

FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN...

The District



FMS Success Wows NJ Department of Ed

In early 2018, Superintendent Mackey Pendergrast received a phone call from the NJ Department of Education: newly appointed Education Commissioner Dr. Lamont Repollet had learned of the tremendous growth in student achievement at Frelinghuysen Middle School over the past several years and wanted to see for himself what lay behind this recent success story. Recalls Pendergrast, "I was surprised by the Commissioner's request for a visit—not by the request itself, of course, but by how quickly news of the middle school's exceptional progress had reached the highest levels of the State. I'm really proud of our dedicated teachers and administrators, who have worked so hard to propel FMS forward, especially in reading, writing, and math."

Comparative data from the State's PARCC assessment shows how substantially our middle schoolers are ascending, outpacing the NJ average in every grade level. Mr. Pendergrast said that what first caught the Commissioner's eye was the fact that this marked growth has occurred consistently across all demographic groups at Frelinghuysen. [more on page 3>](#)



Growing Great Innovators with Makey Makey Invention Kits

We are always told, "Don't play with your food!" But what if you could make a banana piano, a marshmallow drum-kit, or even a gummy bear keyboard? *Makey Makey Invention Kits* allow students' imagination to grow beyond the conventional and all K-5 students have them thanks to a generous grant from the Morris Educational Foundation. The kits arrived in all K-5 media and science specials this fall. Students use any conductible material, not just food, to create touchpads that connect to the Internet to perform different tasks.

In November, Hillcrest School's The H.I.L.L. (Hillcrest Imagination Learning Lab) played host to a *Makey Makey* Invention Literacy Certification Workshop. [more on page 2>](#)



MSD Administrators Forge Valuable Connections at Elite Universities

Morristown High School and its celebrated STEM Academy are now on the radar screens of several prestigious midwestern universities, thanks to Jennifer Giordano, Director of Guidance, and Brian Young, District Supervisor of STEM Education. In July, Giordano and Young toured the campuses of Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, bringing with them word of one of New Jersey's fastest-accelerating public school districts. They linked up with admissions officers and faculty in order to advance a three-fold objective: profile the unique pathways in STEM offered at Morristown High School, learn more about the undergraduate programs and facilities at these universities' schools of Engineering, and explore collaborative opportunities between our respective student and faculty cohorts. [more on page 3>](#)



Morris Educational Foundation Scholarships Open Doors for Students

Each year, the Morris Educational Foundation (MEF) awards graduating Morristown High School seniors with scholarships. Last year was no exception, as the MEF awarded the highest number of scholarships, thirteen, with the most substantial amount of funding, \$149,000, to graduating Morristown High School seniors. Karla Yaneth Escobar and Angelina Hope Bennett, pictured, were the inaugural winners of the Judy and Eliot Steinberg Scholarship, a \$1 million pledged donation to fully fund students' college education.

Scholarships are awarded to eligible MHS seniors through an application process that begins in March and ends in June at Senior Awards Night. We congratulate the following outstanding students who received our 2017-18 scholarship awards. [more on page 3>](#)



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MEF EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Let the Music Play! Student Musicians Stay Active at the Summer Music Academy, a District Gem

Q: Where can music students get a school year's worth of private lessons packaged into a dynamic four-week summer program, all within a few miles of home?

A: At the Morris School District's Summer Music Academy!

Held at Frelinghuysen Middle School and run by the MSD Community School, the Summer Music Academy offers students who have completed grades 3-11 a chance to pick up a new instrument or venture into choral music, study music theory or jazz improvisation, and gain valuable performance experience in both large and small group ensembles. Program directors David Gallagher and Ariel Ocasio, band teachers at the middle school, lead a staff of specialists from diverse musical and cultural backgrounds with expertise in the areas of strings, winds, brass, percussion, voice, piano, and guitar. Two final shows for family and friends, the Chamber Recital and the Gala Concert, give student musicians different types of performance exposure in a supportive environment.

The program has grown significantly over the past several years, serving approximately 100 students this past summer, including seven Morristown High School music students selected as mentors to assist with instruction. Says Community School Director

Jennifer Adkins, "The Summer Music Academy serves as an excellent transition for students moving from elementary school to middle school, and middle to high school, helping to develop a true mastery of music."

According to Mr. Ocasio, the Summer Music Academy is an effective antidote to the infamous summer learning gap as it applies to music education. Daily instruction over the four-week session helps motivate students "to stay more active with their music study during the summer, when oftentimes the instruments barely see the light of day." Students are thus able to "return to their respective band/orchestra/choir in September two steps ahead rather than behind." Ocasio added that the range of course offerings and access to district resources like loaner instruments and sheet music "make the MSD Summer Music Academy a great alternative to many of the other area music camps."

