



NEWSLETTER

☎ Central (925) 927-3250 ☎ East (925) 754-8317 ☐
☎ West (510) 527-7558 ☐ ☎ FAX (925) 646-6461
ccclib.org/psc

January/February 2015 Happy New Year!

A Letter from Laura

“Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.”

- Earl Nightingale

Happy New Year! Project Second Chance (PSC) wishes you and your family all the best in 2015.

And we hope that your dreams come true! Everyone associated with PSC is pursuing a dream. PSC students dream of being able to read to their children, write a résumé, and read their medication. Tutors dream of helping their students accomplish such vital life skills and achieve independence. PSC staff and Board members dream of a day when everyone in our community has basic literacy skills, so that programs such as PSC are no longer needed. While these dreams can seem insurmountable because of the time and effort it will take to achieve them, every day we can take one step toward making these dreams a reality, and then another step, and then another.

As we begin 2015, let's dream big, and to accomplish those dreams, set goals that are **SMART** -- Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-based. So let's get started! Because the time will, indeed, pass anyway.

Speaking of goals, “Goals Setting and Progress” forms will be mailed to tutors the first week of January. They are due back no later than Monday, January 26. For those tutors who work in the East County office, Karin has your forms and will contact you about them.

Finally, don't forget to take time to celebrate your 2014 achievements as you gear up for 2015!

- *Laura*

Wilson Tutor Support Meeting

PSC - Pleasant Hill

Wednesday, February 25, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

If you are using the Wilson Reading System with your student, join us for an informal support meeting. Staff and tutors will discuss what's working or what skills you are having trouble teaching your student. Bring questions and successes to share. We will review tapping, tips to help students hear middle vowels, and more.

Please RSVP by Friday, February 20

(925) 927-3250 or (925) 754-8317



Save the Date Tutor Workshop - Goal Setting

At this workshop, we will:

- review lesson planning as it relates to student goals
- pilot a new goals training for beginning tutors
- practice using a new goals form that debuts this spring

Choose the date that best works for you:

- Thursday, March 12, 6 – 8 p.m. *or*
- Wednesday, March 18, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Both sessions will be held at the Pleasant Hill PSC office.

Student Achievements

Success Stories:

Students are reading:

Jin J. – *All about the USA*

Esmat M. – *Little House on the Prairie*

Pleasant Hill Book Club - *Tuesdays with Morrie, The Circuit*



Carolyn Thiessen reports that **Nadya K.** is now reading for pleasure since she doesn't need to translate as often. She's already finished two Nancy Drew books. Great!

Wow! **Fahime S.** wrote a story about a dear friend and, with the help of her tutor Joanne Hughes, submitted it to the *Easy English Times*. It was published in September. What an accomplishment!

Tutor Nancy Glenfield reports that **Chloe T.** began volunteering at the Contra Costa County Blood Bank. That's wonderful!

Thank you, **Ehte A.** and **Parvin M.** With the help of their tutor, Jane Copps, Ehte and Parvin practiced reading Patxi's takeout menus and then ordered at the restaurant during a PSC fundraiser. Fantastic!

Tutor Beverley Nidick reports that **Seema S.** now has a library card and is checking out books. Great news!

PSC welcomes a new U.S. citizen. Dick Josephson reported that **Finoos S.** passed the citizenship test!

Marc Hanson is thrilled that **Leticia B.** has completed the book *House on Mango Street!* It's the first book she's read for pleasure. Fantastic!

Wafaa Akl let us know that **Mariam J.** has passed the driver's license test and has started taking her child to story times. So many doors are opening!

Work completed:

Jahanshir M. with Bettina Domingue - *Facts C*

Jerry H. with Merriann Sherwood – *Wilson Step 1*

Mary F. with Mary Clifton – *Challenger 2*

Sandra S. with Vicky DeYoung – *Wilson Step 2*

Tina S. with Amber Avelino – *Wilson Step 2*

Hilda A. with Susan Beyerle – *Endeavor 5*

Adaugo N. with Nichole Coggiola – *Challenger 6*

Maryam G. with Kathy Bishop – *Endeavor 6*

Michiko L. with Iris Hillman – *Endeavor 6*

Martha G. with Sheryl Sankey – *Wilson Step 8*

PSC BOOK DISCUSSION

Pleasant Hill



Is "read a book" one of your goals? Try this!

