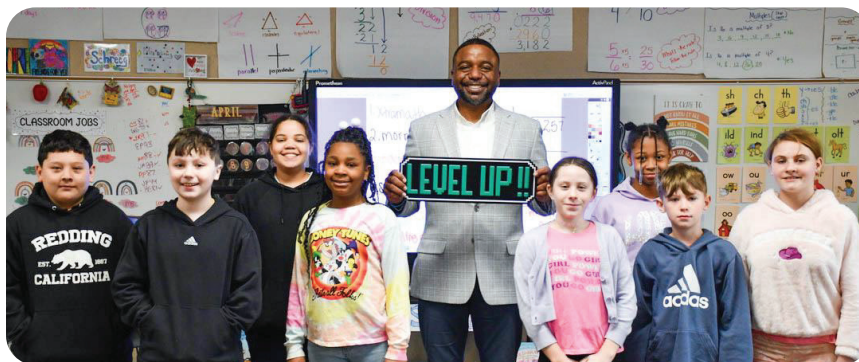


Culture and
Environment



Student
Voice and
Opportunities

A Message from the Superintendent



Greetings, Michigan City!

Our theme this school year has been “Level Up!” All across our district, staff and students truly took our work to the next level during the 2024-25 school year.

This edition of **Connections** will spotlight just a few of the initiatives underway that are aligned with our Strategic Plan. I am so inspired by the many staff, students, parents, and community members who are working together to bring our collective vision to fruition.

I am especially grateful for the insight of our students throughout this process. Student Voice is an integral pillar of our Strategic Plan, and students have been working alongside us every step of the way. Great things happen when students are heard and empowered to take on leadership roles!

I hope you'll visit our new website at educateMC.net to learn more.

I also hope you will stay engaged with us next school year. I welcome you to subscribe to my monthly updates at the link on this page, and follow Michigan City Area Schools (and your neighborhood school) on our social media outlets. And be sure to check out our new Ambassador Program!

Special thanks to the Michigan City Chamber for its support in bringing this publication to you and helping us highlight the many positives taking place in our schools.

Go Wolves!

Dr. Wendel McCollum
Superintendent

Sign up here for
Dr. McCollum's
monthly updates.



“Alexandra worked with students one-on-one, supported lessons, and helped make our mornings run smoothly by helping to supervise breakfast in the cafeteria,” says Little Wolves Director Holly Martinez.

This school year, Little Wolves expanded its program to serve both 3- and 4-year-olds. It also earned the highest rating for Indiana's Pre-K providers, Paths to Quality Level 4. The center's curriculum incorporates play-based activities, field trips, and more and is aligned with Indiana Early Learning Standards.

Little Wolves is now enrolling for fall! CCDF and “On My Way” PreK vouchers are accepted. For more information, call (219) 873-2035 or visit littlewolveslearning.com.

On the cover

Michigan City High School senior Alexandra Reed, a Student of the Year in the Education Professions program at the LaPorte County Career and Technical Education Center, served as a student intern in classrooms at the Little Wolves Early Learning Center this year.

Student POV



Throughout this issue, we are featuring a Student Point of View relating to each pillar of our Strategic Plan. Watch for this icon to get a student's insight!

Pillar Spotlight: Clear & Consistent Communication



We will ensure that information is easily accessible and that all members of our community feel that their voices matter.

Student POV

"MCHS TV started when I was a freshman. Every day, we broadcast news, announcements, and features. We do this segment called Tea Time where we interview students and give them a voice, a chance to express themselves. It gives our building personality, which is really important. I've always known I was a technical person, but this solidified that I wanted to have a career in this field. Next fall, I'm going to be majoring in Film and Video at Purdue."

Carlos Serrano, Technical Editor, MCHS TV

Go Behind the Scenes!

Ever wonder what's involved in operating a school district of close to 5,000 students and 900 employees at 21 different facilities?

"We want Ambassadors to ask questions, give feedback, and have fun. We hope they will share what they are learning with others."

Michigan City Area Schools' new Ambassador Program may be for you!

The seven-session program will give participants a behind-the-scenes look at district services, finances, operations, curriculum, instruction, and more. Participants will meet once a month on a Thursday morning to hear from administrators, staff, and students – and to take part in hands-on activities.

The program will be limited to 20 participants, and preference will be given to those who live within the MCAS attendance boundary. Ambassadors do not need to have children attending our schools.

