

ALWAYS INNOVATING.

HATBORO-HORSHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT



hatboro-horsham.org



DEAR HATBORO-HORSHAM COMMUNITY,

If you look in the dictionary under the word "innovate," you will discover a definition of what goes on in our classrooms every day. Whether it is transforming the way students learn through technology, preparing them for adulthood or increasing opportunities with school programs, the Hatboro-Horsham School District always strives for excellence.

Throughout this annual report, we highlighted the ways our administrators, faculty, staff, School Board and community members inspired innovation at each school. Thank you for supporting Hatboro-Horsham as we create the next generation of leaders and continue to make positive changes in the years ahead.

Best,

Curtis J. Griffin

Curtis Griffin, Ed.D.,
Superintendent

NEW SAFETY INITIATIVES MAXIMIZE DISTRICT PREPAREDNESS

Hatboro-Horsham School District is committed to achieving the greatest state of safety preparedness through training, technology and an on-going review of best practices. The Pennsylvania School Safety and Security Committee awarded \$177,000 to Hatboro-Horsham School District after the District applied for a grant. The grant money helped the District implement the newest and best practices in security and safety initiatives.

TRAUMA-BASED TRAINING FOR STAFF

After the 2017-2018 school year, administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists and instructional assistants began professional development in trauma-based training. They learned about the types of trauma children can experience outside of school and how to effectively respond to them.

"I think because of all the issues students K-12 experience outside of the school, such as family trauma, students bring that trauma with them to school," said Director of Safety and Security Rick Kerrigan.

The school system is being tasked with new duties and responsibilities like addressing trauma and mental health with an increase in the number of children with anxiety. With students attending school six hours a day, the staff's training will improve their overall education experience.

"It's important for people to understand that school safety is broader than all the security cameras and physical equipment," said Director of Elementary and Secondary Education Sue King. *"It's about the environment in the school and fostering connections between students and teachers."*

CREATING A RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

All K-5 teachers at Blair Mill Elementary and grades 4-5 teachers across the District received training on how to create a responsive classroom and gave the rest of the faculty an overview. The goal is to have all elementary teachers trained by the 2020-2021 school year.

"The responsive classroom is an evidence-based approach to developing students' social, emotional and learning skills

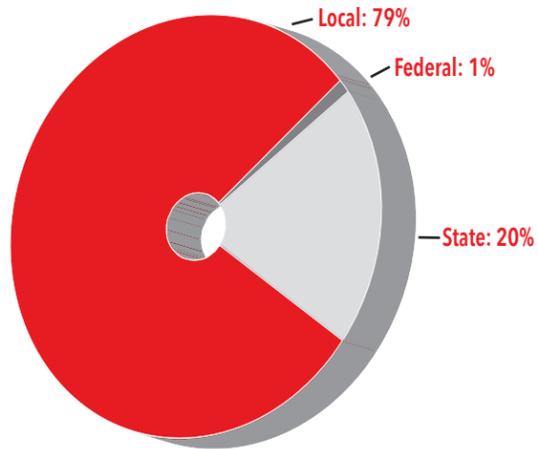
APPROVED 2019-2020 FINAL BUDGET

The Hatboro-Horsham School Board approved a final budget of \$110,063,103 for the 2019-2020 school year, which will help the District deliver outstanding education while maintaining fiscal responsibility to the community.

