



What Individuals (and Groups!) Can Do to Help Our Schools

- **Be a guest reader.** MCAS elementary schools need guest readers, particularly for first, second, and third grade students. You can volunteer to read just one time, on a recurring basis or during summer school. Contact a school near you for specific dates and more information.
- **Help in the Library.** Volunteers are needed at all schools to help with book check-out, re-shelving and repairing books. Contact any school to volunteer!
- **Donate a book.** The district has a need for books (new or gently used) for students K-12. Donations are welcome anytime and may be donated to schools or used by the “Operation Bookworm” or “Back to School Rally” book drives for children in need. Bring books to the MCAS Administration Building, 408 S. Carroll Avenue.
- **Donate a musical instrument.** Used instruments of any condition may be dropped off at Michigan City High School, Attn: Principal. Please include a letter of intent to donate, the serial number of the instrument (if known) and general condition.
- **Mentor a student** through the Hours for Ours program. Spend an hour a week with students during lunch time or after school, share a talent or hobby, or promote STEM by mentoring through the Michigan City FIRST Robotics Team or afters-school horticulture program. Contact Abby May at 873-2026 x 8750 or amay@educateMC.net.
- **Tutor** students after school at the middle and high school level, especially in reading or math. Contact Safe Harbor Coordinator Sherri Silcox at [873-2026](tel:873-2026) x 8740 or ssilcox@educateMC.net.
- **Volunteer for Junior Achievement.** JA teaches students basic concepts of economics, business, and personal finance, and emphasizes the connection between education and students’ future success. Volunteers visit elementary classrooms (grades K-6) for 30-45 minutes per week for five weeks. Contact Lisa Sheller at lisa.scheller@ja.org to volunteer.
- **Attend concerts, musicals, plays, and athletic events.** Community support of our teams and organizations helps motivate and inspire our students, teachers, and coaches! (You may purchase a season pass for athletics at most varsity sporting events, or call the MCHS Athletic Department at 873-2043.) For a calendar of events, visit <http://EducateMC.net>.
- **Donate a used 35mm camera** to the photography class at Michigan City High School. (Drop off at MCHS, attn: teacher Cheri Whitler. Contact cwhitler@mcas.k12.in.us, 873-2044 ext 4445 for more information.
- **Stay informed** about our school district. Minutes of monthly School Board meetings are posted on the MCAS Web site (under the “Our District” tab). Bookmark <http://EducateMC.net> and visit often.
- **Learn more about education in Indiana.** Visit <http://www.doe.in.gov/> for information about academic standards, school data, and much more.
- **Give to the United Way.** The United way supports many local social service

- agencies that help students with needs they have outside of school. It also assists MCAS partner programs such as the Safe Harbor after-school program, the Hours for Ours mentoring program, and the Open Door Adolescent Health Center at Michigan City High School. Visit <http://www.unitedwaylpc.org/> to donate.
- **Make a donation to Donors Choose** (<http://donorschoose.org>). Search for Michigan City Area Schools teachers and projects on this site... one of our teachers almost always has a project request listed and donations of any amount are very helpful!
 - **Collect art supplies, recreational equipment, and healthy packaged** snacks for MCAS afterschool programs. Contact Brenda Bolka, bbolka@mcas.k12.in.us, 873-2026, ext. 8749 for a “wish list” of items for Safe Harbor.
 - **Support the “Dress for Success” program.** Donations of any amount are needed to assist low-income or homeless families in purchasing clothing to meet the “Dress for Success” dress code. Send contributions payable to the Unity Foundation, P.O. Box 527, Michigan City, 46361 noting that they are for the Michigan City Area Schools’ Dress for Success fund. Credit card transactions may be made by calling Unity at (219) 879-0327.
 - **Be supportive of our schools** and our students! Help us make sure residents of our community and beyond have a positive perception of MCAS and where we are headed. If you have a concern or question or want to clear up a rumor, please contact your local school or the superintendent’s office to let us know. Visit <http://educateMC.net/choosemcas> for lots of resources you can use to tell people about the great things we are doing!
 - **Friend MCAS** on Facebook and **follow** us on Twitter @educateMC – and please share our good news posts and information with your friends!

What Businesses Can Do to Help Our Schools

- **Give employees who are parents (and grandparents!) time off/flex time to attend school events.** Students need to know their families are supportive of them and their academic needs and accomplishments.
- **Give employees time off/flex time to mentor.** Mentors spend about an hour a week with students, during lunch time or after school. Research has shown that mentoring has a positive impact on employees and employers, as well. Contact Abby May at 873-2026 x 8750 or amay@educateMC.net.
- **Adopt a school.** What school is closest to *your* business? Consider “adopting” this building, offering support for special projects, job shadowing or field trip opportunities, behavioral incentives, or guest readers. This helps the school and gives your business visibility in the local community. Call the school and speak with the principal today!
- **Assist the A. K. Smith Area Career Center.** Donations of building supplies, manufacturing equipment, and items that can be used as academic or attendance awards are needed. In addition, the Career Center seeks internship placements for



