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## **California State Library Awards Grant to Provide Google Chromebooks to Public Libraries**

### ***Pilot program aims to increase digital access***

SACRAMENTO – With the goal of creating more access to the Internet in public libraries, the California State Library has awarded a grant to Califa Library Group, a non-profit consortium of libraries in California, to distribute one thousand Google Chromebooks to public libraries throughout the state.

“Access to digital resources is something all Californians should have,” said Acting State Librarian Gerald Maginnity. “Part of the mission of the State Library is to help libraries serve those in their communities who want to find information online but don’t have a home computer. By making Chromebooks available for loan, libraries can help bridge the digital divide.”

Forty-four libraries are taking part in the program managed by Califa. Each library received between 10 and 50 Chromebooks. The ultra-light notebook, designed for web browsing and easy portability, will help libraries meet the demand for Internet access. A recent national survey published by the Institute of Museum and Library Services found that almost half (45%) of all library visitors connected to the Internet during their visit.

Response has been positive. “Since we started on the first of October, we have heard nothing but good reviews,” said Greco Venegas, Technical Services Supervisor for the City of Commerce Public Library, which received 10 Chromebooks. “We’re really happy with the program and would like to see it expand.” Chris Rohde of the Roseville Public Library said there has been “an overwhelming public response.” Instead of waiting in line at the library for a computer, patrons “are very pleased they are able to take a Chromebook home.”

The grant to Califa for \$535,881 was funded through the federal Library Services and Technology Act, which the State Library administers in California. A list of all currently funded LSTA grants for 2011/2012 is on the State Library’s website at <http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/lsta-grants-2011-2012.html>.

#### **About the California State Library**

Founded in 1850, the California State Library is the central reference and research library for the Governor’s office, Legislature, state employees, and the general public. The State Library administers federal and state grants for programs in historical preservation, library construction, civil liberties education, literacy, volunteering, and broadband connectivity in public libraries. For more information, please visit [www.library.ca.gov](http://www.library.ca.gov).