

# TUTOR IN TOUCH

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## BEST Plus: New rules for assessing ESOL students

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester has been using BEST Plus since 2004 to assess incoming ESOL students. BEST Plus is an assessment tool to measure oral proficiency in English for Speakers of Other Languages. Students who exceed a score of 598 points officially graduate out of the ESOL-program and can move on to the Basic Literacy program.

As of July 2006, the graduation score for BEST Plus will be 541 points. LVR students in the ESOL program will soon receive letters which will ask them to sign up for assessment.



*Due to new rules in assessing Speakers of Other Languages, ESOL students may test out of the ESOL-program sooner. While they continue to work with their ESOL-tutors, they will move on to reading and writing in English.*

When a student moves on from the ESOL-program to Basic Literacy, he or she is generally assessed with TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education), which assesses reading comprehension skills. Reading comprehension skills at the 8th grade level or higher indicate that LVR students may move on to advanced classes such as preparation for the GED or preparation for US citizenship. Please read the article below ("Tell your students about *Educational Possibilities*") for more information.

If students score below the 8th grade level, they can continue working with their tutors. However, ESOL-tutors need to be aware that their student may have tested out of the ESOL program. While tutors are not expected to take additional workshops on Basic Literacy, an emphasis on reading and writing during the ESOL classes will be required.

For those tutors who do not have experience with TABE, informational sessions will be available after the implementation of the new scoring system in BEST Plus. The biannual conference will also offer a class in *Teaching Reading* for ESOL tutors.

If you have questions regarding BEST Plus or the utilization of TABE, please contact Mellissa Woodhams at 585-473-3030.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS @ LVR

### APRIL

Friday, April 14th  
Saturday, April 15th

**Office closed in observance of  
Easter holidays**

### MAY

Monday, May 8th  
5.00 - 9.00 p.m.

**AWAKEN LEARNING  
Biannual Spring Conference**

Saturday, May 13th  
Saturday, May 20th

**Office closed due to the  
Lilac Festival in Highland Park**

Saturday, May 27th  
Monday, May 29th

**Office closed in observance of  
Memorial Day Weekend**

### JUNE

Tuesday, June 13th  
**Annual Meeting**

### KEEP IN MIND

The **library** at the LVR office  
is **open on Saturdays**  
**9.00 a.m. - noon**



**Regular library hours are:**

Monday through Friday  
9.00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LVR?

## WORKSHOPS FOR TUTORS AND STUDENTS

### PLANTING SEEDS OF LEARNING BIANNUAL CONFERENCE

#### PLANTING SEEDS OF LEARNING Biannual Volunteer and Student Conference

**Monday, May 8th**  
**5.00 - 9.00 p.m.**  
LVR Office  
249 Highland Avenue



It's that time of the year again! The Spring Conference invites both students and volunteers to participate in various workshops and group discussions: Come with your student or come alone!

Six to eight workshops will be offered for volunteers and/or students. A flier will be mailed to you by 4/15/06.

Topics will include: *How do I tutor a group?*, *Research-based instruction: Vocabulary*, and *Using Computers for Tutoring* plus a presentation on self-esteem and a panel discussion on health issues in Rochester. Three informal sessions for Tutors, Basic students and ESOL students will allow for the exchange of tutoring experience as well as feedback and proposals to LVR. Sessions will begin right after dinner which will be served from 5:15-6:00 p.m.. All volunteers and students are welcome!!!



**READINESS FOR LEARNING**  
**Classes ongoing**  
**Please check with the office for specific dates**  
LVR office  
249 Highland Avenue

The *Readiness for Learning* classes are mandatory for all of our Basic Students before they can be matched with a tutor.

During these classes, students go through a series of activities which help them to understand how they learn best. The concept of multiple intelligences and differences between long-term and short-term goal setting as well as reflections on individual ideas of students are part of these classes as well. Even though these classes are specifically designed for students, tutors are invited and encouraged to attend. With questions please contact Mellissa Woodhams at 585-473-3030.

#### WORKSHOPS FOR BASIC STUDENTS

##### Writing Class for Basic Students

**every Tuesday**  
**April 11th through May 9th**  
**6.00 - 8.00 p.m.**  
LVR Office  
249 Highland Avenue



The Writing Class for Basic Students meets weekly and includes learning about sentence structure and improving students' spelling. By the end of the class, the students will be encouraged to write a letter of personal interest. Interested students can call Mellissa Woodhams at 585-473-3030.

