



BALTIMORE
CITY COLLEGE

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Volume 1 Issue 2 Summer 2017

Our year by the numbers:

- Over 18,736 student visits to the library
- 3,515 peer tutoring sessions in writing, research, math and science
- 2,011 new books added to our collection
- 102 new Chromebooks for student use

Contributors:

Sarah Jeanblanc,
Director

Jennifer Gaither,
Librarian

Alisa Engsborg,
*Reed Math and Science
Center Coordinator*

Karen Hodges,
*Research Center
Coordinator*

Lena Tashjian,
*Writing Center
Coordinator*

Our First Year in Review

Supporting Our Students to Challenge Themselves and Succeed

It was an exciting year for City students and teachers in the new Center for Teaching and Learning. The stunning new space, which was made possible by a 2.2 million dollar fundraising effort from alumni, families, students and community members, was a hub of support that prompted growth and innovation for our City family.

The Meyerhoff Library was visited on average over 100 times a day by students before school, during lunch, study hall and after school. With expanded hours, even on days when school was closed for students, students were able to access our expanded collection, use technology, and study in a quiet space.

Doetsch Hall was a premier meeting space for students, teachers, families and Baltimore City School events. We welcomed families to hear students music recitals, research presentations and learn more about our program. We welcomed students from across the city for students leadership forums and 8th grade preview days. We welcomed community members for our interview clinic, career day, and writing workshops. We welcomed City Schools teachers for professional development and strategic planning sessions.

The Writing Center, Reed Math and Science Center and Research Centers offered a combined total of over 1,500 more tutoring sessions than the year before. In addition to offering lunch and after school peer tutoring sessions, the centers also partnered with teachers to offer in class peer tutoring and feedback to teachers to support all of our students with City's challenging IB curriculum.

The Cordish Technology Center gave students much needed expanded access to technology during the school day, space to support small group tutoring and a home for City's brand new Coding Club.

This report will not only give an overview of our first year but also chronicle our innovations and achievements as students, faculty and community members used this beautiful new space.



Juniors working after school in the Meyerhoff library.



Peer tutoring in the Reed Center during lunch.



Sophomores presenting projects to families Doetsch Hall.

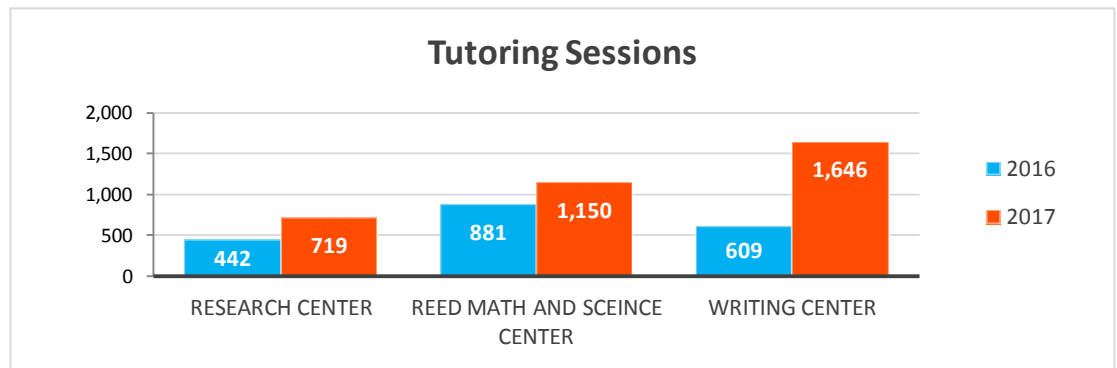


Freshmen meet with alum Lionel Foster in the Cordish Center.



