

Hello Miss Hall's Families,

Happy August to you all! My name is Chris Ouellette and I serve as the Director of the Academic Skills Center, nestled snugly in the library at Miss Hall's. It is a pleasure to meet you if I haven't had the chance already!

The MHS Academic Skills Center has, until now, functioned as a fee-for-service model, where families have had to pay for service levels based on the needs of the student. Miss Hall's is deeply committed to doing the work it takes to build a diverse, equity minded, and inclusive learning and working environment. We feel strongly that an inclusive learning environment includes supporting learners of all abilities. Whether a student has a learning difference or not, all students can benefit from working with a Learning Specialist in some capacity based on their individual needs. To this end, it is with great pleasure that I announce the rollout of a **Fee-Free Academic Skills Center** at Miss Hall's School for the 2021-2022 school year and beyond!

The Academic Skills Center will be providing opportunities for all students to connect with our learning specialists in some capacity based on their individual needs. We will continue to serve students with regular specialized academic services who need ongoing support, and support will range from 1-1 and small group check-ins to study hall availability or grade level connections around shared challenges. It is our belief that great learners ask for help, great learners seek outside view points, and ultimately, great learners come to the Academic Skills Center!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Chris Ouellette, Director of the Academic Skills Center couellette@misshalls.org.

Best wishes for the summer and I look forward to working with your students in 2021-2022!

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Ouellette', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Ouellette

The Academic Skills Center (ASC)

Mission:

The Academic Skills Center (ASC) is a resource dedicated to serving the members of the MHS academic community, including students and faculty. The ASC promotes academic, cognitive and personal growth in students, while facilitating the acquisition of support skills among faculty members. The ASC partners with students and their teachers in order to promote a collaborative process to address individual learning needs. In addition, ASC learning specialists create opportunities for group learning through professional development, engagement with grade-level programs, and seminar-style course offerings for students who self-identify as needing such support. By facilitating the development of students' self-awareness, and academic skills, the ASC aims to create life-long learners who embody the MHS core competencies of vision, voice, interpersonal efficacy, and gumption.

Core Values:

Unconditional Positive Regard: Our practice is informed by the belief that radical acceptance, and genuinely caring relationships are fundamental to the well-being and growth of all learners. We position ourselves as nonjudgmental advocates, seeking outcomes that serve each student holistically while honoring their dynamic strengths, needs, hopes and concerns.

Growth: Our practice is informed by the belief that growth, as opposed to mastery, is the ultimate goal of the learning process. Students are encouraged to take academic risks in order to discover their own potential and reach beyond what they thought was possible for themselves.

Self-Awareness: Our practice is informed by the belief that developing conscious knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, strengths, and opportunities for growth is central to a student's learning.

Resilience: Our practice is informed by the belief that academic success is contingent upon working through challenges and responding to moments of failure as an opportunity for learning.

Agency: Our practice is informed by the belief that encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning helps them to identify the ways in which their thoughts and actions manifest in both desirable and undesirable consequences, and enables them to direct their energies in ways that best serve their personal and academic goals.