



THIS YEAR IN THE LEARNING CENTER

As of the end of February, the Learning Center has received 253 initial student referrals for the 2014-2015 academic year. Referred students have visited the Learning Center 1,689 times during school hours, including 582 visits during Directed Studies, 72 visits during non-academic classes, 682 visits during academic classes, and 64 visits during lunch or from ISS. Students who are scheduled regularly for a block in the Learning Center (for Gradpoint, study hall, or special circumstances) have attended 289 times. During after school hours, students have come to the Learning Center 232 times. One hundred sixty nine of those visits were for individual tutoring while 63 were for study skills workshops.

All of these students have been served by a relatively small number of tutors including the Learning Center Coordinator, our two social services tutors, one parent volunteer, 5 community volunteers, and 12 student volunteers from the Beta, Leo and Mu Alpha Theta Clubs.

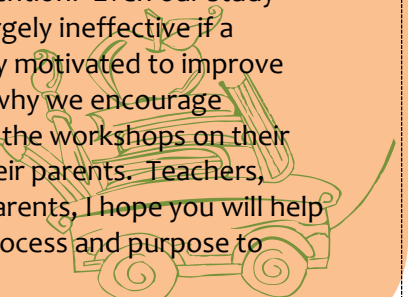
With more volunteer tutors, we would be able to assist even more students, possibly in a wider variety of subject areas. In most subjects and grade levels, we have the knowledge and skill to assist students, but just need additional tutors. In specialized areas like foreign languages, physics, and calculus we are lacking in our ability to assist students. We would love to have some tutors on standby for those subjects. If you know of any possible tutors, I hope you will let us know.

HELPING PARENTS UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF THE LEARNING CENTER

One of our greatest challenges is helping parents understand the Learning Center's mission to serve as a hub of assistance to all students, teachers, and even school programs. Many of them see us as a free tutoring service to help their child for the entire school year. Others think of us as a kind of special education program. We are neither of those things. Our goal is to provide limited and temporary assistance that will help students in specific areas of need so that they can move forward and become more independent learners.

We do provide some support to the special education teachers and their students, but we are not a special education program. I have a strong background in special education for gifted students. I also have experience with some students on the high end of the autism spectrum, and with various learning disabled students. However, our program is not part of the special education department and we cannot provide special education services to any student. The Learning Center might be an option for support services on a student's IEP at best.

It is not uncommon for a parent to call me requesting help for his/her child who is failing, even though a brief look at Power School reveals that the student has a long list of zeros and is not completing their work. I try to explain to them that a teacher should refer the student if he/she feels the student has an *academic* problem. *Behavioral* problems require clear and consistent expectations and consequences rather than Learning Center intervention. Even our study skills workshops are largely ineffective if a student is not internally motivated to improve their learning. That is why we encourage students to sign up for the workshops on their own, rather than by their parents. Teachers, when you meet with parents, I hope you will help us by reiterating our process and purpose to them.



THINGS TO KNOW AND REMEMBER

- We often administer make-up and/or read-aloud tests, quizzes and exams in the Learning Center. If you have students in need of these services, please give us a call and we will be glad to help.
- We try to maintain a file of as many assignments as we can. For example, we keep files of all middle school and algebra 1 weekly comps. We also try to collect copies of reading guides and other handouts. We encourage teachers to email us copies of assignments or give us codes so that we can check your online resources. We do have the ability to get assignments from Power School, but if you use other online sites, we would love to be able to access them.
- The Learning Center is open every day during school. Social services tutors do not work on Mondays and Miss Wilson does not work on Fridays.

WE APPRECIATE OUR TEACHERS!

The Learning Center would like to give a “shout-out” to the teachers who consistently utilize our services and who regularly provide us with materials and information from their curriculum. We receive more referrals and specific assignments from the middle school math and algebra 1 teachers than from any other group of teachers in the school. We say a huge thank you to Kay Goodgame, Jessica Smith, Yang Im, Elizabeth Stewart, Gay Negus and Julie Daniel. These ladies not only send many students our way, but provide us with weekly copies of their Comps, instructions for error-analysis, and copies of study guides, tests, and quizzes.

Kudos also need to go out to Leslie Trehwhitt for the students she refers, for scheduling her read-aloud tests ahead of time, and for her unending encouragement and support; to Robin Faulk for providing her Edmodo codes so we have access to all of her assignments; and to David Poss for taking advantage of our offer to provide assistance with make-up tests and assignments.

Thank you to ALL teachers for always being supportive and so willing to help our students. SMMHS has the best faculty anywhere!

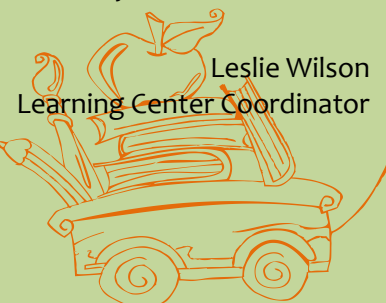


Amelia Lambert and Sophia Barone

SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT TUTORS

Two students have become regular volunteer tutors for the Learning Center and are an incredible help to us. Sophia Barone and Amelia Lambert are Beta Club Members and Amelia is also a member of the Leo Club. These girls were only asked to tutor for a brief amount of time as club members, but they have continued to come almost every afternoon after school since first semester.

They both work beautifully with younger students. They not only have the skill and knowledge to help with academics, but are also patient and encouraging with each and every student. Amelia is hoping to develop a plan for training and scheduling more student tutors as her senior project next year. I am so thankful for these girls' help! They are making our afternoon tutoring sessions so much easier and allowing us to accommodate more students than ever. I look forward to seeing their work expanded next year!



Leslie Wilson
Learning Center Coordinator