Visit educateMC.net/ambassador to learn more and apply by August 1. (Hurry! We expect this program to fill up quickly.)



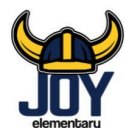
MCAS staff, students, and community members met in March to design session content for the new Ambassador Program.

We are Family

The Coolspring Wildcat, Marsh Tiger, and other MCAS mascots are looking extra spiffy these days!

Last fall, all eight elementary mascots were redesigned, preserving their unique identities but giving them a similar look. (Michigan City High School's wolf was updated in 2019 and is now used by Barker and Krueger Middle Schools, too.)

Before initiating the project, MCAS surveyed students, staff, and community members to give them an opportunity to weigh in on the change. The vote was clear: Keep the unique elementary mascots, but please give them a makeover. Done!



New Look, New Features for MCAS on the Web



In November, MCAS unveiled a new website!

The new platform features a new design that provides easy access to news, events, and resources.

“Because over 50 percent of visitors use a mobile device, we built the site with that in mind,” says MCAS Director of Communications Megan Daurer. “Users can quickly navigate anywhere on phones, computers, or other devices.”

Daurer notes that mobile users should tap the “hamburger icon” (3 lines) in the upper right corner to see the full navigation menu and quick links.

Some new features include:

- **Parent Quick Links**, a collection of helpful links that families turn to most often. (Check out the **Resources** menu selection on the district page for popular shortcuts, too!)
- An improved **Search** function. Look for the search icon at the top of each page.
- A new **“Join Our Team”** section for those interested in working for MCAS.
- Better **Translation** options. Visitors wishing to view the site in Spanish, Arabic, or other languages can click an icon at the bottom of each page.



VISIT OUR New Website!



Michigan City Area Schools is ‘Leveling Up’ with a new and improved website.

[EducateMC.net](https://educateMC.net)

Each MCAS school also has its own website, which can be accessed by clicking on the **“Schools”** button at the top of the district home page.

Check it all out at [educateMC.net!](https://educateMC.net)



Coming this Fall: A Virtual Hub for Families



MCAS will soon provide families with a new one-stop shop to access important information about their child’s education.

The system, called MyPowerHub, allows families to check grades and attendance, monitor assignments, submit absence information, and communicate with teachers.

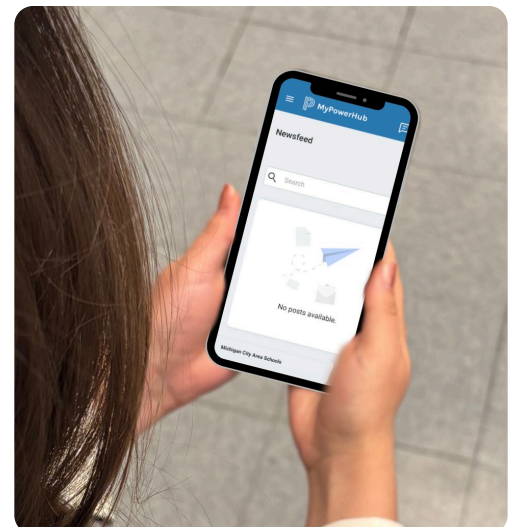
According to MCAS Director of Technology Kevin McGuire, the new tool will feel familiar to users of PowerSchool, MCAS’s student information system.

“Families had been using the PowerSchool parent portal to check grades and attendance, but there was not a two-way communication component to the system,”

he says. “As our pillar team reflected on feedback from our families and staff during the Strategic Planning process, we found this was a very important missing piece.”

Parents will use existing credentials to log in to MyPowerHub. They will see new dashboard elements, presented as “power tiles,” that allow them to view student data, schedules, attendance, messaging, and more. Unlike the previous interface, MyPowerHub is optimized for mobile users, also a key feature for families.

MyPowerHub was piloted by Krueger and Barker Middle School families in the spring, and it will be in place for all schools district-wide in the fall.



Pillar Spotlight: Educating the Whole Child



We will provide students with resources that will support their emotional and mental health needs, including increased social-emotional resources.

Student POV

"Our student council wanted to motivate students for ILEARN, so we designed paper pencils and wrote encouraging messages on them. Kids could send them to others during homeroom, and we also posted some around the school. We also held a huge food drive, planted flowers out front, and did a trash cleanup on the playground. It's been ingrained into me by my family to help others, and it's super important to get students involved because it promotes personal growth."