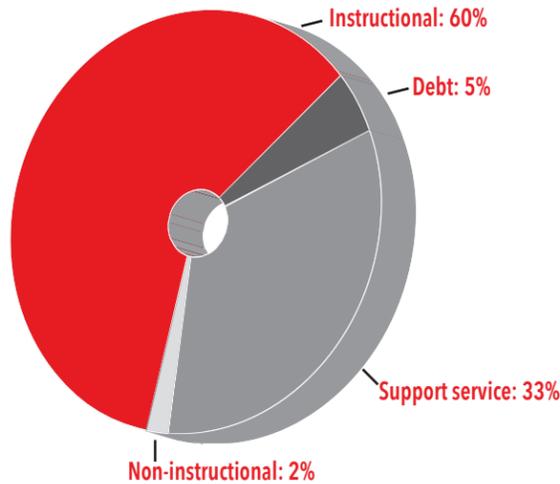
THE DISTRICT'S COMMENDABLE FINANCIAL POSITION

- For the past 13 years since the inception of Act 1, Hatboro-Horsham School District never exceeded the allowable Act 1 base index. The Act 1 Index average is a 2.55% tax increase; however, Hatboro-Horsham averages lower at 2.23% with a 2.3% increase this school year.
- Hatboro-Horsham School District ranked second lowest in annual millage increases in Montgomery County over the past 16-year period.
- The District's Aa1 bond rating – a measure of financial stability, strength and accountability – is one of the best in the state. This rating saved taxpayers more than \$3 million in interest rates on the bonds used to rebuild Hallowell and Crooked Billet. The District did not need to increase budgeted debt service levels or raise taxes to fund these schools and are in stable position for future rebuilds.
- The District established reserves to protect taxpayers against the rising cost of Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS), the loss of federal revenue when the airbase redevelopment begins, high cost facility needs, future debt service and other unforeseen expenditures. Additionally, the District developed a PSERS rate stabilization fund, which has helped manage increases in PSERS contribution rates. ■

BUDGET OVERVIEW REVENUES



BUDGET OVERVIEW EXPENDITURE



We are always improving communication within the buildings in case of an emergency.



School Resource Officer Mary Novak

through a structured, supportive environment," said King. "When schools create a sense of community and focus on relationships, it leads to greater academic success in the classroom. Teachers are able to identify students who are struggling sooner and support them more effectively before it impacts the student's wellbeing."

Teachers learned how to develop classroom-based norms and add structure with routines. For example, elementary school classes start the day with morning meetings, have quiet time after recess and end the day with a closing circle. This helps reinforce expected behaviors from students and creates a safe, nurturing atmosphere. Strong relationships between teachers and students will create positive relationships between classmates as well.

The middle school uses a similar program that has been in place for the past few years. Known as Positive Behavior Support (PBS), it creates a consistent classroom environment for students and clear behavior expectations.

When it comes to safety, the District really wants to hear the voices of the students and increase their involvement. High school students and teachers established the A-Team in the 2018-2019 school year. Team participants examine the school climate and think of how it can become safer and more positive.

The District also plans to hire social workers this academic year to support K-12 students.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL THREATS

Over the summer, the District hosted Dr. Peter Langman, a psychologist who is an expert on the mindset of school shooters. In his three-hour presentation, he taught Hatboro-Horsham staff and administrators how mass shooters think and ways to identify potential school shooters.

To recognize possible threats, the District placed Threat Assessment Team members at each school.

After a triggering event, such as a threatening comment, the team begins the threat assessment. They talk to the student, peers and other teachers to judge if it is a substantial threat or not. Keith Valley Middle School has been piloting the program with a full team and it has been a success so far. The expectation is for every school in the District to have a full team in place later this year.

BEGINNING ALICE DRILLS

After students left for summer vacation, Hatboro-Horsham School District staff completed their first Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE) drill. ALICE Training will prepare the District to proactively handle the threat of an intruder or active shooter event.

"Schools previously had lockdown as their only response to an active shooter," said Kerrigan. *"Now they need option-based responses depending on the situation."*

The first step of ALICE, Alert, is how to recognize the signs of danger. It is also important to Inform others of the threat and communicate information quickly. Lockdown is still an option for schools to respond to danger; however, now there is the option to Evacuate if safe to do so, and also Counter or to create noise, movement, distance and distraction to hinder the shooter's plan.

ALICE is not a District policy, but the District plans to start integrating student participation in the drills with parental consent.

INCREASING BUILDING SECURITY

Advanced technology and more security resources help students and staff feel secure at school. With numerous events and activities held at the high school after class hours, the District felt it was vital to increase security coverage. Previously in the high school, security staff was on duty from 7 a.m. to 3

p.m. Hours were extended to 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. in late 2018.

Analog security cameras are currently in the process of being cycled out for digital, IP-based cameras. IP cameras have multiple sensors for more coverage ability, encrypted video for secure transmission and superior image quality for higher resolution.

The District already replaced more than 70% of their 200-plus cameras located at all buildings. This effort will be continued this year as well as installing additional cameras in more locations throughout the District.

In March, School Resource Officer Mary Novak started full time at the high school to mentor students and be a confidant that they feel comfortable to turn to with their problems. She will later begin to teach on safety and security in the classrooms as well. She is employed by Horsham Township as a police officer and arrives to the high school in uniform and armed.

ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMUNICATION

The District's two-way radio system will be upgraded this year. In case of landline failure, power shut-offs or other scenarios, a walkie-talkie two-way radio system serves as a back-up plan. *"We are always improving communication within the buildings in case of an emergency,"* said Kerrigan.

The two-way radio system reaches all schools within the district and also the Montgomery County First Responders by communicating with dispatchers. ■



Teacher in service session



TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE: REACHING MORE STUDENTS

To achieve the District's strategic goal of providing students with "deeper learning," ensuring technology is updated and available to support students is an essential priority.

Hatboro-Horsham High School is in its third year of the 1:1 Initiative, which aims to transform the way students learn by empowering both students and teachers with access to the best tools available for innovative learning. 1:1 access has become the everyday norm and part of the culture of the school, and is well-received by students, teachers and the whole community. The success in the high school led to making informed choices about

laptops for the District's staff when cycling out old devices for new ones.

After a successful pilot program at Keith Valley Middle School last school year, all students received laptops for this year to use for curriculum-based projects and web applications. Students will complete online assignments in Canvas, collaborate for group projects in Office 365, discuss videos in Flipgrid, create online presentations in Prezi, code and animate in Scratch, and also work in other programs, access online textbooks and research topics. Over the summer, Keith Valley teachers attended the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) where they learned about best practices for including technology in classrooms.

In the elementary schools, the District expanded 1:1 laptop access to the fourth grade. Next year, the 1:1 initiative will continue to trickle down to all grades in the District.

"It is rewarding to see the District ahead of the original schedule in implementing 1:1 in grades 4-12," said David Weber, Director of Curriculum - Education Programs & Assessment. *"Ultimately, the goal is to expand device access to all students in K-12."* ■



HATBORO-HORSHAM STUDENTS RECEIVE VALUABLE CAREER TRAINING AT EASTERN CENTER

Many eleventh and twelfth grade students spend their mornings at Hatboro-Horsham High School and their afternoons honing new skills for high-demand careers at Eastern Center for Arts and Education. Since 1965, EASTERN has provided quality occupational and technical education, and currently serves nine districts in Eastern Montgomery County.

"EASTERN's programs open up career pathways for students," said Organizational Advancement Director Amy Shields. *"Sixty-five percent of our students continue their education and 35% enter the workforce. We want to make sure our students are prepared and achieve their career goals."*

For the 2019-2020 school year, 92 Hatboro-Horsham students, 50 eleventh graders and 42 twelfth graders, are attending EASTERN. Hatboro-Horsham is proud their students are one of the most represented Districts at EASTERN. Usually EASTERN's enrollment is just under 500 students, but this year it has reached approximately 535, an exciting jump for the school.

A leader in technology, EASTERN teaches lifelong skills to students in its state-of-the-art facility and maintains positive partnerships in the industry. There are 14 programs to choose from and the most popular programs at EASTERN this year are Allied Health, Electrical Technology and Veterinary Science.

Many EASTERN student ambassadors are Hatboro-Horsham students. They attend and present at recruitment events at high schools and colleges including the "When I Grow Up" K-12 Career Expo hosted by Hatboro-Horsham School District. When potential students visit EASTERN, ambassadors serve as guides to provide them with their personal experiences.

A change for the 2019-2020 school year is modifying the Computer Network Administration program to Networking and Cybersecurity. The program still focuses on the computer administration aspect; however, now there is a large emphasis on protecting against cyber threats and attacks, a professional area that is in high demand. In fall of 2020, EASTERN will open a new program, Robotics and Automated Technology.

Whether students are confident about their career choice or want to explore their options, they will benefit greatly from EASTERN's offerings. *"You not only learn the skills you need to be successful in your chosen career field, but you also learn how to communicate professionally,"* said Shields.

There is a large focus on crafting resumes and 97% of students participate in SkillsUSA where they compete and interact with students from other technical schools. Last year, one of EASTERN's seniors in the Veterinary Science program won sixth place at the national competition in the customer service category.

At EASTERN's annual Awards Night on May 29, 2019, 24 Hatboro-Horsham students received more than \$11,000 for their academic and technical achievements. ■

AROUND OUR SCHOOLS: BOAST POSTS

Throughout the District, students participated in community service, enhanced their leadership skills and attended exciting events full of learning and making a difference. Our building principals highlighted their favorite initiatives and programs from the 2018-2019 school year.

