



May 18, 2016

Milton Hershey School Statement

HERSHEY, Pa. – The mission of Milton Hershey School is to help children from poverty acquire the academic, career and social-emotional skills they need to lead productive and fulfilling lives. We have a 107-year history of success in doing this. The substantial majority of our students have one or more disabilities – both physical and psychological – and qualify for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In fact, the percentage of students we serve with disabilities is up to *sixty* percentage points higher than the incidence in the general U.S. population aged 5-17. We take very seriously the responsibility we have to meet their individual needs so they can be successful. Our number one priority is to ensure we are providing a nurturing environment where every child can overcome the struggles of poverty and reach his or her full potential. As part of that effort, we take great care to comply with all state and federal laws and regulations.

We have been under attack for many years by a very zealous antagonist who has aggressively solicited former students and lawsuits, while consistently lobbying state and federal regulators across the board, including the DOJ, to pursue claims against us. Sometimes he is successful in provoking “investigations,” although by his own admission, he has had little success in proving his inaccurate narratives. We have been in regular communication with the DOJ since 2012 when we began reporting on our continuing efforts to serve even more children with disabilities. We trust that the DOJ understands, as other state and federal regulators have learned, that indulging the delusions of a spiteful critic can prove challenging and time-consuming. Regardless of the source of any complaint, we always have and always will cooperate with our regulators to ensure our school is giving students the best education we can. We are proud of our work for 107 years to help children from poverty overcome great difficulties to succeed.

MHS’s annual health services expenditures exceed \$11 million, and this school year, MHS will spend more than \$3.66 million to support the psychological and behavioral care needs of our students. Our state-of-the-art 24-hour health center and in-school clinics are run by a team of 106 licensed health professionals, and the school accommodates a wide range of physical disabilities, including those required for children who are visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired. MHS provides individual psychotherapy sessions for more than 700 students. The resources we dedicate to the health and wellbeing of our students far exceed those of any other boarding or day school, private or public. Our integrative approach to nurturing the whole child remains the key to MHS’s success. More on those services can be found in our white paper, [“How Schools Can Help Break the Cycle of Poverty: A Whole Child Approach.”](#)

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