

Greater Commonwealth Virtual School



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Greater Commonwealth Virtual School Shares Success of Hadley Support Center



Students at the Greater Commonwealth Virtual School's Hadley Support center play cards together to bond between classes. (Courtesy Greater Commonwealth Virtual School)

GREENFIELD — The Greater Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) is pleased to share the success of the Hadley Support Center, created for students in need of additional support and instruction in an in-person setting.

The Hadley Support Center opened with a summer program on July 13, 2022, to provide additional support for students beyond the school's virtual model.

The center is located at 1 Mill Valley Road in Hadley. Students in middle school (Grades 6 to 8) and high school (Grades 9 to 12) attend in-person classes two days a week. Only one group is in the Center at a time.

The center serves 12 high school students and five middle school students. Two high school students are on course to graduate this spring after completing internships as part of their work at the center.

"It's been a really neat experience to see the growth that has taken place with these students," said Hadley Support Center Coordinator Kris Provost.

The Center serves students who have special needs or Individualized Education Programs (IEP's), and those who may just need additional support such as social emotional learning support.

Classes at the center include breaks for games to help students bond. Provost said the way that the students have come together and formed friendships has been one of the center's biggest successes so far. He said students have bonded in the classroom and even met after school to further friendships.

"These students are all so different, and if it weren't for the Center I don't think they would have developed these kinds of relationships where they hang out together, because they all came here with such different areas of interest," Provost said.

The Center seeks to help students better understand the role of academics in their lives, and to better understand the pathways available as they move toward graduation.

All students at the Center participate in setting guidelines and norms so that everyone can be comfortable and feel like they belong. Students also participate in a weekly "town meeting," and visit weekly with a counselor at the Center.

"One of our biggest challenges and primary goals is to help students refine their view of themselves and their academic work, and to help them understand why academics are important," Provost said. "We help them put together plans for their personal journey and where they want to go with their lives, and then we help them find a pathway to get there."

"My overall experience with the support center is that it provides an amazing space for students to learn and explore their interests. We all engage with one another in a classroom setting but because there are so few of us it's hard to not make friends with one another," said senior Lee Deater-Deckard. "The learning coaches engage students in many different ways, through board games and conversation and everyday is an enjoyable one. Mr. Provost has provided me an opportunity to pursue a possible career in tattooing and he's managed to do similar things for other students. If anyone ever has the opportunity to attend a support center I highly recommend it as there are many benefits!"

"The support center has been a great place to connect with some kids my age, which is one of the things I wanted the most prior to coming here," said freshman Elijah Mazumdar. "I really appreciate all the opportunities it has presented me with."

"I like being here. It is an escape from home and a way to socialize with people," said senior Javon Nieves.

GCVS students come from across the state. GCVS is now considering adding additional support centers to serve students from the central and eastern portions of Massachusetts.

"A lot of the things we were initially hoping would happen, in terms of relationship building and helping students grow as individuals, has really gone well beyond what I expected," said Provost. "I'm very pleased at the growth and maturity in a lot of our students."

Eligibility

The Hadley Support Center is available for any middle school or high school student enrolled in GCVS. Any student who is within a reasonable commutable distance is eligible. Busing is available.

Last year GCVS began reaching out to families of students to encourage enrollment in the Center (and in many cases, working with the students directly).

Any other student or family wishing to learn more is encouraged to inquire. For more information about the Hadley Support Center, call GCVS 413-475-3879, or email Kris Provost at kprovost@gcvs.org.

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A message from the Greater Commonwealth Virtual School



*Middle School students at the Greater Commonwealth Virtual School's Hadley Support Center play in the snow together.
(Courtesy Greater Commonwealth Virtual School)*



One of the greatest successes so far at GCVS's Hadley Support center has been the bonds that have formed between students who attend. (Courtesy Greater Commonwealth Virtual School)