

Maplewood Branch New Americans Librarian, Evanna DiSalvo reporting:

Current and future programs:

1-1 tutoring for ENL (English as a new language) - meet with a student for 1 or 2 hours a week. Material covered is student driven. Typically, they select something to read - internet articles, or we choose a book. The student reads out loud, I make notes about pronunciation to share at the end to limit interruptions unless student struggles with the word. I periodically check for comprehension, or the student asks when they don't understand something. I currently meet with 16 individuals in this manner.

Topics that students select from the internet have included fashion design, interior decorating, historical figures, archaeology, artist biographies, interviews, Japanese flower arrangement, medical articles (diabetes, weight loss, mental health, ADHD, etc.) Books we've read include The curious incident of the dog in the night, When Buddha was an elephant, Super Fudge, What Light, Sometimes people march, The fisherman and his wife, Oh, the places you will go and twelve other children's books.

Evolved from 1-1:

- I read The curious incident of the dog in the night with 6 individuals, and we had a Book Club Meeting.
- I have begun to pair students (currently 5 pairs) with similar interests or reading ability. In three cases both participants for an hour, two cases using 1.5 hr - 1/2 hr with one, 1/2 hr together, 1/2 hr with second.
- One pair meets an additional hour without me.
- I have a volunteer who meets with one of the students for an extra hour.
- One participant wanted to help. I set up a Zoom "Conversation buddies" room that she hosts on Mondays at 4pm. Other students join her to practice their English with each other.

1-1 tutoring for CITZ (Citizenship Preparation) - meet with students 1 or 2 hours a week giving special attention to what the need most to pass the naturalization exam. Speaking and understanding English for the interview and writing are generally the most required. I currently meet with 7 students, 3 of them also participate in ENL tutoring.

CITZ class - Tuesdays 5:30-7:30, I've finished the 7th week of development. I am adapting PowerPoints I used in the past on a smartboard to fit the Zoom environment. I have not advertised this but am developing it with the help of five of my current 1-1 students. It will be another 3 weeks before I'm done with "first phase" development. I will probably advertise May 11 start date. There is a need for evening citizenship classes - Catholic Family Center and OACES have daytime classes but there's no evening class.

Grammar - Melissa Parrish (adult literacy tutor) agreed to work with the more advanced students who wish to study grammar. She is currently working with 5 students in a class situation and 2 in individual tutoring sessions.

In the "hopper"

"Integrated" Book Club - four participants have been reading the regular Maplewood Book Club (which I have also been coordinating) book for this month - Time Traveler's wife. They have been invited to the meeting for tomorrow night, I think at least two will attend. Two have been reading it on their own.

Group meetings - One thing I feel is missing in the virtual environment is the sense of a community of learners. I plan to address this by creating more group opportunities.

We had a spring group meeting so students could get to know each other, six attended. From that meeting rose the idea to have a "movie club" - participants will choose movies to watch independently and then meet to discuss them. I haven't gotten this started yet but we're going to! I plan to continue to hold quarterly get togethers to seek feedback and fresh ideas from the participants.

Three students indicated interest in writing and started journaling using shared Google documents. One continues to write weekly. I plan to begin writing group - perhaps starting with a lesson on blogging. I may seek outside help with that, but I haven't investigated it yet.

Volunteers - I've reached the point where my schedule is full, and I want to enlist more volunteers to work with current participants so I can bring in new students.

Target Audience: We welcome any ELL (English Language Learner) who is interested in improving their English. Ideally, we serve New Americans but have also assisted visitors and students. Of 20 current participants 10 are New Americans with Permanent Resident Status, 2 are former students who became citizens, 6 are students or here with a spouse or child, 2 are students in other countries.

Attendance: This is a teacher's dream - motivated students who want to learn and are appreciative of the help they receive. If a student can't make a meeting, they send me a text message. Since I have created such a packed schedule for myself it's generally not a problem but almost welcome.

Demographics: 15 women, 5 men | 14 Countries - Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, Haiti, Ethiopia, Japan, S. Korea, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Turkey... plus one student in Argentina and one from Chad who is currently in France. Ages range from 21 to 60 years old.

Residents of United States have been here from 1.5 years to 11 years.