

LEARN Minutes March 31, 2009 at Lisle Library: **Special Meeting to Prepare for ESL Workshop**

In Attendance:

1. Esther Chase (Brookfield Library)
2. Jean Demas (Lisle Library)
3. Joe Popowitch (Indian Prairie Library)
4. Tina Viglucci (Aurora Library)
5. Ann Weaver (Westchester Library)

Workshop

1. **Meeting Date:** We have decided to schedule the MLS workshop for March of 2010 to give us more time to prepare. We will have the regular LEARN meeting in early February, 2010 so that we can finalize the details of the MLS workshop. *We need to pick a specific date in March for MLS to put us on the calendar.*
2. **Publishers:**
 - Rather than have publishers involved in the actual presentation, we thought it would be better to have the publishers available before the meeting, at the intermission and at the end. Perhaps they could have tables set up, and the representatives could answer questions.
 - [Jean can update her ESL publishers list, add Web site URLs, and include it as a handout.](#)
 - Esther felt we should ask the publishers to bring samples of reading materials rather than just workbooks.
 - Ann thought that the publishers might even be able to provide for a gift basket of free ESL materials for a raffle, or even pitch in for some refreshments.
 - Jean volunteered to handle contacting the publishers.
 - Potential publishers to invite include: New Readers Press, Pearson Longman, Saddleback, and Oxford University Press.
3. **Display:** Jean offered to bring a sampling of recommended titles.
4. **Core list of materials:** Ann said that the core list we will be developing should not simply be a long list of items. Rather, it should describe categories that all libraries should own (e.g. grammar or vocabulary). Then, within each category, there would be list of a few suggested items. Smaller libraries would probably choose one of the items, and larger libraries might be able to purchase all. We might also differentiate the types of materials that would best be utilized by trained tutors as opposed to students and untrained tutors like family members.
5. **Program Title: *Serving the ESL Patron 101***

Because we are gearing this workshop toward librarians in general, we thought that this new title more accurately describes our presentation.

6. **Pre-Workshop Questions:** When the workshop is posted, the description should encourage registrants to send us their questions (via email) ahead of time so that we will have the answers ready.
7. **Immigrant Abilities:** We should mention that not all foreign speakers are less intelligent just because they do not understand English. There are many people with advanced degrees from other countries who do not speak English.
8. **Promotion and Marketing** could be a whole program by itself. Therefore, we will just give a brief overview on the topic. We could show the LEARN Web site, give some examples of brochures, and maybe have some handouts with tips. The handouts might discuss signs, newsletters, partnering with other organizations like community colleges, flowcharts for how to use the collection (i.e. here's where to start), and encouraging more patrons to actually get library cards.
9. **Template for Handouts:** We should create a template for our handouts so that if they are created by different people, the handouts will all look the same.

Presentation

1. **Presentation Focus:** What should we be telling other librarians that they should be doing? We should give them an idea of what patrons need.
2. **Sequence of Presentation:**
 - **Flowchart of ESL Reference Interview (15 minutes):** Esther is working on a flowchart for handling a reference interview with an ESL patron. It includes asking if the patron is the student or someone acting on his or her behalf, asking if the patron has had classes before (to determine level of ability), etc.
 - **Tutoring Groups (45 minutes):** One of our main goals is to effectively direct patrons to non-profit organizations when there is a need beyond the resources we have available. We could have representatives from some of the tutoring groups walk us through the process of what happens when they are contacted by a prospective new ESL student. This would include showing how each tutoring agency works, offering typical profiles of students, describing the needs that are being addressed (e.g. conversation groups), and identify ways that libraries can help (including offering tutoring space).
 - **Outside Speaker:** We could get a speaker to speak on the immigrant experience. Ann is aware of someone we might invite.
 - **Core List of Materials:** We could describe a few of the resources from this list.
 - **Recommended Resources** – This would include all the resources that LEARN group members have recommended at meetings. It would also include the recommended lists from Literacy Dupage and Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County.

- **Special Collections:** Describe special resources already at area libraries for library staff to make referrals.

Miscellaneous

1. **ESL Coalition:** Tina attended a meeting of the Area Planning Council for Waubonsee Valley Community College, and they are trying to create a coalition of libraries, schools, and tutoring groups similar to LEARN. She suggested that they check out the LEARN Web site.
2. **Recruiting Volunteers:** How can we help the tutoring agencies better? How can we get them more volunteers? Esther wondered if high school students would be able to act as volunteers. Ann thought that volunteers probably had to be at least 18, and also that it is up to the tutoring organizations to make the decision on who would make an appropriate tutor. Jean also thought that high school students might not become tutors because of the training that they would have to undergo to become tutors.
3. **Books Used at Community Colleges:** We do not always have the books being used by the local community colleges in their ESL classes. It might be a good idea to ask the colleges for a list of titles that we should have in our libraries (e.g. what 5-10 items would you want us to have?). Of course, we would only add items that would fit in with each library's mission. If the colleges have extra copies, we could see if they would be willing to donate these to libraries.
4. **Graphic novels** do not always work for ESL, but Tina mentioned some that are designed for this purpose (e.g. *Learn English with Superman – Aprende Ingles con Superman*).
5. **Following up with ESL Patrons:**
 - I wondered if libraries might take a more active role in getting ESL students registered with the local tutoring groups. Ann and Jean felt that for privacy purposes, we are limited in what contact information we can provide the tutoring groups. In addition, the tutoring groups prefer that the students show some initiative and contact the groups themselves. We can give them our business cards and encourage the students to call if they need more help.
 - We *might* take the patrons' names for possible programming or discussion groups in the future.
6. **Book Discussion Groups:**
 - Esther already does ESL book discussion and Tina is just starting.
 - Most people want to read a whole book, but we could photocopy chapters with short stories as an alternative to buying many books.
 - Book discussion for ESL is partly an attempt to address the needs of individuals who are beyond beginning level tutoring and want to continue to improve their English.
 - The moderator needs to find relevant reading material for each group.

- People think you need to know another language to do a book discussion group, but you do not.
- Participants can also be given a reading list.

Things to Be Done

1. Choose a specific date for the workshop (sometime in March of 2010).
2. Have another small-group meeting before the Augusts LEARN meeting to work out more unresolved workshop ideas.
3. Determine exactly how much time should be allotted to each segment of the presentation, and finalize the sequence of events.
4. Decide which handouts to make and assign the creation of these handouts to LEARN members.
5. Create a core list of materials.
6. If an outside speaker is to be used, we must identify the person and arrange for him or her.
7. Contact the publishers.
8. Coordinate with the tutoring groups.
9. Determine which LEARN members will speak.