Mannisha Singh, Student Government Co-President, Springfield Elementary School

Making Kindness Fun

This year, elementary and middle schools district-wide continued the practice of daily **Crew** – supportive sessions that encourage students to build relationships and help one another succeed academically and socially.

Some schools, like Coolspring Elementary, take Crew to the next level with a monthly school-wide Crew assembly. Coolspring students and staff K-6 meet in the gym, sitting in a large rectangle facing one another. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, they discuss the MCAS Habits of Character, take part in an activity, review norms, and recite the Coolspring Pledge. Activities vary, but they always center on fun – such as a throw-a-pie opportunity in February (pictured here) that doubled as a fundraiser for the school's Cat Cash behavior store.



"Staff and students look forward to this every month," says Coolspring Principal Kim Palmer. "It has impacted our entire school climate."

Schools also recognize students who demonstrate the seven MCAS **Habits of Character** through ongoing programs. At Knapp, children are awarded a bracelet with a Habit of Character on it, such as flexibility. Other schools recognize students of the month who have exemplified the Habits.

Each spring, the Habits of Character, Crew, and academics converge during Better World Week. Students lead service projects that tie into curricular units, demonstrating how what they are learning can have a positive impact on their community.



MCAS Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Specialist Stephanie Rozinski notes that community and relationships are essential components of another key concept:

Restorative Practices. Teachers districtwide have participated in professional development sessions centering on this technique, learning new strategies to address student behaviors.

"Restorative Practices shifts the focus from blaming and shaming to prevention," she says. "Our goal is to foster healthy relationships, proactively teach social skills, and provide students with opportunities to repair harm when misbehavior does occur," she says. "We're identifying the root issues so they can be addressed and we can focus on learning."

A Check-Up for Emotional Health

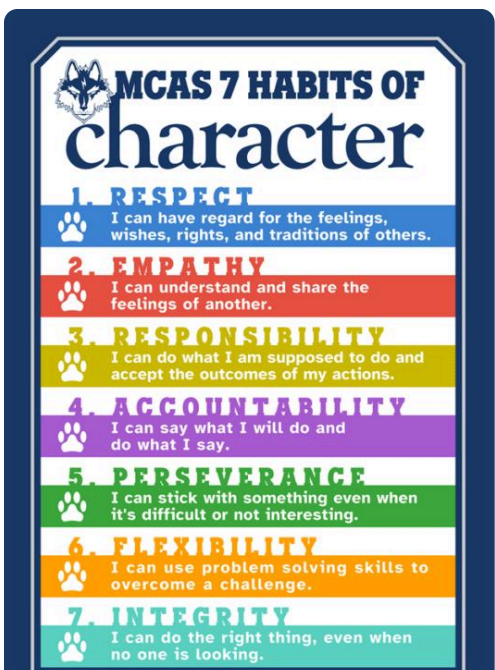
Schools have many ways to identify students' academic needs. But to educate the whole child, data is needed about their social-emotional needs, as well.

"One of the things our Pillar team heard from students is that they wanted a way to check in and to reach out when they needed someone to talk to," says Kristi Davis, MCAS K-12 Coordinator for Counseling and Student Supports. "The students suggested the idea of an app."



Enter "Well Cheq." Three schools (Coolspring, Springfield, and Krueger) piloted the app this spring. Students access it on their school-issued Chromebooks and other devices, checking in by clicking on emoticons to rate their experiences and ask for support from teachers, counselors, and administrators.

Well Cheq allows staff to track students' check-in data over time to look for trends and identify areas of need. The app will roll out district-wide in the fall, complementing other tools such as Crew meetings, surveys, and social-emotional skills lessons.



Michigan City Area Schools
www.EducateMC.net

Pillar Spotlight: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners



We will provide all students with the tools, resources, and support they need to experience success in school, meet their goals, and reach their full potential.

Student POV



"Every day we have WIN, which stands for What I Need. Teachers put you in groups for half an hour for what you need help with, like math, writing, or reading passages. I learned you can read questions first and circle key words, and then when you read the story, the answers will stick out in your mind. We also did a fraction boot camp where we cut up shapes and then partitioned them again. Some kids struggle on stuff, so when they practice, it helps them do better. Even kids who aren't behind can always get better at things."

