

A young girl with short brown hair, wearing a green shirt and a black backpack, is smiling and looking back over her shoulder. She is in a school hallway with other students in the background. The image is framed by a blue border with a yellow wavy line at the top and bottom.

# *a Day in the Life*

SPRINGER SCHOOL AND CENTER  
2015 / 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

**DEAR FRIENDS,**

For 45 years, Springer School and Center has opened its doors to children with learning disabilities. By design, the school looks and feels like a typical school. However, most everyone who has crossed the threshold and experienced Springer will tell you that it is not like any other school. Children, parents and visitors alike say that they feel the difference as soon as they come through the door. One father said, "I felt it the moment I walked into the lobby. There was a kind and friendly spirit evident in the way I saw teachers and students interacting. I knew before I ever got to the Admissions Office that this would be a great place for my son."

A Day in the Life, this year's Annual Report, provides a series of snapshots across the school day with the hope that you can experience some of the Springer magic, whether you have ever crossed the threshold or not. And while much is captured through the quotes and photos, it remains challenging to convey the essence – the transformation of children who previously believed they would not have success in school, children who quietly folded into themselves hoping no one would notice what they could not do, or children who frequently found themselves at odds with their teachers because their challenges were not being addressed. Once at Springer, these very children begin to change their inner script, and over time regain their sense of self-assuredness. Shoulders relax and smiles return – the smiles you will see in the photos on the following pages.

The center, too, plays its role in improving the outcomes for children with learning disabilities through the classes and programs it provides for parents and professionals, through its referral services and the information shared via phone, email or postings to the blog, Insights into LD. And, Adventures in Summer Learning, a mainstay of center programming, combines direct academic instruction with fun activities, and along the way helps children feel better about themselves as learners.

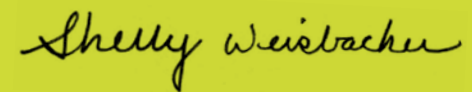
To achieve all that we do, however, would not be possible without your support. Thank you very much for joining us, and through your generosity helping to ensure the resources of Springer School and Center are available to the Greater Cincinnati community, and that families in need of financial assistance are able to receive it.

**Together, we change children's lives.**

*With gratitude,*



Matthew C. Blickensderfer  
President, Board of Trustees



Shelly Weisbacher  
Executive Director

# WELCOME TO SPRINGER SCHOOL AND CENTER!

We hope this "virtual tour" will give you an idea of what a typical day at Springer is like, and that you'll see how each element of a student's day contributes to a unified instructional plan that addresses his or her unique educational and personal needs.



[ Success Starts Here ]





*"On the day we toured Springer, we knew we belonged here. The Springer staff members have created a warm, welcoming, and uplifting environment."*

– **HOLLY**, CURRENT SPRINGER PARENT



When you enter through the front doors, our receptionist extends warm greetings. The lobby itself communicates energy and commitment to the whole child – a monitor displays images of students engaged in learning and play, photos of recent graduating classes hang on the wall, and student artwork is exhibited prominently.



Primary students begin their day by sharing what's on their minds with friends, as they learn to receive, respect and value the experiences of others. These students are wrapping up Morning Meeting with a game of charades.



*"Morning Meeting helps us to know each other. We greet each other every day, and do different kinds of greetings every day. Once we did 'knock-knock' jokes."*

– ALISON, PRIMARY STUDENT





*"By 'following the child' and their interests, we become partners with the students, valuing their contributions to our learning community, and encouraging them to explore new possibilities."*

– KIM, INTERMEDIATE TEACHER



With a classroom ratio of 1:6 students to staff, Springer's teachers are able to offer lots of individual attention, helping students to discover and appreciate their unique learning profile, and to gain the specific strategies that will help them find success despite their learning disability.



Based on readiness and individual needs, Springer designs a comprehensive academic program for each student, supported by a research-based curriculum that builds skills in reading, writing and math.



*"We had been contributing to a college fund for Avi, but by the end of fourth grade we realized that if something didn't change, we would never need that money. We had a complete educational assessment done, and when Avi heard the diagnoses of dyslexia, dyscalculia (learning disabilities in language and math) and ADHD, she cried tears of relief. Now we had something we could work with."*

– **TIPHANIE**, PARENT OF 2016 SPRINGER GRADUATE



*"I learn better when we do group projects because I learn from other people's ideas. It happens a lot in science classes."*

– **GABRIELLE**, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT



Group projects build social skills, cooperation and proficiency in problem solving. These times allow students to use their Executive Function skills, especially in the areas of planning, focus, effort and action.





Four Speech and Language Therapists work with Springer students individually and in classrooms. Psychological services are also available, and the work of these therapists, and the Occupational Therapists, are incorporated into the school day. Therapists collaborate with a student's team of teachers to coordinate progress toward each child's educational goals.



*"One of the best things about being a Language Therapist is seeing a child who has struggled with writing proudly share her latest writing piece – and smiling!"*

– **KATHY**, SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST



*"At recess, I get to talk to friends who are in other classes. After sitting inside and learning all day, we get to go outside and use our energy."*

– HUGH, INTERMEDIATE STUDENT



Recess is an essential part of the day for students with learning disabilities or ADHD, for whom schoolwork requires extra effort and attention.



Occupational Therapy is available to students who need it. Springer's two Occupational Therapists work with students to develop fine and gross motor and graphomotor skills.