#### WORKSHOPS FOR ALL STUDENTS

##### Computer Class

**every Tuesday**  
**April 4th through May 9th**  
**10.00 - 11.30 a.m.**  
LVR Office  
249 Highland Avenue

The Computer Class is open to both upper level ESOL students and Basic students. Participants will learn how to use the mouse and the keyboard and how to surf the internet. **This class has already been filled.** If your student is still interested, please ask them to call the LVR office at 585-473-3030.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LVR?

## WORKSHOPS FOR ESOL STUDENTS

### Field Trips Program

The *Field Trips Program* will offer weekly excursions for beginners and advanced ESOL students and their families.

In April, one or more tutors will guide students through a drug store, a music performance, a library, and a bank. Tutors and students will walk around in small groups, answering questions, describing American customs, and introducing vocabulary words and phrases.



Students can call the office to sign up for the sessions: 585-473-3030 or email: [jemerson@literacyrochester.org](mailto:jemerson@literacyrochester.org). Most of the trips do not require registration - students can just show up. Students interested in *An Evening of Free Music*, however, need to call or email to reserve a spot.

### A Trip to a Drug Store

**Saturday, April 8th**

**10.00 - 11.30 a.m.**

CVS at 789 Elmwood Avenue  
(corner of Mt. Hope Avenue / Route 15)



What is available at a drug store? Learn how to find the basic cold medicines you or your children need, how to talk to the pharmacist, how to read the labels, and more.

### An Evening of Free Music

**Friday, April 21st**

**7.00 - 11.30 p.m.**

Hochstein Performance Hall at  
50 North Plymouth Avenue



Learn how to find high-quality free music concerts for an evening out or how to inspire your children to love music. Urban Steel from John Marshall High School is performing at Hochstein's excellent Music School, along with Rhythm Masters from St. Joseph's Academy and young members of Hell's Gate Steel Orchestra from Antigua, West Indies.

### A Morning at the Library

**Saturday, April 22nd**

**10.00 - 11.30 a.m.**

Brighton Memorial Library at  
2300 Elmwood Avenue



Learn how to find books for yourself and for your children at any library near where you live. Learn how to ask for help finding a book, tape, or CD. Learn how to borrow books. Learn about other library services, such as how to get annual tax forms, weekly story-time readings for pre-school children, and how to get a library card for yourself or your children.

### A Trip to the Bank

**Saturday, April 29th**

**10.00 - 11.30 a.m.**

M&T Bank in Pittsford at 3290 Monroe Ave.  
(across from Wegmans)



Learn how to use your ATM/Debit/Credit card at your own bank, while shopping, or at any supermarket. Learn how to ask for help at your bank, how to deposit money, how to find out what you have already deposited, how to check your account online, and more. What is the difference between a teller and a manager? What is the difference between a savings account and a checking account? Learn how to borrow money for a house or a business.

# TEACHING ADULT LEARNERS

## TELL YOUR STUDENTS ABOUT *EDUCATIONAL POSSIBILITIES*

For some students, tutor sessions once or twice a week may not be enough. Or they may be ready to move on to the next educational level. In the Rochester area, there are several institutions which offer special programs in Basic Literacy and ESOL as well as Math, Citizenship or GED Preparation. Tutors can let their students know that these programs are available. Please explain that most of these classes are free of charge to students over the age of 21. Adult education programs seek to address the special needs of adult learners – therefore, classes are offered not only in the traditional classroom setting, but also in the form of distance learning, home or workplace study. Please call the numbers given below for more information on the specific programs or visit the programs' websites before you suggest a program to your student!

### **Monroe #1 BOCES and Monroe #2 BOCES** ([www.adulted.org](http://www.adulted.org) and [www.monroe2boces.org](http://www.monroe2boces.org))

The *Literacy Student program* at Monroe #1 BOCES offers adult immigrants classes to improve basic academic skills, obtain a General Education Diploma (GED), improve English fluency and prepare for U.S. Citizenship. Please call (585) 383-2210 for more information.

The *Adult Literacy Program* at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES (serving Western Monroe County school districts) includes preparation for the General Education Diploma (GED) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). According to students' needs, both programs can be taken within the classroom, home study or workplace setting. Please call (585) 349-9121 for more information.

### **SUNY Rochester Educational Opportunity Center** (<http://www.rochestereoc.com>)

The tuition-free *English for Speakers of Other Languages project-based learning program* is designed to assist beginning, intermediate, and advanced ESOL students to develop their English language skills in grammar, writing, conversation, and math. Individuals develop job readiness, keyboarding, and word processing skills.

The REOC also offers vocational programs in the field of Health Care, Office Tech and Occupational Professions as well as preparation for Academic programs such as the GED or SAT. Please call 585-232-2730

### **Rochester City School District - Family Learning Center** (585-262-8000)

The Family Learning Center at 30 Hart Street provides free day and evening adult education instruction for ESOL, family literacy, the GED, occupational training and also in the *Work Experience Program*. There are also distance-learning programs available to students who do not wish or cannot attend classes outside of their home. Please call (585) 262-8000 for more information.