Luca Palmieri, Third Grade, Edgewood Elementary School

City Reads!

It was an all-hands-on-deck focus on reading across MCAS this year as students geared up to take Indiana's IREAD exam. Due to changes in state law, all second- and third-graders now take the online test and must pass by the end of third grade.

"Literacy is the foundation of all learning," says MCAS Associate Superintendent Cathy Bildhauser. "Teachers work with students to master phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. But we know that if children also read at least 10 minutes a day at home, it will make a huge difference."

In January, MCAS launched a campaign called "City Reads," to stress the importance of reading.

Krueger and **Barker** middle schoolers made videos recommending books that were their favorites in elementary school.

The high school's **MCHS TV** crew wrote and recorded a pro-reading puppet show in both English and Spanish. The MCHS mascot, Wolfie, even starred in a reel for social media.

And of course, the elementary schools were all in.

At **Knapp**, MCAS Superintendent Dr. Wendel McCollum stopped by to pass out free books and stuffed-animal "book buddies." All **Lake Hills** students participated in a "book blast," earning books for their home library. **Joy** students dressed as their favorite book character during a reading Spirit Week and visited the Michiana Humane Society to read to cats. And at **Marsh**, a reading incentive payoff was "Marsh Madness" – a student vs staff basketball game. (The students brought the energy, but the staff held on for a 4-point victory.)

Read on, City!



Supporting Success for All

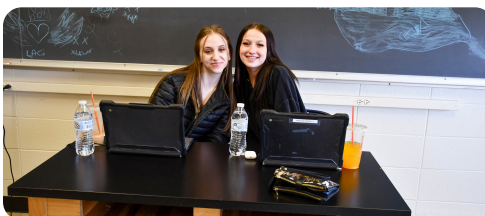
MCAS offers several Non-Traditional Programs, alternative learning options for students who may thrive outside of a traditional school setting. These include Pathways, SCALE, and Restoration, each designed to support student success in unique ways.

The largest of these programs, Pathways, serves approximately 90 juniors and seniors each year, providing extra support and flexibility to help them stay on track.

"Our staff understands the social and emotional needs of teens who have faced personal and academic challenges," says Dr. Coni Taslim, Interim Director of Non-Traditional Programs. "They are committed to building relationships with students and seeing them through to graduation!"

The Pathways program is based at the A. K. Smith Career Center. However, students are enrolled at Michigan City High School and may participate in all social and extracurricular activities.

Pathways students use an online learning platform, Edmentum, in classes led by certified teachers with expertise in non-traditional education. Life skills such as critical thinking, time management, and resilience are emphasized.



Visit [EducateMC.net/Non-Traditional-Programs](https://www.educatemc.net/Non-Traditional-Programs) or follow MCAS Non-Traditional Programs on Facebook to learn more!



Outside the Box Opportunities

“Meeting the needs of diverse learners” means providing diverse opportunities to learn!

“Our students now have 15 different pathways they can pursue to fulfill their graduation requirements,” says Dr. Mohamed Mroueh, MCHS principal. “We’re offering hundreds of courses, in both core subjects and electives.”

This fall, a new Advanced Placement (AP) research course and several Business and CTE classes will enter the mix, with added options such as Networking and Cybersecurity, and Global Environmental Change.

Opportunities are also starting earlier. Middle schools will now offer Spanish, along with several courses for high school credit, including Biology, a Pre-AP class, Algebra 1, and Computer Science.

And it’s not just course selections that are providing students with opportunities to learn and show mastery.

- Through a partnership with the Purdue Extension, **Lake Hills** STEM Magnet School students participated in weekly “invention” lessons. Eight students attended the Invention Convention this spring to showcase their creations, and three advanced to nationals in June at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.

- At **Pine** Elementary, the district’s magnet school for the Arts, third graders collaborated with author Cheryl Chapman to illustrate her book, *Turn it Around: The Life and Words of Naomi Anderson*. Their work was featured during a student showcase performance that also involved dance tableaus depicting the life of the famous Michigan City suffragist.