*"Occupational therapy has helped me with my handwriting, and with typing, which is very important in Middle School. It's a lot of fun too, and I like working with the other students."*

**- SUMMER, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT**





*"Art doesn't have to be perfect. In art class, our minds get to be free."*

– **NIK**, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT



The Unified Arts Department gives students a chance to explore the visual and musical arts, and to build agility, coordination and strong bodies through physical education.



In the summer, Adventures in Summer Learning boosts students' skills and confidence, and gives parents valuable information about their child's learning profile. Springer's center also offers programs for parents and educators that help them better understand and meet the unique needs of students with learning disabilities and ADHD.



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*"In the Adventures in Summer Learning program, Tom learned organizational skills and strategies for maintaining focus that have helped him in school. The program gave Tom confidence, and it gave us peace of mind."*

– **NICK**, PARENT OF ADVENTURES STUDENT

# Annual Giving

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## A Springer Celebration!

\$148,000 for financial aid, school and outreach programs.

Gina Goings and Martha Millett,  
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*"Springer helped me realize I need to ask for help if I want to learn how to learn in the best way for me."*

– BEN SWEENEY,  
ALUMNI SPEAKER

*"Springer taught me that everyone learns in different ways, and that success is found when I seek opportunities that foster my natural tendencies."*

– EMILY MOORHEAD, ALUMNI SPEAKER



*"Springer changed my whole direction!"*

– CAROLINE HARTEN,  
ALUMNI SPEAKER



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# Fiscal Year

2015 – 2016

## At a Glance

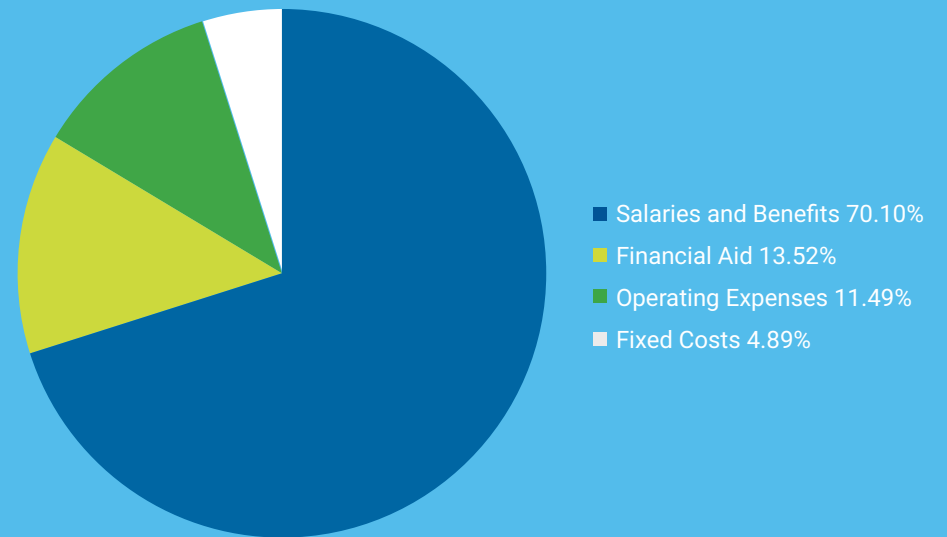
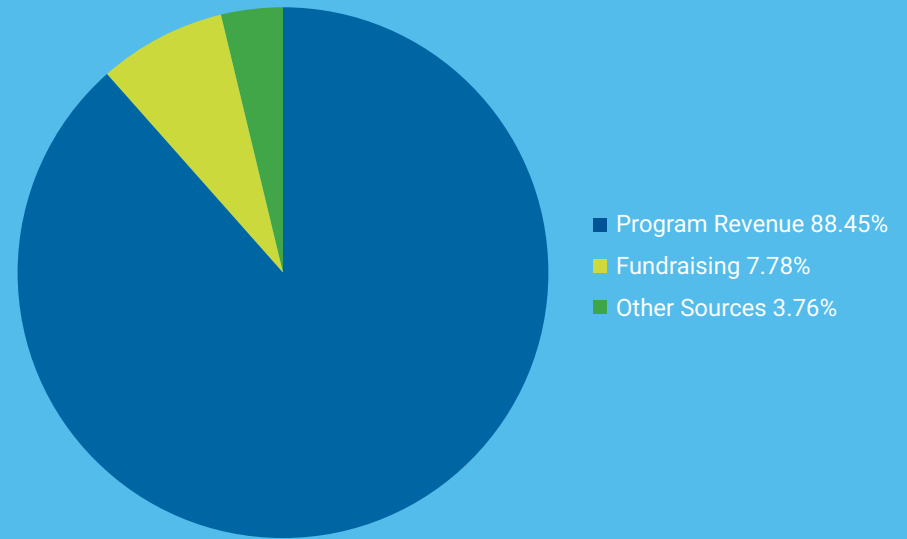
**SCHOOL** 196 students enrolled / 37% received financial aid / \$756,629 financial aid awarded / 56 Zip Codes served

**CENTER** 233 attended professional development programs / 687 participated in parent programs / 71 enrolled in the student summer programs

The operating budget of the school and center closed the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, with \$5.4 million in revenues, which exceed expenses by a modest amount. The accompanying charts indicate the percentage of revenue and expenses by major category.

**Virginia Heitzman, CPA**  
Business Director

Accredited: Independent Schools Association of the Central States



# *a Day in the Life*

SPRINGER SCHOOL AND CENTER  
2015 / 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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