### **Greece Central School District (CSD)** (<http://web001.greece.k12.ny.us>)

The Office of Community Education in the Greece CSD offers GED and ESOL courses as well as Citizenship Preparation classes. Please call (585) 865-1010 for more information.

### **Rush-Henrietta School District** ([www.rhnet.org](http://www.rhnet.org) / (585) 359-7918)

The Rush-Henrietta School District provides a Adult Literacy Program which includes GED Test Preparation and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). For information please call (585) 359-7918.

### **Gates-Chili Central School** (<http://www.gateschili.org>)

The Gates Chili Continuing Education program offers the following classes, free of charge, to adults age 21 and over: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Preparation for the High School Equivalency Test (GED Prep). For more information, please call (585) 347-5345.

### **Webster Central School District** ([www.websterschools.org](http://www.websterschools.org))

The Community Education Office at the Webster Central School District offers a free concentrated Adult Education and GED course (meets two nights a week) as well as ESOL and Citizenship classes. Please call 670-5037 or 670-5039 for more information.

If you have more suggestions regarding free classes for our LVR students, please let us know! You may also contact your local High School District or the District of your student to find out about potential adult education programs.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LVR?

### TUTORS ONLY

#### Tutor Chat

**Thursday, April 27th**  
**10.00 a.m. - open end**  
**Wednesday, May 24th**  
**6.30 p.m. - open end**  
 LVR Office  
 249 Highland Avenue



An informal gathering of tutors and volunteers of Literacy Volunteers of Rochester hosted by Michelle Bruzee. For additional details please contact Michelle Bruzee at 422-9291.

#### Annual Meeting

**Tuesday, June 13th**  
**6 p.m. - open end**

Cooperative Extension Auditorium (same building as the LVR office)  
 249 Highland Avenue

The LVR Annual meeting is an event to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of our students as well as recognize our volunteers for their years of service. Tutors will be receiving information later in the spring to nominate their students for recognition at this event. Additionally, the Judy Dauphinee Volunteer award will be given as well as "Friends of Literacy" awards to individuals and groups in the community who have supported literacy and Literacy Volunteers. The annual budget for 2006-2007 will be presented as well as the new members of the LVR Board of Directors. With questions please contact Shelley Alfieri at 585-473-3030.

#### Teacher's Day

**Saturday, April 8th (details tba)**  
**organized through Mid-West RAEN**  
<http://wxxi.org/adulted>

This comprehensive day of professional development will provide training specific to the needs of ESOL teachers as well as workshop sessions designed for ABE/GED teachers. Description and workshop details are forthcoming.

### TIPS FOR TUTORS

#### ***Creating Authentic Material and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom - A Practitioner Handbook -***

The *National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy* publishes guides for classroom activities. Teachers can use them to develop adult students' literacy skills and knowledge of particular content. The website [www.ncsall.net/?id=25#teach](http://www.ncsall.net/?id=25#teach)

offers access to various online teaching and training materials such as e.g. the handbook *Creating Authentic Material and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom*, which may serve as a source for creative teaching ideas. The book can be downloaded as a pdf.-file free of charge.

#### **Send us your Tips for Tutors!**

Want to help other tutors? Share your experiences and ideas with them! Send your great tutoring ideas to us for inclusion in the next *Tutor in Touch* newsletter. Be sure to include your full name, so we can give you credit for your suggestion. Write to Judy Emerson at [jemerson@literacyrochester.org](mailto:jemerson@literacyrochester.org)



#### ***CD provides tools to custom-create word cards and word lists***

Oxton House Publishers, LLC offers a CD which helps to create and customize reading instruction tools: Word cards for reading isolated words accurately and word lists for spelling dictation or fast oral practice of spelling-sound patterns. The CD contains categorized lists which can be modified in Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Costs: \$ 15.95 plus shipping. Order online at: [www.oxtonhouse.com/Concept\\_Phonics/Materials/WordsCD/wordscd.html](http://www.oxtonhouse.com/Concept_Phonics/Materials/WordsCD/wordscd.html)

#### **Efficient Feedback Recording in Groups**

It is important to capture the work results of student discussant groups in their own words. In order to ensure time-efficient recording of these results, *LitScape* suggests to have the discussant groups themselves summarize their results. An appointed recorder captures the information on a flip chart or a large piece of paper which will then be visibly posted for the other groups. When presenting their results, each group should focus on the main points, as details can be drawn from the written notes on the flip chart. This will speed up the recording process compared to having the teacher take notes on students' results.