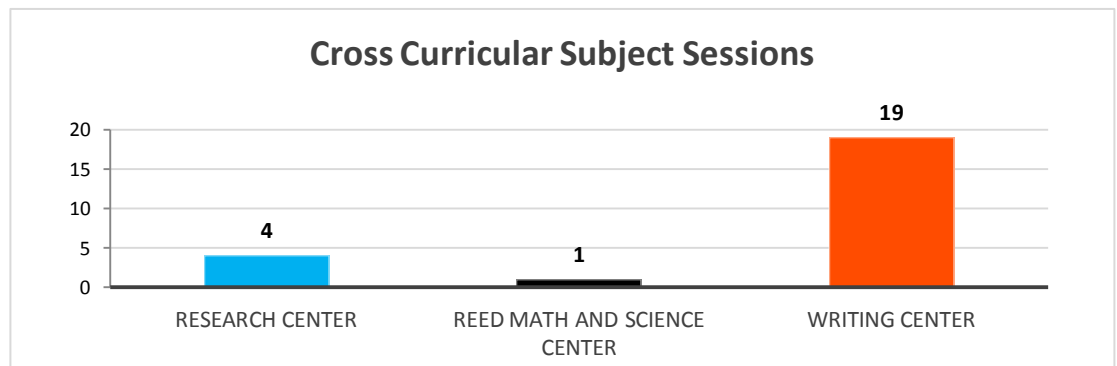
Tutoring Centers Prosper in the New CTL

In their new spaces, the Research Center, Writing Center and Reed Math and Science Centers, have flourished and expanded their influence at City College. As a group, the centers offered a total of 3,515 tutoring sessions with students and teachers during the 2016-2017 school year- an increase of 55% from the previous year. The centers also innovated, with tutors presenting at conferences and finding new ways to meet the needs of teachers and and students this year.



New additions to the Writing Center and Reed Math and Science Centers this year were an additional instructor for each as well as additional tutors. As a result, both centers were available to work with more students, grades 9 through 12, during lunch periods, study halls and after school. Morgan State University provided work/study students to support more individualized instruction in advanced mathematics, particularly in AP Calculus, and also helped the the Reed Center tutors expand into science tutoring this year.

The Writing Center tutors partnered with individual teachers and used adjoining spaces in the library and Cordish Technology center to tutor students during regular class time, giving focused instruction to students that teachers identified as in need of extra help. This class time support also helped spread awareness of the benefits of the Writing Center for both teachers and students. Consequently, the Writing Center tutors celebrated nearly triple the number of sessions as the year before and the most tutoring sessions in cross-curricular courses, 19 in all, supporting writing instruction in every other department in the school.



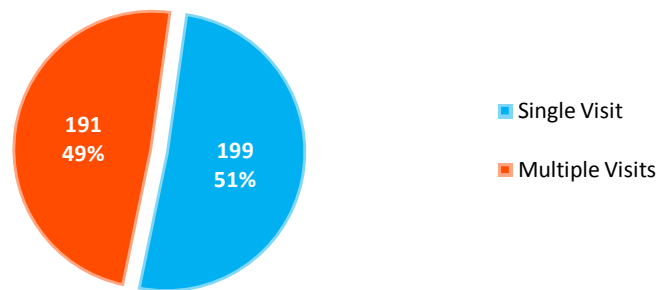
*Cross curricular refers to any courses outside of English in the Writing Center, courses outside of Social Studies in the Research Center and courses outside of Math and Science in the Reed Center



Tutoring Centers Prosper in the New CTL

The Reed Center tutors also innovated this year to become a teaching lab for the Math Department. Tutors kept a record of student misunderstandings and questions and shared them with math faculty. This feedback gave teachers valuable information about how to best support their students. This responsiveness to student needs and questions also contributed to the high frequency of return clients. 49% of the students who were tutored in the Reed Centers returned more than once. Student clients also self reported that their confidence in both the subject of math and their specific assignments increased after each visit. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- no confidence to 5- very confident), students' confidence in math increased on average of .5 after each session, while their confidence in specific math assignments increased by .8 after each session.