Monday, February 9, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The Circuit, by Francisco Jimenez (128 pages, 3 hour CD) – the engaging, autobiographical story of a Mexican boy growing up with his family as a migrant worker in California. Read the book and/or listen to the audio CDs, then come to the meeting for a friendly chat with Kate and PSC friends about the story. Tutors are welcome to come with their student. Ask for the book and CDs now.



West County PSC – Just For You!

Please come to the Hercules PSC office on Thursday, January 15, 12 - 1:00 p.m. (RSVP now by calling 510-527-7558). You will see where –

- PSC books and study buddy materials are located
- Veronica's desk and inbox is positioned

After the tour let's chat about –

- meeting spaces in West County libraries
- coffee break get-togethers
- Book Club
- the PSC materials checkout process
- Computer Lab learning support



Did Santa bring you a new phone? If so, consider donating your old phone to PSC, so we can send it in for recycling cash. Thanks!

Tutor Tips



7 TIPS for NURTURING STUDENT WRITING

by Kate

Let's say your student hands you an essay she wrote with many grammatical and mechanical errors. Do you:

- Say to yourself, "I'm a terrible tutor" and give up? NO!
- Re-write the whole thing for her so it's perfect? NO!
- Stop and consider the seven tips below? YES!
- Ask staff for help and resources if still needed? YES!
- Attend a tutor workshop on writing this spring? YES!*

1. While your student is writing, avoid making corrections mid-flow. Let her write freely, without activating her self-critical mind or disrupting creativity.

2. After you've read it, find something to praise or note about the content or mechanics of the writing. "I love how you describe the ocean. I can almost smell it!" "Look at that—you used two of your new vocabulary words, and there are no incomplete sentences!"

3. Take time to study the piece yourself to categorize errors: are the issues mostly in spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, word choice, verb tense, or something else? Can the errors be grouped so you can pick one thing to start teaching (ex: subject-verb agreement, possessives, *-ing* endings, *-dge* words, a certain verb tense)?

4. Think about your student's skill level and past lesson topics. What can she correct herself? Prompt her to self-correct things you're confident she knows but may have missed. This is an important skill. "Now read it through to see if all the sentences begin with a capital letter." Then, "Good. Now go through to see if everything you want plural is pluralized." Consider making an Editing Checklist of mechanics she understands well enough to go through herself. Add to the checklist as she progresses.

5. If the mistakes are due to not understanding a grammar, spelling, vocabulary or other mechanical rule, congratulations! You've found things to add to your list of things to teach...slowly, and not all at once.

6. After she has corrected all she can, resist the temptation to fix everything else. Leave it at what she corrected herself, or pick one or two types of errors to teach. To narrow down what to teach, think about what

the purpose of the writing was, what interfered most with the readability of the piece, and what her goals are.

7. One last tip: find something she wrote for you long ago (if possible). Now have her edit her own work using what she's learned since she wrote that piece. Seeing how much more accurate she is now can be very motivating.

And remember, the goal is *progress* not perfection!

* Still have questions about teaching writing? There will be a **tutor-to-tutor workshop this spring** on how to group and prioritize grammar errors in your student's writing and sample activities to work on them. Stay tuned!

West County Corner

by Veronica



Computer Lab Assistance: PSC uses the Hercules Library Homework Room to provide computer assisted instruction twice a week. Every Tuesday and Thursday from 1-2:30 p.m., the lab is open for PSC students and tutors. PSC tutors Sharon and Marc are available to assist with reading, writing, and spelling lessons as well as using a computer. Feel free to drop-in on one or both days!



Book Club: The first West County book club gathering will launch in February 2015. The book we'll be reading is *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan. This a simple story of a family that needs a mother and of the woman who gradually fills this need. The book is 65 pages long and can be checked out from the PSC Hercules office with an audio CD. Anyone able to come to the meeting can call (510) 527-7558 or email Veronica (vkimble@ccclib.org) now to get the book and CD. Book club will meet in two parts of West County for your convenience. Choose one library location to attend:

San Pablo- Wednesday, February 11, 10:30 a.m. -12 p.m.

Hercules- Thursday, February 12, 2 – 3:30 p.m.