

## Summary of Fall 2016 Tutor Coordinator Survey - Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth

This tutor coordinator survey was open from August 18 – September 20, 2016 and there were 42 responses. The survey was sent to 112 administrators and 138 tutor coordinators.

This document is a summary of the information most relevant for informing TLC's services.

### Notes on survey results:

TLC should provide services for tutors working one-on-one and in small groups with adult learners of all levels in ABE and ESL. Survey results indicated somewhat higher numbers in beginning and low intermediate ABE learners.

Most programs are working with 1 – 5 tutors, with the majority being either one-on-one or small group tutors. Classroom aides are also common, with, on average, 1 – 5 per program.

While the majority of tutors are not aware of TLC's services, the vast majority of TCs are, but only half of those who responded have used any of TLC's trainings.

Suggestions for ways that TLC can support the tutor training that you provide include: on demand trainings or some other type of tutor PD, additional resources on TLC's website (esp. ESL), lesson alignment with CCRS, and tutor recruitment support.

Most highly requested tutor training recordings (top 4) – math, reading, writing and lesson planning. *(Tutor responses to similar question - writing, reading, retention, adult learner characteristics.)*

TLC will make it a priority to provide recorded trainings and resources in reading and writing instructional strategies for tutors.

A few other notable comments regarding services that would be helpful in supporting the tutoring component of your agency include:

- One on one tutor coordinator time just to think through strategies with TC`s about their specific program.
- Well-designed lesson plan bank for tutors to access.
- Regional multi-program tutor meetings once or twice a year.
- Newsletter for tutors.

More complete survey responses can be found on the following pages.

Most frequent responses are highlighted in yellow.

- 1) Which tutoring arrangements are used by your agency? *(Error in survey – first small group tutoring should have been 2-3 learners instead of 1-3 learners.)*

One-on-one tutoring – 36% (42)

Small group tutoring (1-3 learners) – 27% (32)

Small group tutoring (4-6 learners) – 18.8% (22)

Pair tutoring – 6% (7)

Literacy Corp tutors – 3.4% (4)

Other - Tutoring Arrangement – 8.5% (11)

Classroom aides (10), AmeriCorps members (1)

- 2) On average, how many active one-on-one tutors do you have?

(0) – 2.4% (1)

(1 – 5) – 50% (21)

(6 – 10) – 11.9% (5)

(11 – 15) – 7.1% (3)

(16 – 20) – 9.5% (4)

(21 – 25) – 4.7% (2)

(26 – 30) – 4.7% (2)

(31 – 50) – 7% (3)

(> 50) – 2% (1)

- 3) On average, how many active small group tutors do you have?

(0) – 21% (9)

(1 – 5) – 59.5% (25)

(6 – 10) – 11.9% (5)

(11 – 15) – 2.4% (1)

(> 50) – 4.7% (2)

- 4) On average, how many active classroom aides do you have?

(0) – 23.8% (10)

(1 – 5) – 57.1% (24)

(6 – 10) – 11.9% (5)

(11 – 15) – 7.1% (3)

5) What level learners are tutored at your agency? Please select all that apply.

- Beginning ABE – 17.5% (38)
- Low Intermediate ABE – 18% (39)**
- High Intermediate ABE – 13.9% (30)
- ASE/HSE – 13.9% (30)
- Low ESL – 13.4% (29)
- Intermediate ESL – 12.9% (28)
- High ESL – 9.7% (21)
- Other – 0.5% (1)

- 6) Approximately what percent of the learners being tutored are ABE? *(This percent can be your best "guestimate.")*
- 7) Approximately what percent of the learners being tutored are ASE/HSE?
- 8) Approximately what percent of the learners being tutored are ESL?

Q 6 – 8) % learners	ABE	ASE/HSE	ESL
0	0	11.9% (5)	11.9% (5)
1 – 25%	<b>45.2% (19)</b>	<b>61.9% (26)</b>	<b>47.6% (20)</b>
26 – 50%	21.4% (9)	19% (8)	28.6% (12)
51 – 75%	19% (8)	7.1% (3)	11.9% (5)
76 – 100%	14.3% (6)	0	0

9) On the average, how long do your tutor matches stay together?