Mr. Gallagher believes that "if the students were to seek this type of instruction privately, it would cost an exorbitant amount of money, which can be quite prohibitive ... The Summer Music Academy offers an affordable opportunity to receive instruction at an incredibly high level, and we are researching ways to make it even more inclusive so all interested students are able to participate."

with parents and other district constituents, and communicated important messages to multiple audiences with various informational needs. She will be sorely missed by all who had the good fortune to work with her." As the go-to community relations person for the district, Mary also worked closely with the Morris Education Foundation on a number of projects, including this newsletter.

Mary Donohoe has been instrumental in telling the story of the Morris School District over the years, and so we dedicate the current issue of *The District* to her, with our gratitude and best wishes.

District Bids Farewell to Long-time Staff Member Mary Donohoe

The Office of the Superintendent wishes to thank Mrs. Mary Donohoe for her many years of service to our district community. For twenty-five years, Mary was a dedicated member of the staff, working as an administrative assistant and point person for community relations. She collaborated with the Home School Associations, helping to build critical partnerships between parents and schools as well as with central office administrators, especially the superintendent. Recalls Superintendent Mackey Pendergrast, "Mary was absolutely indispensable during my transition to the Morris School District. She helped me understand the MSD community and its unique history, assisted in forging strong relationships

Makey Makey Invention Kits cont'd

Because the Morris School District is among the first in the county to use this technology, teachers from Roxbury and Florham Park joined our K-5 media and science specialists. Keith Rosso, Frelinghuysen Middle School's media specialist, also participated. This year, he is instructing middle schoolers in Project Lead the Way. This STEM course follows a nationally recognized curriculum.

The H.I.L.L. was funded by the MEF's \$5,000 Gratitude Grants, awarded to each of the 10 Morris School District schools in honor of the foundation's 25 years of service. The collaborative, creative learning space offers students project-based learning and enrichment opportunities featuring maker-space activities and flexible furniture. Learn more about the Morris Educational Foundation grants at morrisedfoundation.org.

Fall 2018 Sports Round-Up

The MHS Varsity teams had a strong fall season all around, with some big wins and personal bests. We are proud of our student-athletes for their dedication, perseverance, teamwork, and exemplary sportsmanship.

Boys Cross Country: 3rd place NJAC Championship, 3rd place county championship, 2nd place state sectionals. NJAC's Sportsmanship Winner, 2018.

Girls Cross Country: 7th place in sectionals at Garrett Mountain.



Field Hockey Sectional Champions 2018

Field Hockey: Sectional finals champs against Montclair, final score 3-2. 2nd place Morris County Tournament. Season record 12W-6L-2T.

Football: Made national news when senior newcomer Kevin Hasenbein scored much-celebrated touchdown against Delbarton. Defeated Columbia 33-0 in consolation game on 11/1.

"State of the Art": How a \$2.7M Renovation Transformed MHS Art & Design Studio



When school opened in September, visual arts students and teachers at Morristown High School stepped into a thoroughly transformed work environment. After two summers of renovations and upgrades, the historic 2.7-million-dollar overhaul of the Art & Design Studio had been finalized. During the first phase of the project, which began in the summer of 2017, the single large room for visual arts classes was divided into two separate classrooms, each with proper storage and equipment such as high-tech digital projectors, open shelving, and large bulletin boards. Floors, ceilings, cabinets, and air conditioning were also upgraded. Phase Two, undertaken this past summer, involved the construction of an entirely new classroom and new storage space to complete the refurbished art suite.

Teacher Elizabeth Ostendorp expressed her enthusiasm for the new space, which she feels has created a calming environment for students and teachers alike. She noted the many benefits of having a more organized, comfortable, and inspiring design.

Students at MHS can take a full sequence of courses that introduce them to a range of two- and three-dimensional mediums, including drawing, painting, printmaking, calligraphy, sculpture and ceramics, as well as graphic design and digital photography. An AP Studio Art course is also offered and may be taken more than once to allow students to pursue multiple concentrations. The Visual Arts Department sponsors a National Art Honor Society and connects students to volunteer activities that give them valuable experience outside the classroom.

2018 was undeniably a banner year for our art students. At the Morris County Teen Arts Festival in May, Morristown High School won first place overall, and three students won gold medals for their creations: Grace Prachthausen in Digital Photography, Gabby Meerwarth in Self-Portrait, and Daniela Cappy in Ceramics. Student work was also selected for the NJ State Teen Arts Traveling Show and for the highly competitive, juried art show at the Fresh Perspectives: Secondary School Art Exhibition. Additionally, the Visual Arts Department was awarded external grants from the Morris Educational Foundation and from the Morristown Muses.

