CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY  
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)  

Final Program Narrative Report  
(LSTA Form 9)  

**Grant Information**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Butte County</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Yearn to Learn!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Award #</td>
<td>40-8036</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Period</td>
<td>2013-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Grant Award</td>
<td>53,000</td>
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<td>Amount of Grant Expended</td>
<td>53,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Match</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Kind</td>
<td>7,830</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Amount of Project</td>
<td>60,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(amount expended + match + in-kind)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Persons Served</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(should not include total population of service area or potential population to be reached)</td>
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**Project Director**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Carey Gross</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Literacy Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Address</td>
<td>1820 Mitchell Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>(530)538-7198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax Number</td>
<td>(530)538-7235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail Address</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cgross@buttecounty.net">cgross@buttecounty.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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This report is due on the date listed in the LSTA Grant Guide for this project. Follow this link to view the Grant Guide. [http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/manage.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/manage.html)

Email this report in “word format” to lsta@library.ca.gov then mail ORIGINAL and 2 copies to:

California State Library  
P.O. Box 942837  
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001  
Attention: Fiscal Office - LSTA

**SIGNATURE:** ___________________________  **DATE:** ___________________________  
(Please sign in blue ink)
**Project Final Report**

A final narrative report is required on the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds following the completion of a project during each project year. The information you report will be used to complete the California State Library report of how funds were expended. Excerpts from this report may be submitted to the Federal government in their evaluation, or may be published by the State Library or shared with other institutions. Please answer all of the questions thoroughly. Please attach any reproduction copies of photographs of project activities or media produced for the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Purpose</strong></th>
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<td>Include your program purpose statement here</td>
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Training in collaboration with the local Early Learning community will be offered in three tiered levels for library staff and will enable a deeper look at Early Literacy and how children learn 0-5. Library staff who work directly with families and their young children will find an increased awareness of what appropriate expectations and meaningful learning experiences "look like" in a library environment. Identifying family strengths rather than their deficits will be further emphasized in everyday library service for families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Activities and Methods</strong></th>
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<td>How did you accomplish the project? What were the steps involved? How did you engage the target audience?</td>
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Due to the nature of the Yearn to Learn project, we recognized that engaging the target audience, which in this case were the Library Assistants, Senior Library Assistants and Librarians serving families in the library as being extremely key to the overall success. As such, a good bit of effort was put into transparency and sharing our enthusiasm regarding the Yearn to Learn project. The following highlights some of the activities and strategies used:

- **Cake!** Our first official announcements about Yearn to Learn included visits by the Family Literacy Specialist and Literacy Specialist to talk simultaneously with staff at the two branches that would experience all the tiers of Yearn to Learn (specifically including the Kindergarten readiness experience). We teleconferenced the visits – the Family Literacy Specialist at one branch and the Literacy Specialist at the other, and across the miles between the branches shared the outline planned for upcoming grant activities and enjoyed cake (not purchased with LSTA funds) together. (Photos forwarded electronically to our grant monitor.)

- When the pre-survey was created as outlined in the grant activities, it established a baseline as well as guide the project. Rather than just sending out an email blast to all staff working directly with children and families and attaching the survey, the Family Literacy Specialist delivered the survey in person to each staff member and used it as an opportunity to share more about Yearn to Learn and to clarify and answer any questions.

- Knowing everyone involved, including library staff members and our County Office of Education presenters, are extremely busy people, the Family Literacy Specialist made certain early on to arrange the Yearn to Learn training dates for the entire year, thus enabling all to reserve the dates several months in advance. This was such a huge help and ensured that folks weren't ever left wondering.

- Staff were informed that not only were they going to be hearing about new ideas for best serving young people at each of the trainings, but that they would also be returning to their library branches with plentiful materials (art trays, glitter finger paint, and books, etc) to be able to replicate what was presented. This intentionally planned part of the trainings was enthusiastically welcomed and served to assist in further luring interest in participating.
This was "particularly" so when it came to the books! Having been introduced during the Yearn to Learn trainings to the carefully selected titles chosen by the Family Literacy Specialist for their focus on early learning, staff expressed such joy at being able to return to their branches with armfuls of high-quality (not already on their shelves) children’s books to add to their collections.