- Barker, Krueger, Knapp, and MCHS** now have makerspaces – areas that provide students with hands-on materials to experiment, build, and invent. Items such as 3D printers, laser cutters, and art supplies encourage creativity. (All MCAS buildings will be receiving similar equipment this summer!)
- Middle school students in STEM classes at **Barker** use a program called TinkerCAD to design 3D-printed items. Some are also learning to fly drones – and their teacher, Amy Hamann, took part in a flyover by the Michigan City Civil Air Patrol in March. Meanwhile, at Krueger, students dress in period costumes and lead area fourth graders on Living History field trips.

- After-school robotics clubs, sponsored by Safe Harbor, are in place at several MCAS schools. A Lego robotics team from **Joy** advanced to the Semi-State level this year, and an electric vehicle built by the **MCHS** Robo Blitz team finished second in the EV Grand Prix at Purdue University!



College & Careers Ahead!

It’s never too early to polish your interview skills!

At Barker Middle School, students can sign up for a mock interview with the principal and counselor, designed to help them practice speaking with adults about their current skills and future goals.

To encourage participation, students receive the questions in advance, and they can use notes or present slides.

“We give them a padfolio that they can keep,” says Barker Principal Lucas Snyder. “I still use the padfolio I was given when I did a mock interview in college. I know that helped me in future interviews, and we’re trying to do the same thing here.”

The mock interview is one element of the school’s “Barker Certificate” program. Students earning the top-level certification must also have 95% attendance and participate in STEM challenges, student-led conferences, and community service.

This year, all MCAS schools held events for College Go Week, including workshops on scholarships, resume building, and apprenticeships. High school counselors took many students on field trips to colleges, and middle schools attended the Health Careers Expo in LaPorte.



DID YOU KNOW?

MCAS held a districtwide “Find Your Inspiration” College & Career Expo for grades 8, 9, and 10 in November... and for grades 6 & 7 in March. Students connected with over 40 businesses, colleges, and industry partners at the interactive events! MCHS also hosted the South Shore College Fair in October, where more than 50 higher education institutions met with students.



Pillar Spotlight: Culture and Environment



We will work to ensure that Michigan City Area Schools is a community that all members appreciate, celebrate, and are proud to be a part of.

Student POV



"Two of my close friends and I saw a bunch of videos of girls playing flag football, and we really wanted to try it. We asked to start a team because we knew a lot of girls would be interested. I am so glad we did, because it was super fun! It was a great way to stay in shape, and I learned so many skills, including how to communicate better with my teammates on and off the field. Football has always been a sport only boys get to do, and I'm proud our high school is offering this opportunity for a new generation of girls."

Minayah Cochran, MCHS Flag Football Co-Captain

A Focus on Facilities

Ever since Isaac Elston donated land for Michigan City's first one-room school in 1834, our public school buildings have been at the heart of our community.

Many current MCAS facilities have been in use since the 1960s, with some dating as far back as the 1930s. Over the years, maintenance and renovations have ensured that buildings meet educational needs. But feedback from Strategic Planning surveys, focus groups, and town halls clearly showed it's time for a closer look at the district's facilities.

This year, MCAS partnered with the Skillman Group, a construction management firm, and architects from Fanning Howey to undertake a facilities assessment. The project involved walk-through inspections at every building and discussions with administrators, staff, and students.

The team met with MCAS Student Advisory Council members to get their input. A top takeaway: Students want flexible spaces that foster "active, hands-on, minds-on" learning and relationships with teachers. "They want to take pride in their learning environment," says Nick Van Wieren of Fanning Howey.

The resulting 385-page Facility Master Plan, which includes a condition assessment and cost estimates, was presented to the MCAS School Board in March. (You can read it at educateMC.net/strategic-plan.) Work is now underway to align costs with budget and financial projections. Staff, student, and community surveys are also being developed to help prioritize improvements, and Culture and Environment Pillar team members are visiting other school districts to see their renovation projects firsthand.

A few projects, however, are being addressed immediately, thanks to a tax-neutral \$5.1 million bond secured this year.

Those include replacing the roof at Niemann, caulking and lighting upgrades at Ames Field, a new soccer and track complex at Michigan City High School, and painting and other maintenance in the Wolves Den gymnasium.



