

Teachers in the Spotlight

Jump-Start Your Grades with a Teacher Tutor Session

By Victoria Reyes

During the pandemic, teachers will tell you it was a struggle to keep students engaged during virtual learning. And when Halsey went back to virtual learning during the Omicron surge in January, many students had trouble staying focused and keeping their grades up. To help students get back on track, the school put in place an after-school tutoring program. We asked English teacher Joshua Lay, Biology teacher Courtney Burke, and Math teacher Theresa Adachi about the program and why they think students should attend.

Was it your choice to begin tutoring? If it was, why did you think it would be a good idea?

Ms. Burke: Yes, I think tutoring is a great intervention for students because it allows for extra instructional time in a small group setting. It can mean the difference between a student failing and passing a class. I want to help my students succeed. If one hour after school can make that difference, I am happy to do it.

Mr. Lay: Yes, it was my choice. I know not all students are able to understand the lessons in class each day and need a time and place for extra help. I'm glad I can provide that needed time and support.

Ms. Adachi: Yes, because some students need one-on-one instruction.



Biology teacher Courtney Burke



English teacher Joshua Lay

How do you think being virtual last year and then again for 2 weeks this school year affected students?

Ms. Burke: The pandemic has not only taken a toll academically, but mentally and emotionally. I think the struggle in education is only natural because if students did not achieve certain benchmarks during virtual instruction, then it is more difficult to build on those concepts in current courses. Despite the circumstances, I think students at Halsey are doing really well this year!

Mr. Lay: Virtual learning definitely played a role in students struggling with their classes. Students were not able to get the same one-on-one instruction and did not always have a distraction-free study place.

Ms. Adachi: I believe that virtual learning last year had an impact on the struggle of students this year.

Along with tutoring, what else could be beneficial to the students?

Ms. Burke: For students who have an interest in science, the new STEM Club is something that will look good on college applications. We are at-capacity for the club this year, but it benefits the students by giving them opportunities to build and design engineering projects. It is a hands-on, real-world learning experience.

Mr. Lay: I think book clubs and other general interest clubs would help students be more productive with their free time. Collaborating with other like-minded students on various tasks and activities would be a lot better than going home to nap or watch Netflix.

Ms. Adachi: More studying. Some students don't know how to study or review their notes.

Do you have any words of advice for students scared to attend tutoring?

Ms. Burke: I have students come for tutoring every day. So, you are not the only person who might need a little extra help. Just because someone comes to tutoring doesn't mean they have a bad grade. I have students with A's in the class who have come to tutoring. It can only help you. There is no reason to be scared to attend. Bring a friend if that makes you feel more comfortable.

Mr. Lay: Don't be scared! The teachers want to help you!

Ms. Adachi: Take advantage of the free resources given to you in school.



Math teacher Theresa Adachi