And then there were the books to give to families to develop their home libraries. For staff to have the opportunity to hear the Family Literacy Specialist read a book aloud at a Yearn to Learn gathering and then return to their branch to immediately be able to share it with the families they serve – excellent. However, library staff were not only given the same book to replicate the read aloud they were also supplied with dozens of copies of the same title to give a copy to each family attending their storytime to take home and keep.

- The Family Literacy Specialist carefully listened to individual staff members and based on this would often adjust the trainings based on their expressed interests and needs. Library staff were pulled into the planning and sometimes the presentations of the trainings and activities. This made it all the more fun, interesting and relevant for everyone.

- A KinderGo team, comprised of Children’s Services and Literacy staff as well as Branch Librarians, the Countywide Children’s Librarian, and circulation staff gathered together for both the Oroville and Paradise Branch libraries in preparation for the Kindergarten readiness experience at the library. Tasks included a publicity plan to get the word out about KinderGo utilizing the team’s community connections already in place.

- In an effort to be certain that the development of Yearn to Learn’s Travel Guide was of relevance and useful to the novice and nervous storytime facilitator, contributions were solicited via email and during the January training. During the “Yearn to Learn; and in-house chat and chew” librarians and senior library assistants were divided into intentionally planned groups with specific questions to address regarding best practices surrounding library service to families. This proved to be an engaging and effective way to elicit participation and to generate ideas for the Travel Guide.

- The Yearn to Learn team made a purposeful effort throughout the project to keep all staff apprised about the goings on. These included announcements sent library-wide via email, updates during Library Leadership Team meetings as well as meeting with the Countywide Children’s Librarian from the onset. This communication and the support of the Branch Librarians was key to the participation of children’s services staff in the trainings and the outreach efforts that took place in State Preschool classrooms.

### Project Outputs

What was created for the project and how much? (For instance three promotional brochures were created and 75 copies distributed; or three training classes were designed; two sessions of each were held, and 80 people were trained)

1. **Training**
   - 3 training announcement flyers created and distributed
   - 4 carefully designed trainings in early literacy and early learning presented
     - October 2013—Yearn to Learn; let’s talk about Early Literacy
     - January 2014—Yearn to Learn; an in-house chat-n-chew
     - February 2014—mini training revisiting puppets as effective tools in library programming
     - March 2014—Yearn to Learn; let’s talk about scribbling and sensory play
   - 61 staff members trained in early literacy and early learning, including 7 colleagues from neighboring library jurisdictions as well as staff from the Hmong Cultural Center

2. **Surveys/Evaluations**
   - 7 surveys/evaluations created and distributed
2. Books

326 children’s books with a focus on early literacy and early development added to the library collection.

1588 children’s books with a focus on early literacy and early development given to children for ownership during library Storytimes and state preschool visits.

2 bookplates created offering families ideas for playful early literacy practices in the home.

1 bookmark created to include with books given families highlighting the value of incredible vocabulary (See attached.)

14 professional development books purchased for staff reference.

3. Community Outreach and Staff Observation/Practice Opportunities

7 preschool storytimes designed and guided by early literacy and early learning principles.

14 preschool classes at 7 State Preschool sites visited by Family Literacy Specialist who presented storytime and modeled best practices in early learning strategies for accompanying library staff as well as also introducing library staff and families to each other.

10 library staff from 6 different branches or departments participated in these outreach visits.

4. KinderGo! (Kindergarten-readiness Library-Style!)

1 KinderGo library kindergarten readiness experience created and developed, covering two days and including 11 different activities.

4 library staff trained in providing KinderGo.

1 invitation for KinderGo designed; 100 invitations distributed.

1 poster designed for KinderGo; 20 posters distributed.

6 roadside signage posted around town.

6 KinderGo press releases submitted.

4 pre-school classes visited to provide personal invitation to attend KinderGo!

1 Parent Café’ visited with an invitation to KinderGo.

2 KinderGo two day Kindergarten readiness experiences presented in two library branches.
5. 50 Survival Travel Guides created to support library staff who may find themselves providing services to young children and their families. The Survival Travel Guide incorporates best practices for library programs with an eye on early childhood development.

**Project Outcomes (if applicable)**

Please state the outcomes and the results of your evaluation.

"I was a better librarian this week because of Yearn to Learn" as stated in an evaluation of our trainings.