Says Superintendent Mackey Pendergrast, "We have so much artistic talent at the high school, and we are able to offer our students a first-rate, professional program in the visual arts; they—and their teachers—deserve a first-rate, professional space in which to work their magic."

Boys Soccer: Entered first round of state playoffs against #1 seed Montclair.

Girls Soccer: Shut out North Bergen 8-0 in first round of state sectional tournament, moving on to quarterfinals against #2 seed Montclair. Season record 10W-6L-0T.

Girls Tennis: 2nd place county championship. Season record 8W-7L.

Volleyball: Shut out Parsippany Hills High School 2-0, both home and away.

At Discover MHS, 8th Graders Learn What Makes Morristown High the "Pot of Gold at the End of the Rainbow"



On the rainy night of October 11, hundreds of eighth grade students and their families packed the Morristown High School auditorium to hear Principal Mark Manning's introduction to *Discover MHS*, the high school's annual open house event. Mr. Manning gave an overview of the academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular offerings students will encounter beginning in ninth grade. He outlined several strengths of the high school that make the large, vibrant institution feel like a cohesive community in which students can find their place to belong: a personalized experience, multiple pathways and specialized programs, and state-of-the-art facilities and resources that promote inclusion and shared learning.

Manning acknowledges that some eighth graders may initially be apprehensive about their transition to the high school. But, he insists, "MHS administration, guidance counselors, faculty, and staff work extremely hard to ensure that all students who enter our doors receive whatever intellectual, social, and emotional support they may need. Our fundamental goal is to position each student for success and well-being throughout high school and beyond."

Following the introductory remarks of Mr. Manning and other speakers at *Discover MHS*, visitors were directed to different areas of the building to learn

more about the high school's core content areas, electives, and student activities.

Visitors were invited to tour the high-tech new wing of the high school and view presentations and student projects in Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Visual Arts, Woods Technology, Graphic Design, and Photographic Imaging. The Gymnasiums, Radio and Television Studio, and Culinary Arts classroom were open as well. Coaches and players from all athletic teams shared information about the high school's award-winning sports program. And current high school students and their advisors from a wide array of extracurricular clubs set up shop in the cafeteria, enthusiastically encouraging rising freshmen to become involved, whether it be in the Asian Club, Gay-Straight Alliance, Girls Who Code, Interact Club, Jazz Band, Latin Honor Society, Math Team, Melanin Minds, Musical Theatre, Rocketry, or other student-driven activity.

One parent marveled at the breadth of opportunities our students encounter in high school: "I moved my family to Morristown years ago in large part because of what the high school offered, knowing my children would one day be enrolled. Now that we've finally arrived at this point in their schooling, I'm actually in awe of all that's available to them—and in awe of the students we met tonight. This really is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow."

Connections at Elite Universities cont'd

Campus visitations and other outreach efforts are part of a comprehensive plan to augment the services that Dr. Giordano's Guidance & Counseling Department provides to each student at Morristown High School. Given the notoriously competitive college admissions environment, increasing the visibility of MHS throughout institutions of higher learning nationwide is a priority for Morris School District leaders, who remain focused on multiple ways of expanding students' access to college. Giordano explains, "As we grow and develop as a district, so does our need to keep admissions offices aware of our unique programming, dynamic student body, and commitment to progressive education."

The connections Dr. Giordano and Mr. Young made

FMS Success Wows NJ DOE cont'd

The NJ DOE ended up visiting the Morris School District twice last spring, each time touring FMS and seeing students and teachers in action. At the second visit, in June, Commissioner Repollet sought input from the larger Morris School District community. He first spoke with students during their classes, noting later how impressed he was by their academic engagement and their thoughtful remarks about education in the twenty-first century. Along with members of his DOE team, Dr. Repollet then led a group of District administrators, FMS administrators and teachers, and representatives from the Board of Education in an hour-long forum on the next generation of standardized assessments. The feedback the Commissioner

received from these Morris School District stakeholders contributed to the State's comprehensive review of PARCC and its subsequent revision of the test.

But the significant improvement in student achievement is only one part of the FMS story, says Principal Joe Ugliarolo; the middle school has greatly expanded its co- and extracurricular opportunities as well. "It's important to remember that our focus is on educating the whole child," he affirmed. "Offering students the space to learn and try new things outside the traditional academic classroom, to tap into their creative selves, to feel a sense of belonging with other inquisitive minds—that's what's happening at FMS."

