

## November 2019 Featured Writers: A2 STEAM Literacy Center

A2 STEAM, an Ann Arbor K-8 public school, is prioritizing literacy with a new initiative: The Literacy Center. The center, which runs as a class for seventh and eighth grade students, supports the entire school with reading and writing-focused programming and services.

The Literacy Center hosts a suite of services all K-8 A2 STEAM teachers and students can utilize. The [Literacy Leaders](#), the students in the class, can be booked to host anything from a read aloud (view their list

of [featured books](#)) to a live tutoring session.

Students in need of writing support can submit papers electronically through an online form.



“We want to make sure that everyone in our school can get the literacy

help that they need,” Elizabeth Sobocinski, eight grade, said. “Not everyone is in the same place and the literacy support teachers can’t always do it all. We want to make sure students can [read and write] and can [read and write] better than they do now.”

Students signed up for the elective class after attending a field trip to Skyline High School Writing Center. A2 STEAM students had the opportunity to meet with high school writing consultants from Ann Arbor and Saline schools.

“I wanted to be part of The Literacy Center because I really like reading and writing and I really want to help people,” Elizabeth said.

While some Literacy Leaders have always loved reading and writing, others, like seventh grader Oliver Maranda, have found a love of literacy through the class. Oliver says his English grade last year was his lowest grade.

“I thought it would be a good idea [to join the class] because maybe it would improve my grade,” he said. “I love working with kids, older than me, younger than me — I love working with people. I love helping others no matter what.”

In addition to supporting the literacy efforts at A2 STEAM, the Literacy Leaders are also growing in their leadership and teamwork skills.



“Writing isn’t something that you’re just born knowing and born feeling comfortable with,” Wren Collins, seventh grade, said. “We want to help other students feel good about their writing. It doesn’t have to be the best writing, but as long as it grows a little bit more and [students] feel encouraged and they feel good about their writing.”

The class is led by Karen Haddas, who has won the hearts of the Literacy Leaders. When asked about her, they can’t help but smile. This working relationship developed between the students and Karen is one of the keys to the Center’s success.

The efforts surrounding the The Literacy Center at A2 STEAM are helping students understand the importance of everyone identifying as a writer.

“Writing is such an important part of our society,” Elizabeth said. “I think once you identify as a writer you know that you can [participate in society].”

Keep up with A2 STEAM’s Literacy Center with their [blog](#) and learn more about their services and donation opportunities at their [website](#).