Blair Mill Elementary

Students worked on yearlong service projects with local nonprofits such as Horsham Parks and Recreation, CHOP, Mitzvah Circle, Beds for Kids, The Giving Tree, WAGS, Lehman Food Pantry of Hatboro and many others. The partnerships culminated on May 10 with their first annual Day of Service, which closely aligned with one of Blair Mill's core principles: fostering positive relationships. Through their service, children bonded with students in their classes, teachers who supported them and also members of the organizations. Students learned about issues impacting the nonprofits and realized their ability to provide positive change to communities that are beyond their immediate world.

Crooked Billet-Hallowell Learning Community

Family members of students in grades K-5 attended the Crooked Billet-Hallowell Learning Community for the Celebration of Leading and Learning. Students showcased their portfolio of school work and demonstrated their leadership skills from the 2018-2019 year to their families. To refine their academics each year, teachers focused on their students' social and emotional learning, which teaches children how to understand emotions, set goals, foster positive relationships through respect and make responsible choices.

Pennypack Elementary

The annual Acceptance Day's focus "Abilities Awareness" was created to increase students' understanding and acceptance of differences. Students in all grade levels rotated through hands-on demonstrations with Hatboro-Horsham High School's special education teachers and replicated challenges that people with disabilities face. Stations simulated obstacles such as muscular

mobility constraints, sensory sensitivities, dyslexia and hearing/visual impairments. Students learned what it would be like to live with a disability and understood the importance of accepting everyone no matter their differences.

Simmons Elementary

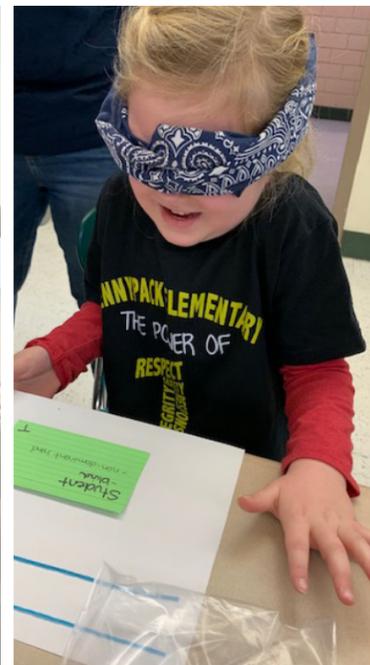
For the "One School, One Book" event, the entire school community read "The World According to Humphrey" by Betty G. Birney. The event kicked off with community members reading to the students. Throughout the month of March, classes read the book and engaged in learning activities related to the main character, Humphrey the hamster. The culmination of the program featured teachers racing in human-sized "hamster balls" while students cheered them on.

Keith Valley Middle School

Keith Valley Middle School students entered the "What's So Cool About Manufacturing?" Student Video Contest and received the Outstanding Videography award. Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center (DVIRC) matched Keith Valley with the major manufacturing company, Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Research Services (PMRS) in Horsham. Keith Valley students attended the awards ceremony in April at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center. Later that month, the team proudly represented the Philadelphia Region as one of three teams at the state level.

Hatboro-Horsham High School

Feed-A-Friend is an annual community-wide food drive run by the high school's Student Council. In the 2018-2019 school year, the campaign provided enough food for almost 60 families, all of which have at least one student enrolled in Hatboro-Horsham High School. Students are involved in all aspects of the project including planning, bag drop-off, bag collection, sorting and delivery. District families in need receive non-perishable food items, a turkey or ham, and a grocery store gift card. The students take pride in working as a team and knowing they are instrumental in supporting District families. ■



The Hatboro-Horsham School District Board Answers, "How Do You Show Your Hatter Pride?"



**Eric E. Coombs,
VICE PRESIDENT**

I am in my fourteenth year as a board member and am extremely proud of where the District is now and what is planned for the future. It says a lot about our schools when students come back to serve as teachers and principals. They provide superior education and over the last few years, test scores in the District increased. All day Pre-K will also go a long way in future testing and student development.

Robert W. Gockley II

As a member of the Facilities Committee, I have pride in building excellent, quality schools for the students as well as my two children who are currently in the District. I hope to positively affect the culture and provide a safe environment for students to learn in.

