

Robert Orrill

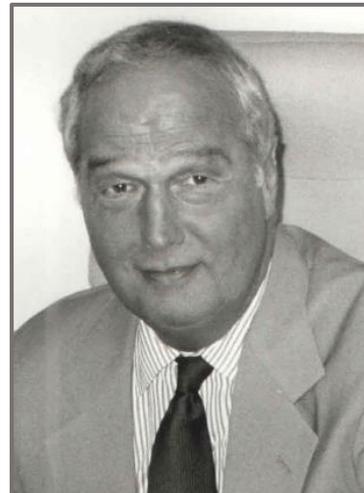
Class of 1957

MCHS Hall of Fame Induction 2022

Twenty-two years ago, the world welcomed the dawn of the 21st Century, the third millennium in the Gregorian calendar. But Madison native Robert Orrill focused on that arrival years before google, selfies, podcasts and emojis emerged.

A recipient of 2022 MCHS Alumni Hall of Fame distinction, Orrill spent most of the 70s, 80s and 90s focusing on the issues, continuity and advancement of education, particularly between high school and college curricula. He identified the need and sought the solution.

Under Orrill's leadership as executive director of the National Council on Education and the Disciplines, as well as senior advisor at the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, the nation's top scholars and teachers collaborated on curriculum standards in the four literacies – quantitative, scientific, historical and communicative. In the 1990s, as the executive director of the Office of Academic Affairs at the College Board, he served as the chief architect of the Pacesetter initiative, which led to a standards-based 12th grade curriculum to address the “senior slump” of students electing easy classes rather than the more rigorous, college preparatory. Many educational entities reference Orrill as the “forefront of re-inventing” the curriculum in American high schools.



Education priority, however, only came natural for Orrill, a 1957 graduate of Madison High School, which later became a component of Madison Consolidated High School. On Broadway Street downtown, he excelled in academics in high school - third in his class - and continued that momentum at Purdue University and then at Oxford University in England on a graduate level. His stellar academic performance served as a key component in being named a Rhodes Scholar, as well as the recipient of the University History Prize in 1964. Annually, only 32 college seniors nationwide merit the Rhodes commendation.

In addition to his efforts to narrow the academic gap between high school and college, the distinguished MCHS alumnus also strived to incorporate and promote the importance of democracy and diversity in all teachings. Numerous publications today don American bookshelves with Robert Orrill as the author, including *The Future of Education ...*, *The Condition of American Liberal Education ...* and *Education and Democracy ...*

Besides today's alumnus honor, Orrill already occupies another spot at MCHS, the Athletic Hall of Fame for his basketball ability as a Cub. Orrill wore jersey No. 10 when he played on the Indiana All Star team.

As MCHS students accept the academic need to take higher level, demanding classes to better prepare themselves for college and life in the 21st Century, the labors of a fellow Jefferson Countian will be at work.