2020-2021

Mountain Heights Academy

ANNUAL REPORT

We are the leader in Digital Education
School Highlights

Founded in 2009, Mountain Heights Academy is Utah's premier online school, known for unparalleled teacher interaction and personalized instruction. Schoolwork is divided into weekly modules, which empowers students with the freedom to complete their assignments when and where they choose, within each week.

Mountain Heights Academy is an award-winning, full-service virtual school that is home to 1400 full-time 7th–12th graders and over 500 part-time students in grades 9-12. Part-time students attending their district schools are eligible to take up to four credits online from various providers. Mountain Heights Academy has the highest Statewide Online Education Program passing rate in the state, at 96%.
Academic Highlights

Mountain Heights Academy maintains its position as the highest-rated online charter school in Utah, based on graduation percentages, state test scores and completion rates, due to data-driven instruction, teacher interaction and a customizable, open educational resource curriculum that can be tailored to meet the needs of every student.

Program Highlights

At Mountain Heights Academy, a Chromebook is provided to each student, along with cutting-edge applications, programs and collaboration tools. Students learn to use real-world, 21st century technology in their courses and are able to leverage these tools to showcase stellar work throughout their high school experience.

Administration and Faculty Highlights

Mountain Heights Academy employs 103 certified teachers from all over the state of Utah, from Perry to Santa Clara. Thirty-one of these highly decorated faculty members and administrators have advanced degrees in addition to their bachelors degrees.

We never forget what’s at stake here. Young, malleable minds. Creative thinkers. Tomorrow’s leaders.
School Overview

Mountain Heights Academy’s student population varies from year to year. Students come because they value the flexibility of fitting school in around their own schedule, and the unparalleled interaction they enjoy with their teachers.

Student and Parent Preferences

• Flexibility and the ability to work anywhere, any time
• Individualized teacher interaction between teachers and students
• Teacher and administrative responsiveness
• Social activities and leadership opportunities
• Customizable curriculum
• Use of a Chromebook for full-time students

Parent and Student Surveys

Parent and student surveys reveal between 91% and 94% satisfaction ratings for curriculum, teacher and administrator responsiveness and overall satisfaction. There were 189 surveys returned for families, and 285 surveys returned for students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Parent Satisfaction</th>
<th>Student Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge of Courses</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Responsiveness</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin Responsiveness</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Experience</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Student Demographics**

Mountain Heights is uniquely positioned to serve the needs of all students because of the customized learning pathway each student experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>1335</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>1277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students choose Mountain Heights Academy for many reasons—each as individual as they are.
Service Learning

Mountain Heights Academy is a service learning school. Students and faculty were recipients of individual President's Volunteer Service Awards, recognizing many hours of individual service. To date, Mountain Heights has provided a cumulative total of over 105,500 hours of service. In 2020-2021, Mountain Heights students, faculty, board members and parents logged 10,500 hours, providing service in various areas, including:

- Utah Food Bank
- Provo Food Bank
- Primary Children’s Hospital Volunteers
- National Reading Day
- Youth Detention Holiday Treat Bags
- Humane Society Volunteers
- Ronald McDonald House Volunteers

Social Activities

Students have opportunities for face-to-face social activities outside of school. Students enjoy their Mountain Heights experience and are the school’s primary advocates. Students value the social opportunities, often commenting that they are friends with people they otherwise would never have met.

- Back to School Barbeque
- Classic Skate
- STEM Fest
- Art in the Afternoon
- ACT Prep Bootcamp
- Prom at the Capitol
- End of Year Gala
- Spirit Week
- #YouAreAwesome Week
- Applied Technology Tours
- Suicide Awareness & Prevention Week
- College Campus Tours
- Girl Talk
- History Day
- Leonardo Museum
- Club Activities
- Student Success Groups
- Anxiety Busters Groups
- 9th Grade Academy
- Virtual College Tours
- Leonardo Museum
- Hale Theater
- Veteran’s Day Activity
- State Capitol Tour
- Red Ribbon Week
- Halloween Trunk & Treat
Leadership Opportunities

At Mountain Heights Academy, students have many opportunities for leadership, including National Honor and Junior Honor Society Chapters, Student Advisory Board, and Peer Mentors. Additionally, there are a variety of clubs—Art Club, Chess Club, Health and Fitness Club, World Language Club, History Club, Math Club, Music Club, FCCLA and Creativity Club—that students enjoy participating in through service activities and leadership.

Parental Involvement

All parents belong to the Mountain Heights Academy Parent Organization and many volunteer their time to assist with monthly school activities such as fieldtrips, social outings, and extra-curricular events throughout the school year.

Our students have the opportunity to find their strengths and pursue them in a wide variety of ways.
**Academic Highlights**

**Graduation Rate**

The historical graduation rate for students at Mountain Heights Academy is a strong indicator of the success of our students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Graduation Rate (per USBE Data Gateway)</th>
<th>Graduation Rate (seniors starting the year at MHA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**State Test Scores**

Utah students take assessment tests each spring. Students took the RISE, ASPIRE+, and ACT exams. Mountain Heights Academy students have traditionally performed well on state tests, and the school is consistently the top-ranked online school in the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement &amp; Proficiency</th>
<th>MHA</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Secondary Readiness</th>
<th>MHA</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT 18+</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Year Graduation Rate</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Course Passing Rates

Mountain Heights Academy implements an engaging, high-tech teaching model by employing full-time certified teachers to work individually with students when they ask for help, and to reach out to struggling students to offer assistance, which translates to more students passing their courses.