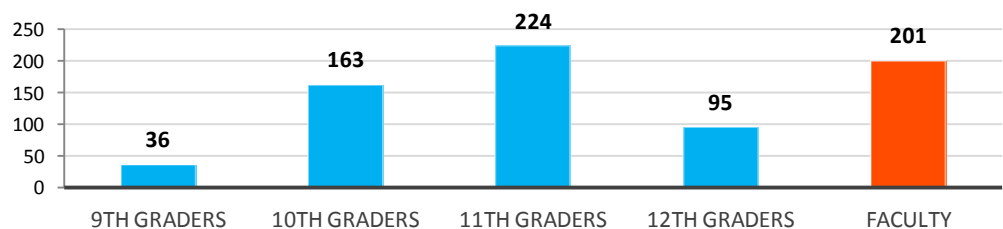
Repeat Clients in the Reed Center



For the first time In 2016-2017, the Research Center had a dedicated space. Like the Reed Center and Writing Centers, the Research Center was open during lunch, study periods and after school. Unlike the other centers, however, it was only staffed by the Research Coordinator and also had additional roles beyond tutoring in the areas of faculty support and curriculum development.

The two groups that used the Research Center the most this year were juniors and faculty. Juniors visited the center for help with their Extended Essays and research assignments, like the IB Historical Investigation. Faculty needed support in advising independent projects such as the 10th grade IB Personal Project and 11th grade IB Extended Essay.

Research Center Visits





Tutoring Centers Prosper in the New CTL

The Research Coordinator was also a hub for curriculum development in the IB Personal Project, research integration into the Social Studies curriculum and advisory curriculum. This work extended into communicating and training in all of these areas with faculty. Next year, a small group of tutors will be trained to help juniors with the Extended Essay to expand our capacity to support upperclassmen with research skills.

Finally, the centers collaborated in areas of leadership and focused support. The Writing Center and Reed Center tutors presented together at both the Capital Area Peer Tutoring Association at George Mason University and the Free Minds Free People Conference at Loyola University, sharing their work with school leaders from across the country. The Reed Center hosted a Baltimore City Professional Development workshop for other area IB schools. The Writing Center and Research Centers collaborated with the librarian to support 100 seniors as they completed their IB Extended Essays this year.



Caption: Peer tutors from the Writing Center and Reed and Math Center presented at the Free Minds, Free People Conference at Loyola University in July.



Empowering Students through Leadership: The Impact of Peer Tutoring

By Destiny DeShields ('18) and Lizet Anzures-Cruz ('17), Reed Center Tutors

Peer tutoring in the Center for Teaching and Learning benefits not only our peer clients, but also our upperclassmen tutors. Through an analysis of data and student reflections, we will show how the experience of tutoring improved tutor grades, communication skills and sense of responsibility.

The tutoring experience improved and diversified our communication skills. In our pre-service surveys, Reed Center tutors began the year with a mixture emotions, indicating that they were “proud but frightened,” and “excited and intimidated” about becoming tutors. After a year of tutoring, tutors reported that they felt “confident in my ability to help others” and “accomplished that people look at me as a person that they can go to when they need help.” This confidence developed as tutors learned how to interpret and respond to different learning styles, raise self esteem in others and motivate their peers. Through peer tutoring and teacher feedback sessions, tutors learned how to communicate professionally with both their peer clients and teachers about math and the learning process.

Peer tutors also adopted a more responsible role in the school. Not only did Reed Center tutors have higher attendance than their peers, but they also assumed a leadership role in maintaining a positive academic culture at our school. Tutor and client relationships extended beyond the math center and into classrooms and the hallways as tutors adopted the belief that all students had the ability to be successful with the right supports. Tutors became both models and coaches for their peers as they worked through challenges in all of their classrooms. We became members of leadership in the school that believe that academic success is achievable for all.

This confidence and responsible attitude also helped tutors do better academically. A study of ten senior Reed Center tutors showed a growth in not only math class grades, but also overall grade point average. Senior Reed tutors had an average of growth of 1.07 in their GPA and 9.9% in their year end math grade.