- students, mentors in the trades/business, and guest speakers. Please contact Audra Peterson, Director, at (219) 873-2120, apeterson01@mcas.k12.in.us.
- **Advertise in student publications.** The MCHS “Alpha” yearbook and “Cityzen” newspaper teach students language arts, organizational and business skills *and* give them a creative outlet. Ads are low-cost and are seen by close to 2,000 students and their families. For information, contact yearbook advisor Laure Poulin at lpoulin@mcas.k12.in.us or 873-2044, ext. 4339, and newspaper advisor Mandy Chastain at cityzen@mcas.k12.in.us or 873-2044, ext. 4338.
 - **Support athletics.** MCAS offers a number of sports programs that teach students teamwork, leadership skills, and keep them active and motivated to learn. Contact the Athletic Office for more information on a wide variety of sponsorship opportunities; 873-2043 or email Athletic Director Craig Shaman at cshaman@mcas.k12.in.us.
 - **Exhibit at Career Fairs.** Michigan City High School, the A. K. Smith Career Center, and several other schools host Career Fairs annually, typically in the early spring. These events showcase companies in our region and present an overview of career possibilities and educational requirements. Contact the office of a school near you to learn how you can take part; ask to speak with the guidance counselor.
 - **Be a guest speaker.** Students need to see how what they are learning in the classroom is relevant to the real world. Contact a school principal to discuss how what you do might tie in. Highest areas of need: Products and services relating to science, technology, engineering, and math.
 - **Provide incentives.** MCAS schools appreciate donations of free food coupons, recognition items, gift certificates, etc. that can be used as academic or behavior incentives. Contact your local school if you can help!
 - **Spruce up our buildings and grounds.** Consider holding a “cleanup day” for a school in late July or early August, prior to the start of the school year. (Your employees’ assistance with weeding, trimming, and trash pickup would be greatly appreciated, to help our buildings look their best!) Contact the MCAS Plant Planning Department to arrange a date and location, 873-2124.
 - **Give a scholarship.** Contact the Guidance Department at Michigan City High School for more information, 873-2044, ext 4340. (Scholarships are also needed to help low-income students attend summer camp and afterschool programs; contact Sherri Silcox at ssilcox@educateMC.net or call 873-2026, ext. 8740.)
 - **Support the Michigan City FIRST Robotics Program** with mentoring, materials or donations. Contact Sherri Silcox at 873-2026 x 8740 or ssilcox@educateMC.net.
 - **Host field trip visits** by afterschool program participants. Contact Sherri Silcox at 873-2026 x 8740 or ssilcox@educateMC.net.

What Parents Can Do to Help Our Schools

- **Stay connected to your child’s school and teacher.** If you have questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to reach out!



- **Be there.** Show an interest *every day* in what happened at school. Review homework assignments, celebrate accomplishments, and make sure your children understand that you are there to support and encourage them.
- **Check your child's grades online.** Visit the MCAS web site (<http://EducateMC.net/>) for a link to "Parent Access", the web-based system that allows parents to monitor grades and homework assignments. Contact your school's secretary for your child's password.
- **Make academics top priority.** Provide a quiet, well-lit area for homework, and make sure your child has the necessary supplies for school. Be sure school work and grades are done before other activities.
- **Share your talents!** Let your child's teacher and/or the school principal know if you have a particular area of expertise that might be helpful to students. Schools need guest speakers, guest readers, volunteer tutors, chaperones, "extra eyes" at recess, library volunteers, bulletin-board creators, and much more.
- **Understand what your child should know and be able to do** at various grade levels. Visit the Indiana Dept. of Education's web site to see samples of student work, learn about academic standards, and much more:
<https://learningconnection.doe.in.gov/Standards/PrintLibrary.aspx>
- **Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast** – before school or at school (MCAS cafeterias all serve breakfast, and it is free to elementary and middle school students.)
- **Emphasize attendance.** Schedule vacations and appointments after school or during breaks. Students who miss school – or are tardy – miss valuable instructional time and can quickly fall behind.
- **Purchase educational toys and games for your child.** Ask your child's teacher or principal for suggestions! Always monitor phones, computer games, TV, etc. for appropriateness.
- **Model lifelong learning.** If your children see *you* engaged in learning, it will make a big difference for them. Turn off the TV for a while and read instead – or play board games, visit a museum, write in a journal, or go for a walk.
- **Be active in your school's PTO.** Your school's parent-teacher organization is a great way to stay connected and help your school with important projects. If your child attends Michigan City High School, make sure you are part of the Parent Network, the "electronic" parent group. Contact mchsparentnetwork@gmail.com for information.
- **Keep your child safe.** Make sure your children's health concerns are addressed and communicated to the school, including information on allergies and medical needs, and be sure any medications are administered properly. And be sure your children know you have zero tolerance for drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and bullying.

Note: In order to assure the safety of our students, all school volunteers must complete an MCAS Volunteer Form and will be subject to a criminal background check. Please contact the school office for information. Thank you!

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