- (0 – 3 months) – 11.9% (5)
- (4 – 6 months) – 35.7% (15)
- (7 – 12 months) – 38.1% (16)**
- (13 – 18 months) – 4.8% (2)
- (19 – 24 months) – 4.8% (2)
- (> 24 months) – 4.8% (2)

**Services Available from TLC**

Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) offers free services to all adult literacy programs in Pennsylvania. TLC provides support for the tutoring component of your agencies by offering online tutor and tutor coordinator trainings, face-to-face tutor trainings, face-to-face tutor coordinator events, monthly tutor coordinator webinars, program visits, a website (<http://tlcliteracy.org/>) and more.

10) Did you know TLC is available to provide tutor training and tutor coordinator support to your agency?

- Yes – 95.3% (41)**
- No – 0
- Unsure – 2.3% (1)
- I would like to learn more – 2.3% (1)

11) Have you ever used TLC to provide your tutor training?

Yes, online – 23.8% (10)

Yes, f2f – 7.1% (3)

Yes, f2f and online – 16.7% (7)

No – 40.5% (17)

Unsure – 11.9% (5)

12) TLC is available to help support your initial and ongoing learner-centered, job-embedded tutor training opportunities. Please tell us specifically what we can do to support your tutor professional development activities.

General summary of responses in order of frequency:

- Provide on demand trainings or some other type of tutor PD
- Resources on website (esp. for ESL)
- Remain available for f2f, online, and webinar training and support
- Lesson alignment with CCRS
- Tutor recruitment

13) TLC is planning to develop on-demand tutor training recordings. Please select all the topics you feel would be useful to the tutors at your agency. If you have other topics of interest, please select “Other” and add your suggestions in the next question.

Responses prioritized by frequency.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) Math – 12.1% (39)                        | 7) Role of the tutor – 8.1% (26)                  |
| 2) Reading – 11.8% (38)                     | 8) Technology/digital literacy skills – 7.8% (25) |
| 3) Writing – 11.1% (36)                     | 9) Adult learner characteristics – 7.8% (25)      |
| 4) Lesson planning – 9.6% (31)              | 10) Being a classroom aide – 6.8% (22)            |
| 5) CCRS – 8.7% (28)                         | 11) Goal setting – 6.2% (20)                      |
| 6) Soft skills/workforce skills – 8.4% (27) | 12) Other – 1.5% (5)                              |

14) If you selected “Other” in the previous question, please provide your topic suggestions here.

- Trainings specific to classroom aides
- Integrating workforce skills into literacy curriculum
- WIOA
- Developing rapport, becoming a better tutor, self-evaluation strategies
- Retention/commitment
- Learner disabilities/learning differences support

15) What other kinds of services from TLC would be helpful in supporting the tutoring component of your agency? How could TLC better meet your needs?

General summary of responses not addressed in a previous question:

- Differentiation.
- Any service that would assist our ESL tutors i.e. how to work with very low level English speakers that may go beyond looking at pictures.
- One on one tutor coordinator time just to think through strategies with TC`s about their specific program.
- Well-designed lesson plan bank for tutors to access.
- Regional Multi Program tutor meetings once or twice a year.
- Getting materials approved can be an obstacle at my organization. If it would be possible to have marketing material created by TLC to which our agency name could be added. YouTube videos; other social media ideas which could be shared. We do not specifically market this way.
- Newsletter for tutors.

16) What would improve TLC's services?

General summary of responses not addressed in a previous question:

- Every student in our tutoring program represents challenges beyond literacy. How are other tutors handling the tough challenges and are they seeing academic progress. How do these tutors move the needle with students? Having case studies would help.
- I think that the Tutor Face to Face Event could be held over a couple of days. The last one gave us one session to cover a lot of topics. (It seemed a bit hurried).
- Additional monthly webinars.
- If there was on-demand marketing we could share--even if it has to have a website or a phone number that gives potential tutors a referral. We have to wear so many hats and do not have time for all roles. Many of us only have a matter of a couple hours per month to create, market, and supervise.

