

New FAFSA Process to Begin in December 2023



One of the most important steps for your student to continue their education and qualify for the Milton Hershey School scholarship is to apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Changes to the application process are taking place this year.

Typically, the application is available Oct. 1, but major changes beginning with the application for aid to be awarded in 2024-25 have delayed the availability of the FAFSA until December 2023.

It is important for you to know what will be required from both parents/stepparents and students when it is time to apply for financial aid.

Overall, the application process has been redesigned to make it easier for families to complete. One improvement is the direct exchange of income and other information from the Internal Revenue Service into the FAFSA. The IRS and Department of Education have worked to make the process faster than in prior years.

The new process requires each individual completing the FAFSA to have a special number, known as an FSA ID, which acts as their electronic signature. In addition, each applicant is required to provide their consent on the FAFSA for the IRS to transfer information to the FAFSA. Both the FSA ID and consent from the student, parents/stepparents **are required** even if a tax return was not filed. If either is missing, then the student will not be eligible for financial aid or the MHS scholarship.

Another change is that students must now invite individuals to complete the FAFSA form. To do this, the student must enter parental name, Social Security number, date of birth, and personal email. The parent/stepparent will receive the invitation via email and must use it to begin their portion of the FAFSA.

In rare cases, students may not be able to provide parental information and must let their high school counselor know immediately to determine how to proceed. MHS is committed to helping your student achieve their dream of continuing their education and will keep you and your student posted on any changes or next steps in the coming months.

If you have questions about the FAFSA application process, contact your student's high school counselor.

MHS Family Weekends Are for You

Learn how college and career counselors work with your student to explore, plan, and prepare for their career path and how you can take a more active part in the process.

Fall Family Weekend, Oct. 27-29, 2023

Senior-focused: GPS staff will make presentations about GPS Plans and financial aid, including the parent information required to complete the financial aid process. Parents and sponsors of seniors are highly encouraged to attend.

Individual meetings with college and career counselors for junior and seniors will be available by appointment on Friday afternoon, Oct. 27, and Saturday morning, Oct. 28. To schedule an appointment, contact Katie Eckert at 717.520.2812.

Individual meetings with ninth- and tenth-grade counselors will be available by appointment on Saturday, Oct. 28. To schedule an appointment, use the link shared through the Family Weekend website.

Winter Family Weekend, March 1-3, 2024

Junior- and senior-focused: The transition to life after MHS, postsecondary planning options, support services provided by Graduate Programs for Success.

Individual meetings with ninth- and tenth-grade counselors will be available on Friday, March 1, 2024, by appointment.

Spring Family Weekend, May 10-12, 2024

Junior-focused: The transition to senior year, CES and financial aid, postsecondary GPS planning.

Recent Graduates Prepare for Careers as Students at MHS

Milton Hershey School students work closely with their college and career counselors to create a plan that will help them achieve their career goals, and they begin working on their plans before they graduate from MHS. Below are two examples of 2023 graduates who took advantage of career-preparation opportunities as students.

Anna Allen '23 earned a nurse aid certification during senior year at Milton Hershey School. She was one of nine seniors who participated in the program offered through Harrisburg Area Community College.

Like many of the MHS students who participated in the program, Anna was interested in a career in health science. She is now enrolled at Marshall University and plans to pursue a degree in nursing.

As an MHS senior, Jeremiah Clark '23 was interested in becoming a commercial pilot. He attended an aviation career exposure day in October 2022 facilitated by MHS Graduate Programs for Success staff at Cargill Aeronautical Academy in New Cumberland. He participated in their Discovery Flight opportunity where he went up in a plane with a flight instructor. The experience confirmed his desire to become a pilot. Jeremiah started his training at Cargill Aeronautical in July 2023 to pursue his dream of becoming a commercial pilot.



2023 Alumnus of the Year Robin Ferrer '00 and his wife, Zuleika, who attended MHS Commencement in June, congratulate Anna Allen '23, the 2023 recipient of the award they sponsor for a graduating senior who planned to pursue a career in health science.



Leigh Farrar-Freeman, Ph.D. congratulates Jeremiah Clark '23 during the GPS Plan Celebration in May. GPS collaborated with the MHS Student Government Association and Transitional Living staff to host the celebration for members of the Class of 2023.

Career Services and Workforce Development Specialists Assist Students as They Plan for Post-Graduation

The Milton Hershey School Career Services Support Specialist assists students and alumni with the full cycle of finding a job, from finding job opportunities, completing job applications, preparing for an interview, and accepting a job. In addition, the Workforce Development Specialist assists students and alumni with finding and enrolling in short-term training programs to help them prepare for in-demand jobs. Below are some of the resources available to help your student with career planning.

Career Information Sessions with Employers

Students can meet with employers to learn about careers in their organization with an emphasis on careers that require no college degree. Employers explain job responsibilities, salary information, benefits for full-time employees, and opportunities to be promoted.

Apprenticeship Information Sessions

Students can meet with apprenticeship providers to learn about skilled trades and learning on the job while earning a full-time wage. During an apprenticeship, the employee also attends classes to learn skills related to the trade. Examples of skilled trade programs include construction, carpentry, heavy equipment operation, welding, machining, HVAC, masonry, and plumbing.

Military Career Exploration

Students can meet with military recruiters to learn about careers in the military and enlistment options. They also can take the military entrance exam (ASVAB) at MHS to determine if they meet the educational requirements for enlistment.