National Merit Commended Scholars

The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships available to high school students who qualify based on their Preliminary SAT (PSAT) scores. Of the approximately 1.6 million entrants, about 2% receive Letters of Commendation for their outstanding academic promise.

We are pleased to acknowledge these Morristown High School seniors, who have been named National Merit Commended Students for the Class of 2019:

Anna Cliché
Sofia DelGaudio
Elyse Genrich
Abigail Gringeri

Loren Kennedy
Benjamin Liu
Alexandra Stephens
Ava Tan



National Merit Commended Scholars, Class of 2019

MHS by the Numbers:

- 1850 students
- 157 educators
- 280 courses
- 29 Advanced Placement courses
- 5 world languages
- 250 students in the STEM Academy
- 70 students in the Humanities Academy
- 83% of students in Class of 2018 attend college
- 2-time AP District Honor Roll designee within four years
- 72 Global Navigator Scholarship recipients
- 40 student clubs
- 28 varsity teams
- 3 athletic complexes
- #5 public high school in NJ (Star Ledger's Top 25 Sports Programs)
- #1 public high school in Morris County (Star Ledger's Top 25 Sports Programs)
- #1 overall at Morris County Teen Arts Festival
- #1 overall film, comedy, and sound design at NJ High School Film Challenge
- #1 AP Environmental Science Team in Morris County
- #1 AP Chemistry Team in Morris County
- #1 Costuming Achievement and Sound/Film Designer, Papermill Playhouse Rising Star Awards

2017-18 MEF Scholarship Winners

The Judy and Eliot Steinberg Scholarship
Angelina Hope Bennett, Rowan University
Karla Yaneth Escobar, Rutgers University

Wong Family Scholarship
Erin Fleck, Cornell University

The George and Michele Becker Scholarship
Yusty A. Sanchez, The Ohio State University

The Stephen B. Wiley Scholarship
Danielle Gai Simon, University of Maryland

The Spring Brook Foundation Scholarship
Catherine Amezcua Paredes, University of Bridgeport
Kyara Delana Rawlins, St. John's University

Dorothy F. Johnson Scholarship
Brendan Michael Pallatta, Villanova University

The James B. Galbraith, Jr. Scholarship
Sophie Olivia Thomsen, Connecticut College

The Javier Avelar Scholarship
Angela Gomez Diaz, County College of Morris

The John T. Cunningham Scholarship
Margaret Mustion, Muhlenberg College

The AT&T Pioneers Scholarship
Meghan Sinéad Crowley, The University of Maryland

The Mary Bentzlin Scholarship
Hannah Grace Vail, University of North Carolina

Over twenty-five years, the MEF has raised more than \$3 million in scholarship funding. Our offerings will continue to grow as we work with donors to provide more scholarship options. If you are interested in supporting or creating a scholarship, please connect with us at info@morrisedfoundation.org.

Congratulations to our AP Scholars!

The following Morristown High School seniors have been named AP Scholars for 2018:

AP Scholars
Sarah Anderson
Veeraj Arora
Trijit Banerjee
Teresa Capella
James Endahl
Elyse Genrich
Alexandra Hoeman
Abigail Kuelker
Daniel Lacy
Julia Landi
Benjamin Liu
Patrick Mullen
Sarah Penrice
Dylan Quattro
Kirsten Santiago
Connor Startzel
(current junior)
Alexandra Stephens

AP Scholars with Honor
Alexander Arenas
Abigail Gringeri
Lauren Hicks
Sean Oddoye
Andrew Rosenkilde
Ava Tan

AP Scholars with Distinction
Anna Cliché
Conor Lenahan

PROUD OF OUR PAST,

This is the original Morris School District building on Maple Avenue. The MSD was one of the first school districts in New Jersey to have a high school. The first floor of the school building housed the elementary students. The second floor housed the middle school students and the top floor was for the high school students.



MSD, 1869

Superintendent William LeRoy Haven's last year after being principal and superintendent since 1869—50 Years!



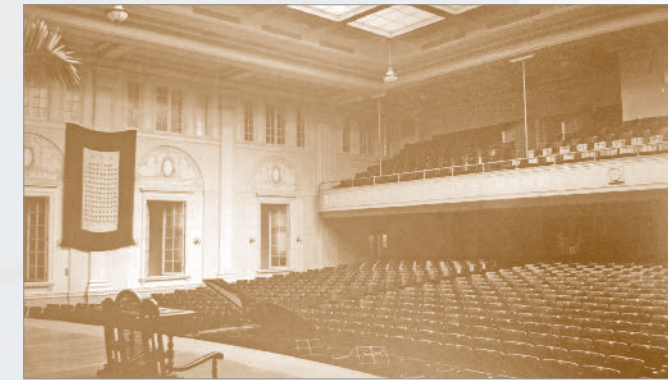
MHS Graduating Class of 1909

50 students in a class? The original Maple Avenue School became overcrowded and it was only lit by the open windows in the back of the classroom! A new facility was needed to serve the growing student population and changing times.



