

# LiteracyLinks

Quarterly Newsletter - September 2024



Portland LITERACY Council

## What we're covering this quarter:

- **Foundational Literacy - New PLC Program**
- **PLC Fall Schedule**
- **In Other News...**
  - **Afghan Support Network of Portland Needs Tutors**
  - **ORTESOL on Volunteer Tutors**
  - **Matching Donation Success!**
  - **Sneak Peak: Spring 2025 PLC Conference**

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## Foundational Literacy - New PLC Program

### FILLING A CRITICAL NEED

By Peggy L. Murphy, Portland Literacy Council Board of Directors

Do you have a friend or loved one who doesn't know how to read? Have you ever tried to get help for that person to improve reading, writing, and spelling skills? How did that work out?

Help is on the way! PLC has entered into a groundbreaking collaboration, foundational literacy tutoring, designed to help native-English speaking adults who want to improve reading, writing, and spelling skills.

PLC is working with [Language & Literacy Fund \(LLF\)](#) to train volunteer tutors who wish to help adults improve their literacy skills. LLF is a local nonprofit that supports adults in developing literacy skills. This [video](#) shares the experiences of some of the adults LLF helped during the last school year.

Tangela Purdom and David Roth, local supporters of arts and education are funding our initial efforts. Tangela has personal experience with dyslexia and has tremendous empathy for adult learners who struggle with learning disabilities. The Blosser Center, a local nonprofit that provides science-based foundational literacy education to children, facilitated the donation. This program now makes it possible “to bring foundational literacy education to adults in the Portland Metro area,” noted Suzanne LaGrande, Executive Director of the Blosser Center.

PLC is recruiting volunteers who are ready for the challenge of becoming foundational literacy tutors. Training will include teaching structured literacy methods, working with adult learners, and understanding lingering trauma adults have experienced from unsuccessful learning experiences.

The foundational literacy tutoring program will fill a critical need for adult literacy tutoring in the Portland Metro area. “We regularly hear from individuals who struggle to read at a

third grade level and it is very difficult to find help for them today. It will be wonderful to have well-trained resources available” stated Lorie Wigle, Executive Director of Portland Literacy.

If you’d like more information about the program, please contact Peggy Murphy, Foundational Literacy Program Manager, [peggy@portlandliteracy.org](mailto:peggy@portlandliteracy.org),

## PLC Fall Class Schedule



PLC's Fall Class Schedule is available!

Where noted, registration is now open and can be accessed [here](#). In addition, we want you to know that: "You spoke, we listened" and added a Literacy Tutor Connection time. A number of people have mentioned wanting more time to share stories and ask each other questions, so we are doing the connection time in response to that on Sept 16 (see schedule below). If people have other ideas of workshops they would like to take or things they want to learn about, they can email PLC Board Member Heidi Dryden with suggestions or comments at: [hdryden@portlandliteracy.org](mailto:hdryden@portlandliteracy.org).

| Date   | Course Title  | Course Description  |
|--|---|---|
| <p data-bbox="282 1094 581 1283">Sept 16<br/>7:00-8:20pm</p> <p data-bbox="282 1192 581 1283">FREE but registration required. To learn more and register click <a href="#">here</a>.</p> | <p data-bbox="659 1094 956 1157">Tutor Connections<br/>Instructor: Heidi Dryden</p> | <p data-bbox="1024 1094 1357 2032">Join our interactive Zoom workshop for volunteer literacy tutors working with English language learners (ELLs). This 1-hour session offers a platform for sharing experiences, discussing challenges, and finding answers to common questions about volunteering. Whether you're a seasoned tutor or just starting out, this is your opportunity to connect with peers, exchange valuable insights, and gain practical strategies to enhance your tutoring sessions. We'll explore questions from navigating cultural nuances to refining teaching techniques. We will also make time to share our favorite activities or ask about ideas of activities in a supportive and collaborative environment.</p> |