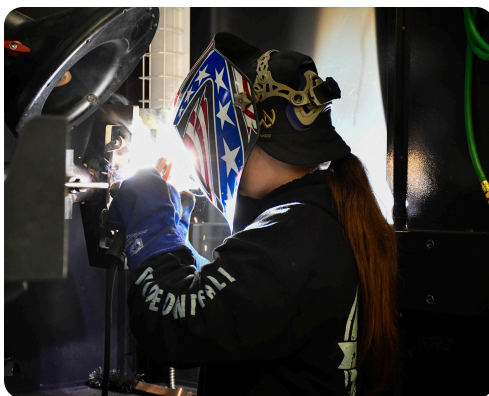
A New Home for Hands-On Learning

LaPorte County Career and Technical Education celebrated a new home for seven of its programs this year: the LPCCTE South Campus.

In August, classes for Criminal Justice, Education Professions, and Health Careers began meeting at the 1001 E US HWY 20 location, which also houses the Little Wolves Early Learning Center. By January, Automotive, Construction, Precision Machining, and Welding classes had moved in, as well.

"We're thrilled with this expansion," says Dr. David Notary, LPCCTE Interim Director. "The new lab spaces and equipment are giving our students real-world experiences similar to what they will find in the workplace."

Additional CTE programs in Culinary, Cosmetology, Energy, EMT, and Fire Science are also still going strong at the A. K. Smith building, 817 Lafayette Street. And in August, a new CTE program – Smart Manufacturing – will be offered.



DID YOU KNOW?

The LPCCTE Culinary Program tied for Best in Show at the Dig the Dunes Mac and Cheese Fest in September!

Breaking News!



The LPCCTE South Campus will be named the "Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins Education Center" in honor of our former Superintendent. Watch for more details about a dedication, coming soon!

Big Success in a New Arena: Esports



History was made at Michigan City High School this year, as senior Katelyn Ast became the school's first Esports commitment. She will attend Manchester University in the Fall, where she will study Art Education with a minor in Esports management.

Ast is a captain of the MCHS Esports team, which competes against other schools in popular console games like Rocket League, Super Smash Bros, Overwatch, and Chess.

The team secured impressive victories this season, and Wolves senior Carlos Serrano finished second at the Indiana Esports Finals.

"It's amazing to be part of this moment," Katelyn says. "Growing up, I never thought Esports could lead to an opportunity like this. To be recruited by a top-ranked team like Manchester is unbelievable."

City Pride Shines on Heritage Night

Michigan City brought some Red Devil magic to the Wolves Den in January on "Heritage Night", when players wore throwback t-shirts during warmups for a packed girls-boys doubleheader against rival LaPorte.

Heritage Night is a new tradition for the Wolves, who honored Rogers Raiders 1984 championship teams and Mr. Basketball alums Delray Brooks and Dan Palombizio last year.

This year, they spotlighted sectional-winning teams of the early 1990s and 1992 Elston graduate Megan Boguslawski, who was inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in April. Boguslawski helped lead the Red Devils to three consecutive Sectional Championships and finished her high school career with 1,088 points and just shy of 1,000 rebounds.

The icing on the cake: The Wolves boys and girls teams both came away with decisive wins on Heritage Night!



Photo by Kevin Harmon

Flipping for Bus Safety

MCAS Transportation staff took part in an unusual drill last August when they had an opportunity to navigate through a bus that had been rolled over on its side in front of the Service Building on Woodland Avenue.

Drivers and monitors practiced opening safety hatches at the top of the bus, cutting seatbelts, and "rescuing" crash dummies through the rear exit door. Cloverleaf Garage, Michigan City Firefighters, and EMTs were on hand to assist with the drill, and staff from the New Prairie Transportation Department came to observe the action. (You can experience it firsthand at tinyurl.com/MCASdrill.)

Thank you to our Transportation staff for making student safety top priority!



DID YOU KNOW?

Krueger Middle School now honors its past through an Alumni of the Year Award. This spring, the honorees included Sarah McFarland-Hendricks (a member of the 1996 state volleyball championship team) and former Indiana Representative Scott Pelath. Last year's inaugural honorees were Kevin Harmon and Donnie Walker.

Congrats to our Teachers & Employees of the Year!



Elizabeth Schreag
Elementary Teacher
of the Year



Sue Ard
Secondary Teacher
of the Year



Kathy Schroll
Support Staff
Employee of the Year



Jacob Miller
Transportation
Employee of the Year



Doriann Wiegand
Food Service
Employee of the Year

We are grateful to Comcast and the Michigan City Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring this recognition program, which is now in its second year. Visit educateMC.net/TOY_EOY to learn more about each of our outstanding winners.