MHS, 1914

The auditorium in the new high school facility had elegance and charm. Notice the flag honoring all of the MHS graduates serving in WWI.



MHS Auditorium, 1919

The Morris School District has long been a model for successful integration. Our schools have always reflected the vibrancy of a diverse community—an ongoing source of pride for the district and the towns it serves.



MSD 3rd Grade Students, 1935

MHS Graduating Class of 1897



Estella Walker (upper right) was the first female African-American MHS graduate in 1897. Her brother, Clarence Walker, was the first African-American male student to graduate from MHS.

MHS Baseball Team, 1914



A tradition of excellence in athletics continues today. The 2017-18 MHS Varsity Baseball team took home the Morris County Championship.

MHS, 1918



From the 1917 MHS Yearbook, this is a drawing of the "New High School" that opened 100 years ago in 1918. Widely considered one of the most progressive facilities in Morris County, the school drew students from Morristown, Morris Township, Mendham, Harding, Morris Plains, and many other local communities.

MHS Field Hockey Team, 1930



Girls' sports came to MHS in the 1920s and is still thriving. The 2018 Varsity Field Hockey team won the State Sectional Championship in a gripping overtime game.

POISED FOR THE FUTURE

THE MORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT IS NOW!



A collaborative learning environment with state-of-the-art technology offers students exceptional preparation for their future college and career endeavors.

AN INVESTMENT IN STUDENT PARTICIPATION



Wide-ranging, inclusive co- and extracurricular opportunities help students find their place to belong.

PROGRESSIVE SPACES FOR PROGRESSIVE LEARNING



Innovative, relevant curriculum that leverages our future-ready STEM programs, media centers, maker spaces, learning labs, flexible seating classrooms, and arts facilities keeps our students engaged and inspired.

OUR ENDURING SPIRIT



Although there are many pathways through our schools, we are one community. In the Morris School District we take care of each other and we work hard to honor the values that have strengthened and edified our community over many generations.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN... #TheDistrict FALL 2018

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and The Morris Educational Foundation

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IN THE DISTRICT



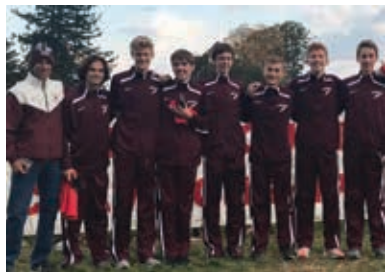
The MEF was the proud non-profit partner of the Morristown Festival of Books again this year. Through this joint commitment to literacy, \$10,000 was presented to the Morris School District for the purchase of books on social-emotional learning.

Pinned by [Morris Educational Foundation](#)



Morristown Onstage, the MEF's premier fundraising talent show, will be on Wednesday, February 27, 2019, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center. The area's best amateur talent will compete for a chance to win one of three prizes: \$1000 for 19 & older, \$1000 for 18 & younger, \$500 for viewers' choice. Don't miss your chance to support your schools while having a great time! Tickets go on sale in early February 2019.

Pinned by [Morris Educational Foundation](#)



Among several distinctions this season, the MHS Boys Cross Country Team received the 2018 NJAC Sportsmanship Award.

Pinned by [Morris School District](#)



The FMS Debate Team competed in a high school-style speech and debate tournament at Montville Township HS on November 2. Each of the four FMS pairs of debaters won at least one debate.

Pinned by [Morris School District](#)



All athletic events held on Memorial Field and the Main Gym are now available for online viewing thanks to the Pixelott camera system and a grant from the NFL. Viewers can watch the Morristown Field Hockey State Sectional Champs, pictured above, in their big win over Montclair.

Pinned by [Morris Educational Foundation](#)



Normandy Park students know it's "Cool to Be Kind" thanks to the MEF Gratitude Grant-funded yearlong theme. All students will read *Wonder* this year, including all English language learners.

Pinned by [Morris Educational Foundation](#)



Community volunteers work with FMS staff to tutor students in language arts and math. Every spring, they celebrate together with a breakfast. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact info@morrisedfoundation.org.

Pinned by [Morris Educational Foundation](#)



MHS presented the high school world premiere of *Prancer*, based on the 1989 holiday film. The cast and crew worked tirelessly to bring this magical production to life.

Pinned by [Morris School District](#)