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| <p>Sept 21 &amp; 28<br/>(consecutive Saturdays)<br/>9:00 am – 2:30 pm<br/>PCC Sylvania</p> <p>To learn more and register, click <a href="#">here</a>.<br/>Scholarships available –<br/>Contact Lorie,<br/><a href="mailto:lwigle@portlandliteracy.org">lwigle@portlandliteracy.org</a></p> | <p>Basic Tutor Training- In person</p> <p>Instructor: Sarah Bauer</p>                   | <p>For those interested in teaching/tutoring English to adult learners, this 2-part workshop provides essential tools to get started or to refresh your knowledge and skills.</p>   |
| <p>Sept 24, 26<br/>Oct 1, 3, 8, 1<br/>7-8:20pm</p> <p>To learn more and register, click <a href="#">here</a>.<br/>Scholarships available –<br/>Contact Lorie,<br/><a href="mailto:lwigle@portlandliteracy.org">lwigle@portlandliteracy.org</a></p>   | <p>Basic Tutor Training- Zoom</p> <p>Instructor: Jennifer Snyder</p>                    | <p>For anyone interested in learning how to be an effective teacher or tutor of English for adult learners, this 6-part, Zoom workshop provides essential tools to get started or to refresh your knowledge and skills.</p>   |
| <p>Oct 15 &amp; 17<br/>Online<br/>Time: 7:00-8:20pm</p> <p>(Registration will open mid-September)</p>  | <p>Low Level Literacy ESOL</p> <p>Instructor: Lucy Marincel</p>                         | <p>You will learn strategies to differentiate within a small group to help engage all learners without creating four different lesson plans. We will look through some real life examples of modified tasks that meet the needs of multiple learners and practice differentiating a lesson together</p>   |
| <p>Oct 12 &amp; 19<br/>9:30-11am</p> <p>(Registration will open mid-September)</p>   | <p>GED Overview</p> <p>Instructor: Colleen Latimer</p>                                  | <p>Come and find out what it is like to tutor for the GED, get up-to-date information on GED testing, and learn different approaches to working with GED learners. Find out what it takes to pass, the steps in between, and how YOU can help a learner reach this valuable goal of completing their GED.</p>   |
| <p>Oct 26 &amp; Nov 2<br/>9:30-11am</p> <p>(Registration will open late September)</p>   | <p>Teaching online - Zoom strategies for teaching</p> <p>Instructor: Jennifer Baran</p> | <p>Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned online teacher, there are always new techniques for teaching language. In this session, we will explore the online teaching environment and how it requires tutors and teachers to adapt. We will explore the multilayers of language learning and ways to approach topics and functions. Participants will learn about resources that they can use for their</p> |

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|   |   | own tutoring sessions.  |
| <p>Nov 9 &amp; 16<br/>9:30-11am</p> <p>(Registration will open<br/>early October)</p> | <p>Math for Adult Learners</p> <p>Instructor: Colleen Latimer</p> | <p>This workshop is designed to empower tutors in effectively teaching math to adult learners and GED seekers. Gain practical strategies and resources tailored to engage adult learners, enhance their numeracy skills, and build confidence. Whether you're new to tutoring or looking to refine your approach, this workshop equips you with the tools to inspire.</p> |

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## In Other News...

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### TUTORS NEEDED

Afghan Support Network of Portland needs English teacher volunteers to assist newly arrived Afghan refugees in improving their English language skills. Online via Zoom or Google Meet. Contact Pamir Armany at [pamir@asnpx.org](mailto:pamir@asnpx.org) if interested.

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### ORTESOL ON VOLUNTEER TUTORS



The July Coffee & Connect hosted by ORTESOL featured a lively discussion on the role and value of volunteer adult literacy tutors. Facilitated by long-time tutor Arnold Vinnard, the teachers who participated were very vocal about how helpful volunteers can be in engaging with small groups in the classroom and facilitating breakout rooms in Zoom. Some key takeaways were:

- It's critical that the teacher and the assistant are clear up front on the role and expectations of the volunteer.
  - Instructional programs vary in the amount of autonomy for volunteer tutors with many of them using tutors purely as assistants (i.e., not as independent one-to-one tutors).
  - The biggest short-coming flagged was that volunteer tutors can be too passive. Most teachers want their assistants to be very actively engaged.
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### MATCHING DONATION SUCCESS!

Thank you SO VERY MUCH to everyone who contributed to our recent fundraising campaign! We were able to reach the \$20,000 goal and earn the \$10,000 match. We are very grateful.

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## SNEAK PEAK: ANNUAL SPRING 2025 CONFERENCE

Planning is underway for our annual conference. We're expecting a wide variety of interesting and useful topics. The **tentative** date is March 22, 2025 and location is PCC Southeast. We will update everyone when the date and place are confirmed.

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Thank you for being a part of the Portland Literacy Council network. We will return next quarter with another update. In the meantime, follow us and stay in touch via social media! We are on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram (@portlandliteracy).

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Portland Literacy Council  
[Portlandliteracy.org](http://Portlandliteracy.org)



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