| Student | GPA During Year Preceding Math Center Participation | GPA During Year of Math Center Participation | % Growth in GPA | % in Algebra II | % in Math Class While a Tutor | % Growth in Math Score |
|------------|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Student 1 | 2.714 | 3.75 | 38% | 88 | n/a | n/a |
| Student 2 | 2.5 | 3.64 | 46% | 80 | 87 | 9% |
| Student 3 | 4 | 3.86 | -4% | 73 | 87 | 19% |
| Student 4 | 2.357 | 3.29 | 40% | 80 | 80 | 0% |
| Student 5 | 2.786 | 3.92 | 41% | 70 | 87 | 24% |
| Student 6 | 2.143 | 3.13 | 46% | 60 | 87 | 45% |
| Student 7 | 1.929 | 4.07 | 111% | 73 | 95 | 30% |
| Student 8 | 2.214 | 3.36 | 52% | 79 | 80 | 1% |
| Student 9 | 3.643 | 4.07 | 12% | 82 | 87 | 6% |
| Student 10 | 1.813 | 3.79 | 109% | 79 | 87 | 10% |
| Senior Avg | 2.6099 | 3.688 | 41% | 76.4 | 86.3333333 | 13% |

We look forward to welcoming a new group of tutors next year in the Reed Center who will grow as student leaders and support our peers.



The Impact of the CTL on Student Achievement: A Case Study

Context

Baltimore City College, established in 1839, is a public high school that holds students to the highest standards, sending almost 100% of graduates to college. Although students must meet entrance criteria to attend City, their need for support is high: 69% of the student body qualify for free and reduced meals and 51% of the population will be the first in their family to attend college. As the only public International Baccalaureate (IB) school in Baltimore, City is uniquely positioned to empower students to overcome inequalities. While nationally there is a gap in IB access for low income students and students of color, City offers IB courses to all students (Theokas and Saaris 2013). This open access to IB courses is vital. Research from the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, National Student Clearinghouse and International Baccalaureate indicates that IB Diploma students are more likely to go to university at higher rates, go to more selective universities and perform better once there (Adams 2015).

Many of City's students travel over an hour each way on public transportation to attend school daily and conditions for the city's youth are stressful. Nevertheless, students arrive at city with the drive, ambition and raw talent necessary to succeed. To provide the additional academic supports that these students need, the Torch Burning Bright campaign raised \$2.2 million dollars from alumni, families, teachers, community members and students to create the Center for Teaching and Learning. Opened for students in the fall of 2016, this support hub includes the Joseph Meyerhoff Library, George Doetsch Hall, Stanford Reed Math and Science Center, David Cordish Technology Center, Writing Center and Research Center. To measure the impact of our new Center for Teaching on our students, we will examine a case study of one aspect of the IB program- the IB Extended Essay.

The Extended Essay

To earn the IB Diploma, students must write a 4,000 word extended essay. The Extended Essay develops a range of skills that students will need to succeed in college, such as analyzing, evaluating, constructing and reflecting on an argument. Alumni surveyed report that the Extended Essay was the single most important thing that prepared them the best for college. Students select a faculty adviser to guide them, but all work for the project is done outside of the classroom and in addition to a full IB Diploma course load of study. For the last five years, City has supported between 28 and 55 students annually through this individualized process. However, the class of 2017 marked a massive expansion of the IB Diploma program. This year, 100 seniors wrote and submitted IB Extended Essays to IB graders. The new Center for Teaching and Learning provided support through peer tutoring, an expanded collection, individualized instruction, technology access and expanded hours for students to work through this process.



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Supports

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) became the anchor for Extended Essay support. The Meyerhoff library offered expanded hours, technology and research collection. The space also hosted individualized instruction and even a “relaxation station” for easing stress. Monthly “work days” for students and professional development for faculty took place in Doetsch Hall. The Writing Center’s peer tutors coached upperclassmen through the process, from finding reliable sources to formatting the final work. The Research Center provided one on one support for both students and faculty. Faculty led small group instruction in the Cordish Technology Center.

Expanded library hours were essential to meet the needs of our students who traveled so far each day to attend school. The library was open daily from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, days when school was closed for students (teacher professional days) and three weeks into summer vacation so that students could not only access materials and technology, but also get individualized instruction from the librarian. This flexible and expanded time meant that students could still participate in activities, go to coach class and even have a job while still receiving getting extra help on the Extended Essay.

Wireless internet and the acquisition of over 100 new computers for both the Cordish Technology Center and the Meyerhoff Library were vital for students who did not have technology access at home. We also added over 2,000 books to our collection since August of 2016. New acquisitions supported Extended Essay topics in Film, Theatre, Physics, Economics, Visual Arts, Global Politics and World History. And following the model of university libraries, a “relaxation station” was created in the library to help students take a break and manage stress levels.