Pillar Spotlight: Student Voice and Opportunities



We will ensure that students' voices and choices are reflected in decisions made throughout the district by committing to getting their feedback on a consistent basis.

Student POV



"Our principal sent out a survey asking students to vote for clubs they would like to have. A lot of us voted for a Cooking Club, because who doesn't want to learn to cook and eat food? We learned about safety in the kitchen and made delicious recipes like brownies and calzones. Sometimes it doesn't feel like we have a voice, but this has given kids an opportunity to branch out and make friends in areas they enjoy."

Ireland White, 8th Grader, Barker Middle School

Students Organize Summits for Leadership

In November, MCHS Student Government hosted its first-ever Student Leadership Summit, a Saturday event designed by students, for students.

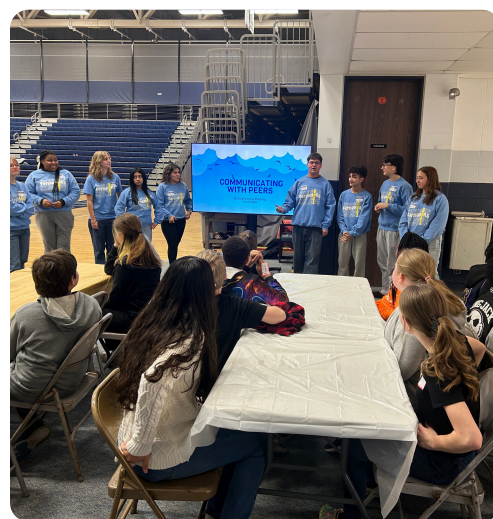
The summit featured a panel discussion and interactive breakout sessions facilitated by local leaders, offering a unique opportunity for young leaders to connect, learn, and grow.

Students from MCAS middle and high schools, along with their peers from neighboring districts, attended the summit. Many of the participants are involved in student government or hold leadership roles in their schools and the community.

Breakout sessions were led by Indiana Senator Rodney Pol, LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody, Michigan City Police Chief Marty Corley, and Monica Komasinski, Executive Director of Leadership LaPorte County.

This spring, MCHS students took it to the next level, hosting a Rising Wolves Leadership Summit for 100 MCAS elementary and middle school students.

"We took what we learned at our fall summit, implemented those lessons, and developed presentations for the younger students," says MCHS Student Government President Bailey Chavis. "The goal was to develop leadership skills for the next generation. We had great discussions!"



Much Ado About Music

Participation in MCAS music programs is on the rise!

Last year, MCHS introduced a "Music Pathway" — one of two Fine Arts tracks available to students (the other being an Art Pathway). In addition to multiple years of choir or band, students in the Music Pathway take a business class, complete a teaching internship, and submit a Music Portfolio to the state as a capstone project.

One of the most popular new electives is Piano/Keyboarding.

"We had 30 students take Piano this year," says MCHS Choir Director Michelle Howisen, who teaches the class in the school's new piano lab. "They see people playing on social media and locally, and

they want to emulate them. We're able to teach them the proper way to play and how to read music."

Another exciting addition is an after-school jazz band for middle schoolers. The Wolfpack Junior Jazz Band is led by Krueger Band Director Katharine Martin, with assistance from Barker Band Director Jacen Smith.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Michigan City Area Schools Music Department has a new Facebook page! Follow them @MCASMusic.

The group included 28 students from both middle schools; they performed at the annual One City, One Sound holiday concert and alongside the high school's jazz ensemble in a spring concert at Michigan City's historic Barker Hall.

This year, elementary and middle school vocalists from Pine, Lake Hills, Joy, Barker, and Krueger participated in the Circle the State with Song choral festival. A record number of MCAS music students (89) also took part in the ISSMA District Solo and Ensemble contest, with 17 MCHS band and choir students advancing to the State level. The big finish: MCAS music received the prestigious "All-Music Award" from ISSMA for scoring Gold ratings in every category.

Can you dig it? Kids Choosing What they Love

Students spoke, and MCAS listened!

In response to requests from students on surveys and in focus groups, the district enhanced extracurricular options across all grade levels this school year. All schools now have the option to choose up to five extracurricular activities based on student voice; sponsors receive a stipend.