17) What would you like to see stay the same with TLC's services?

General summary of responses:

- Website
- Monthly tutor coordinator webinars
- Online trainings
- Availability for support
- Face-to-face trainings
- Facebook group for tutor coordinators

## Tutor Coordinator Support

18) TLC provides monthly webinars for tutor coordinators on the third Tuesday of the month at 10 am. (These will begin again in October 2016.) Please provide at least two topics that you would like to see addressed in upcoming Tutor Coordinator webinars.

Responses to this question seemed to either be geared toward a tutor audience or a tutor coordinator audience. The responses are separated accordingly. Some responses were beyond the scope of TLC's services and are not included.

General summary of responses:

### Tutor Coordinator Audience

- **CCRS, lesson planning and tutors**
- Tutor recruitment and retention (inexpensive ways to reward tutors)
- Tutor management
- Agency documents and resources for sharing
- Helping tutors develop assignments which are both informative and complex
- Matching tutors to students on a timely basis
- Successful tutoring program
- Utilizing the range of TLC online resources
- Using new technology to boost volunteerism
- Marketing/PR
- Collaboration among tutoring programs across agencies (How to share tutors. How to create supplemental educational events like book clubs to be collaborative across agencies and involve volunteers and students from multiple agencies.)
- Helping tutors develop good questioning techniques. Many tutors just ask DOK 1 level questions. Asking good text dependent questions is a skill we may need to train our tutor volunteers to develop.

### Tutor Audience

- Lesson planning
- Setting goals with learners
- The difference between assisting in an ESL class vs GED classroom
- Instructional resources for LIB learners
- Helping tutors understand (have patience with) the differences from their own personal lives, learning styles and background
- Learning differences
- Working with a frustrated learner
- Differentiation
- Resources for ASE/HSE students for language, listening and communication
- Teaching tutors to have the confidence needed
- Informal assessments
- Establishing appropriate boundaries with students while developing a positive relationship with them
- You know a student is making progress but it doesn't show on the TABE test - what's going on
- Providing tutor instruction to low literacy incarcerated individuals in county jails. Students are there for short periods of time, making it difficult to achieve EFL gains.

19) What would you like to see as the focus of a program year 2016-2017 tutor coordinator face-to-face event?

Responses to this question also seemed to either be geared toward a tutor audience or a tutor coordinator audience, with some overlap occurring. The responses are separated accordingly. Some responses were beyond the scope of TLC's services and are not included.

General summary of responses:

#### Tutor Coordinator Audience

- Several comments support the format of the May 2016 tutor coordinator face-to-face event and would like to see a similar structure occur again. ("May 2016 Face to Face was perfect..... more of the same!")
- Resources/instructional support
  - Job embedded soft skills related resources for tutoring; lessons related to preparing students for post-secondary education.
  - TLC resources.
  - How to assist the tutors more than I am currently doing. Making it easier on them. Resources that I don't know of.
  - Activity ideas--lesson ideas, ideas/tips for teaching different subjects.
  - Strategies tutors can use with students would be beneficial.
  - Academic resources.
  - Using technology for low level and ESL learners.
- Tackling the CCRS with your tutors! (lesson planning)
- Sharing of success stories and why? Celebrating student/tutor successes.
- Best practices/sharing ideas to improve the tutor program/Tutor programs and collaboration.
- Volunteer retention.
- Using volunteers in a meaningful way in the classroom.
- The challenge of the learning disabled and how we are not equipped to deal with that type of student.
- Tutor training for new tutors.
- Student work protocol.
- Integrating clients onto career paths after they obtained their educational goals.
- Ideas to support off site tutors.
- Making a meaningful learning plan for each student - what's involved.
- Explore additional ways to utilize volunteers to benefit students academically (workshops, book clubs, field trips, etc.).
- How IET fits into tutoring or how to train tutors to use computer labs and other technology.