**James Greenhalgh,
PRESIDENT**

I show my Hatter pride as often as I can by talking to people in our community and talking to our students, teachers, coaches and parents. We have so much to be proud of but there is still so much we can do. Nothing makes me prouder than when I meet someone and the first thing they say is, "I went to Hatboro-Horsham!"

Tara Conner-Hallston

What I truly enjoy is attending as many Hatboro-Horsham student events as possible. In all of our schools, seeing our kids participate, learn and work together is heartwarming! From graduation and moving-up ceremonies to college fairs, carnivals and competitions, there are always accomplishments to be proud of.

Theresa Harmon

I am particularly proud of the efforts and initiatives Hatboro-Horsham School District has taken to keep our students safe and maintain an orderly learning environment. With the addition of our School Resource Officer and the implementation of the new Emergency Management Plan, our community can feel confident that the safety, security and well-being of our students, staff and school facilities are the top priority of the District.



**Marian McCouch,
TREASURER**

I am proud of the genuine commitment to teamwork that is consistently demonstrated by the administration, staff, community, police department and School Board. None of our accomplishments would have come to fruition without mutual cooperation. By practicing effective teamwork, we can best serve our children, teachers and community while being fiscally responsible.

Mark Opalisky

As a board member for 12 years, I show my Hatboro-Horsham pride by the endless hours I put in as a volunteer, yet elected, board member. The time required of a board member is not only the semi-monthly public meetings, but also the countless behind the scenes hours spent reviewing policies, contracts, plans and resumes, interviewing, writing, researching, analyzing data and responding to parents' concerns. I do it because I want to contribute what I can to the success of the great Hatboro-Horsham School District.

Joseph A. Wade

I have proudly served on the Board for four years. Currently, I serve as chair of the Facilities Committee, representative to the Eastern Center Joint Operating Committee, liaison to the Safe Schools Committee, member of the finance committee and executive committee for drug, alcohol and mental health. I strive to ensure that all District students receive a high-quality education to prepare them for success, as did my six children, and that all children and staff are safe in our schools every day. I show Hatter pride by sharing the successes of the District with everyone I meet.

Jennifer Wilson

Growing up, I saw the hard work my dad did as a teacher to provide his students with the best education. Our District's educators are dedicated and hardworking, and my goal is to make them feel valued and appreciated. As a board member, I also hope to ensure that all our children receive the best educational opportunities, so that once they leave our schools, they will be prepared to lead productive and successful lives.

What Does A School Board Do?

The Hatboro-Horsham School Board provides support to the District's administration, faculty, staff, students and community through countless hours and commitment. The Board is comprised of nine residents who serve overlapping, unpaid terms of four years each. As a legislative body that is locally elected, the Hatboro-Horsham School Board are state officials who co-partner with the legislature and are designated by school law to oversee the District's school system.

Hatboro-Horsham's Special Education Programs Prepare Students for Adulthood

Hatboro-Horsham School District provides a continuum of services for students with disabilities and ensures student access to the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment.

Before 2008, special education services were outsourced and students with autism had to attend special schools outside Hatboro-Horsham School District. Since the programs became in-house, they have expanded rapidly. The District added a new elementary teacher for the 2019-2020 school year to have five autistic support teachers at the elementary level, two at the middle school level and two at the high school level.

"Children belong here. They live in this community," said Kimberly Myers, director of special education and special services. Which raised the question, "Why can't they attend school in their community?" So, the District embarked on a mission to support meaningful inclusion for students with autistic support needs in the school district.

Special education supports children from kindergarten up to the age of 21. Services align with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 04) and state law (Chapter 14). The delivery of services for each student is designed by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team, which consists of related service personnel, the child's teachers, a case manager and parents. The IEP is the plan for the student to achieve meaningful success.

"Students enter the District in kindergarten and exit after their senior year or age 21," said Brigid Brady, special education supervisor (K-12, autistic, life skills and emotional support). "During their entire time in the District, students are learning how to become the most successful adults they can be and the programs they participate in are designed to support their successful transition to adulthood."

We've had more and more parents say, 'I never thought my child would be able to do that.'

Students participate in as many general education classes with their peers as possible to create the least restrictive learning environment. Students may be out of the general education classroom for the type of support they need including speech and language, vision, hearing, learning and mobility.