What Can I Do with This Major Tool

If a student is thinking about going to college but not sure which major to choose, it can be helpful to know what careers are possible with certain majors. Career Services has an online tool, called What Can I Do with This Major, that gives students and parents or sponsors a chance to review different careers associated with specific majors and types of employers that hire individuals with those majors.

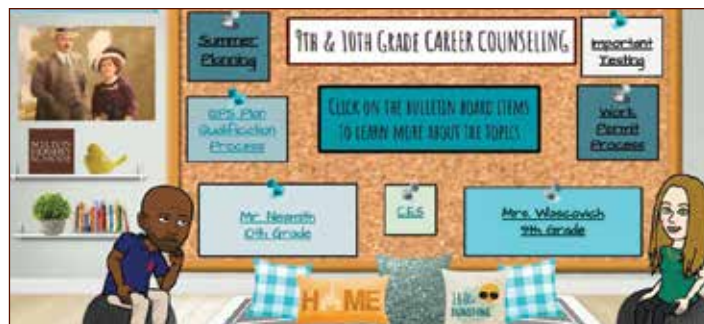
Your student can learn more about these opportunities and resources by asking their college and career counselor.

Questions? Call the College and Career Readiness Department at 717-520-2812.

GPS Offers **Summer Programming** For Senior Division Students

Milton Hershey School's Graduate Programs for Success Division took the lead on welcome-back programming for Milton Hershey School seniors in August. The staff created a week of fun and engaging opportunities for about 100 seniors during the first week of August. Among the opportunities were career-focused field trips, college visits, and a career-focused scavenger hunt.

In addition, GPS facilitated the Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship program during Weeks 7 and 8 of Year Round Experience (YRE) programming. Fifteen juniors and seniors participated in the program, a collaborative effort by MHS, The Manufacturers' Association, and The Hershey Company. In addition to classroom activities, participants spent two shop days at the Manufacturers' Association and toured the Reese's plant in Hershey. At the conclusion of the two-week training, students participated in a graduation event and received OSHA 10 certification and a state-registered pre-apprenticeship certificate.



Career Counselors Invite Parents/ Sponsors of Students in Grades 9 or 10 to **Visit Their Homepage**

When your student begins high school, countless questions may come to mind; so, Abbey Wascovich, 9th-grade career counselor, and Jeremy Nesmith, 10th-grade career counselor, developed an online resource page for parents and sponsors. The online resource looks like a bulletin board, and it contains links to information about requirements and programs that will be part of your student's experience.

Scan the QR code below to find information about MHS graduation requirements, scheduling and course planning, important testing, summer planning, the work permit process, and the GPS Plan Qualification Process. There are links on the page to videos that will allow you to hear directly how the topics relate to and influence your student's experience in high school. This resource may help you jumpstart conversations with your student about planning for their future learning and career experiences.



Understanding the Graduate Programs for Success Plan Process

Milton Hershey School students can accrue scholarship funds for post-graduation education expenses. Before accrued scholarship money can be applied toward a program, students must have an approved postsecondary plan, called a Graduate Programs for Success (GPS) Plan.

College and career counselors and other staff work closely with high school students to help them build their GPS Plans. The goal is that every student develops a GPS Plan that matches their abilities and career interests.

GPS Plan Progress Report

A copy of the GPS Plan Progress Report is sent to the student, their sponsor, their houseparents or TL staff, and their college and career counselor.

Ninth-grade students and students who are new to MHS are now creating their first high school academic records. These students and their parents or sponsors will get their first GPS Plan Progress Report in the fall of next school year.

To visit the online Senior Resource page for parents and sponsors, scan the QR code.



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Contact your student's college and career counselor.

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Questions? Call the College and Career Readiness Department at **717.520.2812**.

CLASS CORNER Important Dates to Remember

Sponsors of Seniors:

August–December 2023: Off-campus SAT testing for postsecondary education.

September 2023–March 2024: Provide proof of health insurance to Mrs. Smyder.

September–December 2023: College Visits

Dec. 1, 2023–Feb. 4, 2024: Complete the 2024-25 FAFSA* (Financial Aid).

February–March 2024: Submit a copy of your financial aid letter to your career counselor.

March 4-5, 2024: ASVAB testing

April 19, 2024: College selection deadline*

May 2024: Deadline for CES Application, release form, and other CES required documents.

June 1, 2024: GPS Plan Approval Deadline*

***Note:** If deadlines with an asterisk* are not met, it is very likely your student's GPS Plan will not be approved for fall 2024.*

Sponsors of Juniors:

Your student should research and discuss with you and their career counselor their ideas for a career and postsecondary options—military, world of work, apprenticeships, trade schools, or higher education.

Oct. 18: Juniors will have the opportunity to take the PSAT for postsecondary education. Ask your student about their experience with the test.

Oct. 19: Juniors will have the opportunity to take the ASVAB (Career assessment tool used by the military).

March 4–5, 2024: Juniors will have the opportunity to take the ASVAB (career assessment tool used by the military).

March–May, 2024: SAT testing for postsecondary education.

Sponsors of Sophomores:

Oct. 18: 10th-graders will have the opportunity to take the PSAT for postsecondary education. Ask your student about their experience with the test.

March 4–5, 2024: ASVAB (career assessment tool used by the military).

Sponsors of Freshmen:

Oct. 18: 9th-graders will have the opportunity to take the PSAT for postsecondary education. Ask your student about their experience with the test.