#### Tutor Audience

- LIB (low intermediate basic) learners (teaching and learning strategies/instructional resources, etc.).
- Practical training on how to teach learners, particularly to help beginning ABE learners in math and reading.
- Students who are not able to read at all.
- Using technology for low level and ESL learners.
- How to build English language skills with students from West-African English speaking countries.
- Strategies to use when student is not moving beyond teaching point and needs to progress, i.e cannot answer questions correctly if you are not sitting right next to them.

20) Please share your biggest challenge as a tutor coordinator. If possible, include suggestions regarding how TLC could provide support for your challenge.

- **Recruitment challenges (14 responses)**

- Getting/finding volunteer tutors (9 responses).
- Meeting the number of required tutors.
- Getting committed volunteers with a 4 year degree; ideas for targeting that population.
- Finding and retaining quality tutors who can comply with the requirements of our grants.
- Finding good tutors that are able to invest the time needed.
- If you have any more suggestions on recruitment at the college level, I could use that.
- Time management challenges (7 responses)
  - Perhaps time management strategies would be helpful. (2 responses)
  - Due to my current position going from full time to 60%, time would be my biggest challenge.
  - I have limited time to network and do face-to-face support with my tutors. In the past, I have found my most successful tutors are those who I build a personal relationship and support with.
  - Doing tutor coordinating on top of fundraising and administrative tasks with a limited staff and limited budget.
  - Wearing many hats within the agency.
  - Small staff and many components of our program....priorities are sometimes not clear....and time is always short!
- Retention Challenges (5 responses)
  - Retaining tutors (3 responses).
  - Tutor - student retention.
  - Keeping qualified tutors.
- Tutor management/support challenges
  - In our program, our tutors work with their learners off site, so providing support to them can be challenge. TLC support, in the form of materials on the web site, would be helpful if the tutors could guide themselves through the process.
  - I am an administrator and our tutor coordinator is offsite. I would say providing adequate support and effective matching is our biggest.
  - Bringing tutors together for meetings/networking due to various schedules.
  - My biggest challenge is meeting each tutor where he or she is and providing professional development support that is meaningful and ultimately results in students making progress.
  - Helping tutors understand the adult literacy population - their lack of persistence and commitment at times throughout their learning. I know that many of my tutors are frustrated by this.
  - Keeping the tutors that I have engaged when I do not have a student for them right at that moment.
  - How to encourage tutors to work with students in math. All prefer to work in ESL class.
  - Tutor instructional challenges
    - Learning real teaching techniques to share with tutors to provide quality instruction to learners.
    - Identifying/recommending resources for tutors to use with their students



- I depend on the GED/ESL coordinator to tell me what the tutors should be teaching (for one-on-ones) I have no clue as to lesson plans for tutors, levels of the students, what they should be teaching these students.
  - Occasionally I encounter a well-educated tutor who is unable to grasp the idea that the learner is unable to learn the traditional way. I will discuss strategies and offer a variety of resources, and although the tutor accepts the assistance, he reverts to how he was taught and becomes increasingly frustrated and impatient with the learner's lack of progress. I would love to have a workshop activity that I can use with my tutors.
  - It's a challenge to visit all tutoring sites regularly and provide lessons plans for selected levels of literacy. Keeping up with the new mandates for curriculum means constantly changing materials and plans.
- Classroom aide challenges
  - Getting instructors to proactively utilize and productively engage tutors (particularly volunteers) into their classroom processes.
  - That classroom aides are not considered real tutors. (And consequently cannot be "counted" as real tutors (i.e. volunteer instructors). There should be a way (structured documentation of their instructional activities?) that classroom aides can be recognized as real tutors. Then, more can be done to recognize, utilize, and support these wonderful volunteers. The students would benefit!
  - For classroom aides I depend on the teachers to use the volunteers in any way they see fit. The problem seems to be that the teachers don't know how to use the volunteers in the classroom.
- Student persistence challenges
  - Turnover in student population as well as tutor/student pairs. Student persistence is a challenge. What are some good strategies to encourage or remediate persistence?
  - Students committing to meeting with their tutor on a regular basis.
  - Biggest challenge being a TC is : after `perfect` tutor - student matches are made and `perfect` schedules are in place, and everything is working well, I'll run into the last minute excuse-making phone call, (mainly tutee cancellations). When they occur, and I know they're bound to, it's very frustrating. Rescheduling then happens... If it becomes a pattern, "good-bye" tutee.
- Miscellaneous challenges
  - Marketing effectively given social media has become a huge tool (I recently had two different marketing meetings with suggestion for more web-based presence).
  - My biggest challenge was putting an ESL Tutoring program together from scratch. Issues included finding locations who would support our mission.
  - My biggest challenge as an administrator is keeping a tutor coordinator! It is the position with the most turnover at my agency.
  - Record keeping.
  - Fundraising.
  - Getting information on learners in a timely manner.