The result? A wide range of new options: Dance/Cheer Club, STEAM Club, Bell Ringer (Handbell) Club, Friendship Bracelet Club, Cooking Club, eSports Club, Art Club, Journalism Club, Anime Club, Book Club, and Board Game Club – to name a few!

“Students are taking ownership of their school culture by choosing which clubs to add and making sure that extracurriculars align with their interests and passions,” says MCHS sophomore Donavin Kappel, who is a member of the Student Leadership Advisory Council.

Over the past few years, MCAS has also increased athletic offerings for students at all levels.

At the high school, teams were recently added for Boys' Volleyball, Girls' Wrestling, and Girls' Flag Football a team sponsored by the Indianapolis Colts.

Volleyball was added at all elementary buildings, and MCAS middle school teams will be scheduling more games against Duneland Athletic Conference schools to better prepare them for the competition in high school.

New summer offerings for students in sports and the arts are also being added in partnership with Michigan City Parks and Recreation.

Vision for an Accessible Future

Elementary students in the Safe Harbor after-school program were challenged to think about their community in a new way when they took part in a LEGO “Build the Change” project in March.

Working in teams of both younger and older students, they used Legos and other materials to imagine and build accessible public spaces that work for everyone.



The ideas in their model communities were impressive: ramps, lifts, aids for the hearing impaired, braille signage, sensory-friendly spaces, and even dog parks for service animals. The dioramas were displayed for parents, school staff, and community stakeholders at the five schools served by Safe Harbor, including Coolspring, Joy, Knapp, Edgewood, and Lake Hills.

After the project ended, the students were excited to play with their Lego towns. “They expressed their desire to continue learning what they can do to promote inclusiveness in their real-life communities,” said Safe Harbor Coordinator Brenda Johnstone.



DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to funding from the Health Foundation of La Porte, accessible playground equipment has been installed at Joy, Knapp, and Pine Elementary Schools. These spaces, along with playgrounds at Marsh, Edgewood, Springfield, and Little Wolves, feature wheelchair-friendly play surfaces that can be used by all children together.

Growing Their Voice

What started last year with just two student reps on the Strategic Plan steering team has blossomed into something much bigger – a full group of 17 MCHS students serving on a Strategic Plan Student Leadership Advisory Council.

The group kicked things off in the fall with training focused on leadership and communication skills. After a listening session with all of the district pillar leads, the students jumped right in, working with pillar teams to share ideas and give feedback.



They met with the Culture and Environment Pillar to discuss school facilities and helped the Clear and Consistent Communications Pillar design a new Ambassador Program.

They also attended two districtwide Strategic Planning meetings, making sure student voices were heard.

“These students are driving real change,” says Monica Handley, MCAS Assistant Special Education Director and Student Voice Pillar Lead. “Their insights are helping us create a stronger, more student-centered learning environment and are shaping the future of our schools.”

Michigan City Area Schools
408 S. Carroll Avenue
Michigan City, IN 46360

EducateMC.net
(219) 873-2000

DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES

CLASS OF 2025



TREVOR ACKERMAN	KATELYN AST	SINIYAH BURDINE	BAILEY CHAVIS	KEEGAN COWGILL	NATHAN GROSZEK	GABRIEL HEICHEL	MESHAK LUNCSFORD
KAITLYN MILLIGAN	EMILIO MUNOZ	NOLAN PAINTER	HANNAH PARKER	KHUSHI PATEL	NICHOLAS SALCIDO	CARLOS SERRANO	CHRISTIAN SHANKS
MADELYN SHINN	SARAH SUTOR	AVA TAYLOR	NATALIE WHITE	NAOMI WILLIAMS	AAVERIE WINGARD	JOHN ZAKNOUN	

MICHIGAN CITY HIGH SCHOOL

103
Academic and
Technical Honors
Diplomas



3,610
College Credits Earned

 **370**
Advanced Placement
(AP) classes completed

23 Number of
Graduates
with 4.1 or
Higher GPA

10 Number of
Graduates
with 4.3 or
Higher GPA

60 Early
College
Program
Graduates

24 Graduates
Earning the
Indiana
College Core



1,949+

Hours of
Community
Service

10
All-DAC
Athletes



12
Students
Entering the U.S.
Armed Forces

26 All-DAC
Academic
All-Conference



17
Athletes Signed
to Play on
College Teams