The Special Education Department offers services to promote the transition from school to adult activities, such as employment and community living. The District created an apartment where students learn the skills needed to live on their own and practice daily living skills such as cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping and budgeting. Students take trips to the grocery store with a budget to practice their math skills and communication skills while shopping. Back at the apartment, they practice cooking meals with the food they purchased.

"We mirror as much of the world as we can, so students are prepared for what life will be like when they're not here," said Myers.

To facilitate this, the Special Education Department has job coaches for students who need them and a transition teacher with more than 25 different work sites for them to gain employability skills. Throughout students' time in the District, they can obtain jobs, practice daily life skills and learn how to be active members in the community.

"We've had more and more parents say, 'I never thought my child would be able to do that,'" said Myers.

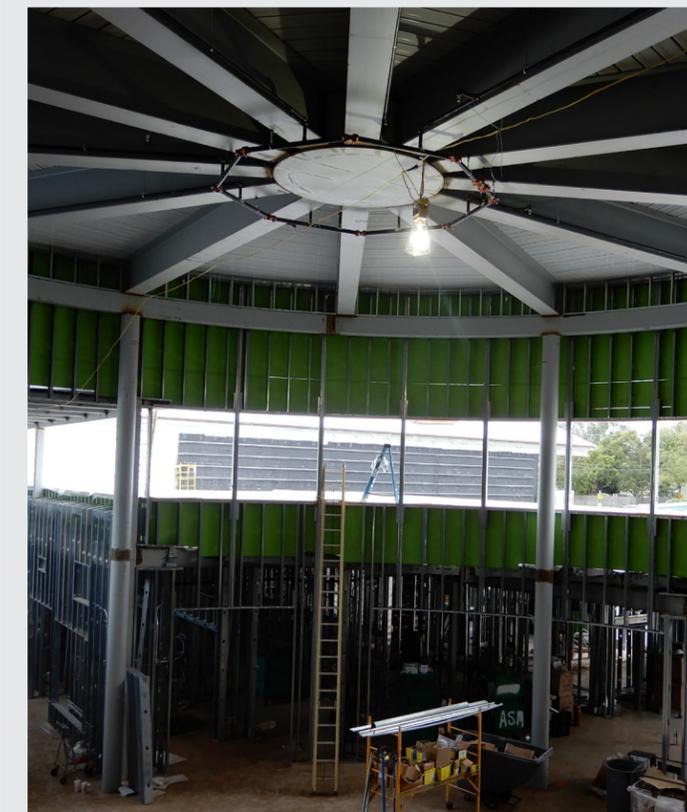
The least restrictive learning environment allows students with disabilities to thrive in school like every other student.

"Students with differing abilities are no different than anyone else," said Brady. "This idea of successful inclusion and a strong transition program makes Hatboro-Horsham School District students awesome." ■

Crooked Billet Construction on Schedule

Crooked Billet Elementary is on schedule for completion July 9, 2020 and will be ready to open for the 2020-2021 school year. Construction began Aug. 20, 2018, of the new K-5 elementary school, which is designed to accommodate 600 students.

"I'm very excited to see the progress of Crooked-Billet Elementary School," said Kelli Sendel, co-principal of Crooked Billet-Hallowell Learning Community. "Every time I drive by and visit the site, I am eager for the school's opening and to watch students excel in their new learning environment." ■





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HATS OFF TO THE CLASS OF 2019!

NUMBER OF GRADUATES: 411

Post high school plans:

- 88% enrolled in formal post-secondary education
- 63% of those will attend a four-year college or university
- 8% entered the workforce
- 2% entered the military

The Class of 2019 is represented at the following colleges and universities: Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, Cornell University, Duke University, Drexel University, John Hopkins University, Montgomery County Community College, Muhlenberg College, New York University, Northwestern University, Temple University, Penn State University, University of California, Los Angeles; University of Florida and University of Pittsburgh.

- National Merit Finalists: **3**
- National Merit Commended Scholars: **9**
- Pass rate on national certification tests for EASTERN Center students: **90%**
- Scholarship dollars provided to graduates: **6.6 million**
- Division I, II and III scholarship athletes: **25**
- Class average SAT score: **1,100**
- 2019 AP Exam Pass Rate: **80%**