## **TLC's Services in Program Year 2015 – 2016**

Please answer the following questions if you received or participated in any services from TLC during program year 2015-2016. If you did not receive or participate in any of TLC's services during PY 15-16 you do not need to answer any further questions.

21) If you used TLC's services in PY 2015-2016, how would you rate your overall experience with TLC? If you would like to support your response with a comment, please do so in the next question.

Excellent – 75.9% (22)

Good – 24.1% (7)

22) Comment supporting my response to the question regarding my overall experience with TLC.

General summary of responses:

- Feedback is positive and supportive of the overall experience with TLC.
- Specific quotes:
  - "TLC is an excellent organization and provides top notch customer service to those of us in the field. It's very helpful to have folks understand the challenges we face."
  - "I find the webinars valuable due to the opportunities to network."
  - "I enjoy using the online resources and I have found the face to face networking events to be worthwhile."

23) How well did the services provided by TLC meet your needs/expectations? If you would like to support your response with a comment, please do so in the next question.

Excellent – 76.7% (23)

Good – 23.3% (7)

24) Comment supporting my response to the question regarding how well the services provided by TLC met my needs/expectations.

General summary of responses:

- Feedback is positive and supportive of the services provided by TLC.
- Specific quotes:
  - "As a refresher, I took the Tutor Coordinator basic training, and it helped me come up with some ideas for recruitment."
  - "I appreciate the annual meeting / training for Tutor Coordinators....since we are not teachers and don't fit into their PD."
  - "Online tutor training works well for our tutors. The comments the tutors and coordinator receive after the training is completed are helpful."

25) How well did the resources provided by TLC meet your needs/expectations? If you would like to support your response with a comment, please do so in the next question.

Excellent – 74.2% (23)

Good – 19.4% (6)

Adequate – 6.4% (2)

26) Comment supporting my response to the question regarding how well the resources provided by TLC met my needs/expectations.

General summary of responses:

- Feedback is positive and supportive of the resources provided by TLC.
- Specific quotes:
  - "I think the resources were excellent, but they were underutilized by my agency."
  - "Our tutors have used the links on this site for tutor resources and they were helpful."
  - "TLC provides a wide variety of resources and offers good explanation on how to use them."
  - "Love that TLC provides supplies to programs."
  - "I use the resources often and recommend them to our tutors whenever I can."

27) Based on your experience with TLC's services, would you use/participate in their services again? If you would like to support your response with a comment, please do so in the next question.

Yes - 97% (32)

No - 0

Unsure - 3% (1)

28) Comment supporting my response to the question whether or not I would use TLC's services again.

General summary of responses:

- Feedback is positive and indicative of using TLC's services again.
- Specific quotes:
  - "TLC is really a clearinghouse of brilliant resources and information. The active participation of the tutor coordinators adds to the effectiveness of the website and other resources."
  - "My role as a TC would be severely compromised would it not be for the guidance, direction and support provided by TLC. That, in kind, would adversely affect the quality of tutors in our program."
  - "Services are easy to access and support from the TLC staff (Michelle, Colleen, Kim) have always been very responsive and helpful."

29) If there is anything else you would like to share with TLC, please feel free to do so here.

General summary of responses:

- "I feel that I need to take more time to review TLC's website and make certain this year that each tutor is connected to the website."
- "You're a great team and provide great team support to us. THANK YOU!"
- "Thanks for all you do."