Mountain Heights Academy is dedicated to providing an academically rich experience for all of its students.

Devoted, accredited teachers create a custom learning environment tailored to allow each student to succeed. Teachers design lessons that students can complete throughout the week in order to absorb the lesson at their own pace, fast or slow.

From there, students complete their weekly work with personal teacher interactions available via video chat, email, text, live study sessions, or phone as needed.

The individualized, high-tech teaching model earned Mountain Heights Academy multiple Best of State awards for Best Charter School, Best K-12 Online School, Best Curriculum Development, and Best Administrators between 2011 and 2020.

Because of Mountain Heights Academy’s groundbreaking approach to personalized learning, the school frequently hosts visitors from across the country and around the world. To date, Mountain Heights has hosted international guests from 31 countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health / PE</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Averages</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Values

• We value being Audacious

• We value being Student-Centered

• We value being Problem-Solvers

• We value being Open and Flexible

• We value being Innovative

• We value being Communicative

• We value Personal Responsibility

• We value Service Learning
Testimonials

Preparation for life

Since starting Mountain Heights Academy, I now have a lot more time to do the things I love most like spending time with my family and cooking. I also love the flexibility I have with Mountain Heights because it holds me responsible for what I do with my time, which will help me greatly when I am an adult.

He finally found success

My son was struggling in Middle School. The environment was bad, the teachers didn’t seem to care, and his grades showed it. Halfway through the year, desperate for another option, I moved my son to Mountain Heights Academy. In the 6 months he has been with Mountain Heights, his grades have come from C’s, D’s and F’s to straight A’s. He is happier. He is more confident. And he is learning more than he was in his previous school. Seeing him succeed tells me we made the right choice.

Genuine Teachers

The best thing about this school is how personal and genuine my teachers are. I felt more independent than ever. I got to work at my own pace and express my own thoughts without fear of feeling self-conscious. I felt accepted, I felt cared for and encouraged to do my best work at all times.

Finding counselors who care

My counselor has been a life-saver. She is so understanding, intelligent, efficient, and comprehensive. Mountain Heights Academy makes online learning more effective with a user-friendly online software and learning environments.

Opportunities for Self Growth

Mountain Heights Academy is a school that provides the students—the me—with incredible opportunities for self-growth. I have been able to present to a group of over 300 national educators, teach 27 international educators about MHA’s online learning environment, compete in a national STEM competition, and many other activities. I have learned and grown so much as a person during my time with MHA and I am forever grateful. Thank you to all of you who have helped make me who I am today.

Student became more responsible

I wanted to take a minute and say thank you to the wonderful teachers and staff of Mountain Heights. My child spent two years with you becoming a better student and learning to be responsible for his own education. Thank you so much for investing in him and maintaining an amazing commitment to your students.
Awards and Recognitions

2020
Lexus EcoChallenge, Student Team National Finalists
Samsung Solve for Tomorrow, Student Team State Finalists
Innovators of Tomorrow, Student Team National Finalists
Best of State, Charter School
Best of State, Curriculum Development
Best of State, K-12 Online Education

2019
eCybermission, 9th Grade National Winner
eCybermission, Regional Winner
Utah Robotics, 3rd Place
EcoChallenge, 3rd Place
Best of State, Charter School
Best of State, K-12 Online School

2018
SETDA, Student Voices Winner
Best of State, K-12 Online School
eCybermission, 1st, 2nd Place Utah
Sara Layton, National Humanities Center Teacher Advisory Council
Open Pedagogy Award, Open Education Global Consortium

2017
Jenni Klein, Drive2Teach Fellowship
Madison Kingsford, USDLA, Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Award
Sara Layton, Utah’s PBS Digital Innovator
eCybermission, 2nd Place Utah Team
Best of State, K-12 Online School, Curriculum
2016

Jenna Ellis, USDLA, Best Teaching Practices Award
Crystal Van Ausdal, Utah Coalition of Education Technology, Outstanding Educator
Best of State – K–12 Online School, Charter School, Curriculum Development
Open Education Consortium International Award of Excellence – Outstanding Course

2015

Carrie Jones, USDLA, Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Gold Award
Best of State – K–12 Online School
Open Education Consortium International Award of Excellence – Outstanding Course
Board of Directors – Utah Association of Public Charter Schools “Board of the Year” Award

2014

DeLaina Tonks, Best of State – Principal, Utah Business’s “30 Women to Watch” Award
Annie Swinton, Math for America Fellowship Winner, USDLA, Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Bronze Award
Sara Layton, Utah Charter School Teacher of the Year
Melissa Hesterman, LearnZillion DreamTeam Winner
Ashley Webb, USDLA, Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Silver Award
Amy Pace, National PBS Learning Media Digital Innovators Award

2013

Ashley Webb, UCET, Outstanding Young Educator Award
Sara Layton, ISKME Fellow
Ashley Webb, ISTE Emerging Leader Award
Sara Layton, American Board Certification for Teacher Education, Utah Teacher of the Year

2012

Emily Andersen, ISKME Fellow
DeLaina Tonks, ISKME Fellow
Amy Pace, Governor’s Medal of STEM Excellence Winner

2011

Laura Bishop, USDLA, Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Silver Award
Amy Pace, Top Five Online Teachers in the nation

2010

Amy Pace, Presidential STEM Award Winner
Sarah Weston, Charter Educator of the Year, the first online instructor to receive this award
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Mountain Heights Academy
It works for me.
We are the leader in digital education. Our mission is to develop connected & successful learners.