The CTL also hosted monthly Extended Essay work days. These days allowed students to work with faculty advisers, volunteers, Writing Center peer tutors, Research Coordinator and the librarian for an extended period of time during the school day. The large and flexible space of the new CTL was ideal for meeting the needs of such a large group of students- peer tutoring in the Writing Center, one on one instruction in the Research Center, small group instruction in the Cordish Technology center and large group instruction in Doetsch Hall and the Meyerhoff library happened simultaneously..

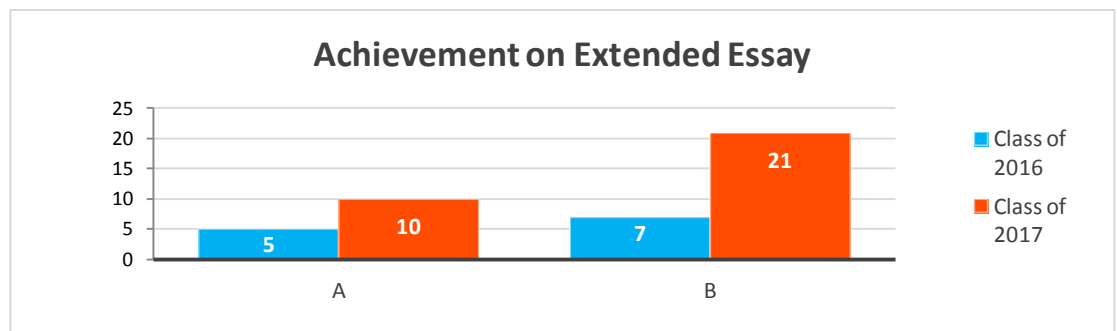
Despite the many large and small group supports that the center provided students, many students needed one on one instruction. The librarian and Research Coordinator both worked individually with students, but we also saw a need to expand our capacity. We recruited a group of four retired educators who worked with the students who were most in need of this support. This additional resources was vital for students, including some of our non-native English speaking students.



The Impact of the CTL on Student Achievement: A Case Study

Results

Extended Essay results from the Class of 2017 show that this dedicated support from the Center for Teaching and Learning impacted achievement. Results demonstrated a significant increase in both the number of As and Bs earned on the Extended Essay overall, as well as increased achievement of students from underrepresented minority groups.



A passing mark on the Extended Essay is required in order for a student to earn the IB Diploma, however, more points are awarded towards achieving the diploma if students earn a B or above on their work. In the Class of 2016 which had an overall pass rate of 98%, 55 students submitted Extended Essays and only 12 students earned As and Bs. 58% of those who earned these top marks were from underrepresented minority groups. The Class of 2017 which had a pass rate of 100%, however, submitted 100 Extended Essays and earned 31 As and Bs. 77% of those who earned top marks were from underrepresented minority groups.

These higher marks on Extended Essay consequently lead to more IB Diplomas earned overall. The Class of 2016 earned 22 IB Diplomas, while the Class of 2017 earned 47. 12 of those 47 students from the class of 2017 were awarded extra points towards their Diploma because of their exemplary work on the Extended Essay.

Conclusion

This case study examined the impact of how one aspect of the IB Diploma program was impacted by the new Center for Teaching and Learning. The new space provided an opportunity for collaboration between faculty and volunteers, targeted and varied supports for students, and increased access to library services. Students were successful on the Extended Essay as a group, earned higher marks overall and underrepresented minority students achieved at higher levels. As the IB program continues to grow and more upperclassmen write the IB Extended Essay, the support structure of the CTL will continue to adapt to accommodate the needs of our students. Plans for next school year include adding peer tutors to the Research Center, more small group instruction throughout the year and the addition of a writing lab in the Meyerhoff Library space.

Adams, C. (2015, June 08). Study Links International Baccalaureate to College Success. Retrieved July 27, 2017 from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/college_bound/2015/06/ib.html

Thokas, C., & Saaris, R. (2013). Finding America's Missing AP and IB Students. The Education Trust.