We made a concerted effort to find guidance and meaning by seeking the reflection of library staff from a total of 7 surveys or evaluations regarding Yearn to Learn. Library staff working with families and their young children were given opportunities to express themselves as we navigated throughout the Yearn to Learn grant. These invitations to participate were given through written evaluations that ranged from posting notes on a large tree on the wall created just for their thoughts, face-to-face delivery of a survey and/or a quick email. This is what we’ve discerned from the observations and evaluations collected:

1. Staff seems to be more aware of the ways children are learning. For example, environmental print is an exciting "first" reading experience for young children and one library staff member exclaimed, “it also made me realize that my own preschooler is noticing road signs while we are driving and (I) started asking, “what does that mean” or “what does that say”.

2. Process driven experiences for young children are being spotted at the library as one survey noted “praise the process not the product”.

3. Library staff working with young children are beginning to be willing to take risks which are colossal steps in creating change, as one evaluation noted we value “sharing our risks and our failures”.

4. Library storytime is beginning to be looked upon as more than just an entertainment session by the library staff, “Families don't have to take something home every time, but can take home new experiences and ideas”

5. Library staff were eager for more time focused time on the content of early learning each time we met we often saw evaluations that said we needed “more time” or ”it was great I would have stayed even longer!”.

6. An appreciation and connection has begun to be forged between Butte County’s Early Learning community and the library. As one survey stated, “we are so alike”.

7. Library staff see their valued role in early learning, “understanding the purpose behind what we do” as one attendee observed and “it’s important to emphasize that it’s not just a “fun time” at the library (although fun is an important element) but that we do things with purpose and intention toward literacy development”.

8. Library staff expressed appreciation in our training that included some ways to reframe interactions with families where we examined family strengths and moving to positive rewording of our chats with families, “How programs strengthen families was very useful, its made me think about (library) programs in a different way”.

9. KinderGo as with any library program, required no enrollment and no other form of pre-qualifying, except having a youngster who would be starting Kindergarten in the fall. Younger and older siblings were welcome. Families attending KinderGo! remarked, “I’ll be sad tomorrow when this isn’t happening” and “I had no idea this would be so amazing”. Our early childhood partners heard wonderful reports about KinderGo from families in their classrooms.

10. Here is what one KinderGo team member reported about this school readiness experience at the library:
“While this program was developed for the kids and families, I ended up learning and gaining more confidence, too!! This is especially in regards to how I can serve families and children who are making this crucial transition.”
“The reality far-exceeded the vision, and the vision was already really, really good! I love it when this happens, as it is usually kind of rare, but not when the Literacy team is involved!”

Additional Project Outcomes
Please state any additional intended or unintended outcomes and what data sources you used.

We are still discovering the influence that Yearn to Learn may have had on services to young children and their families during the course of the 2013/2014 grant cycle. However, there is one mark Yearn to Learn left behind that has to be noted.

As we explored early literacy as a whole family affair there was a natural intermingling with the services offered at the library for adult learners. Our visits to State Preschool classrooms during Family Events carried a message for those who do not visit their library about the availability of Literacy Services for adults who may need a bit of help with their own reading and writing skills. Our message was always directed to the children but attending parents heard it too, something like, “just as you (children) are learning about writing and reading here at school did you know the library can help grown-ups who want to learn more about reading and writing?”

With our intimate relationship with Butte County Office of Education we know that teachers often encounter families with an adult who struggles with basic reading and writing skills. In an effort to not only reach adult learners but also to inform classroom teachers, a former adult learner who has become a volunteer spokesperson for Literacy Services attended two meetings that included all the classroom teachers. He shared his difficulties of growing up and also of being an adult who struggled with reading and writing and then shared his experience of coming to the program at age 55, learning to read and of the difference it has made in his life. His message was received by teachers who may not have realized how limited reading and writing skills may often be reflected in their encounters with the families in their program. Tears were shed and a moment that bound us as true partners was forged. These are the words of a Direct Service Coordinator who included us in the meeting:

“Parke changed my life, made me see things in a whole different way. I learned who the non-readers were in my family as a result of his gentle spirit.”

Anecdotal Information
Tell us a story. Give two or more examples of how the project has helped an individual or group in your community.

Yearn to Learn was a journey of challenges, discovery and celebration.

While happily introducing the Yearn to Learn outline to staff a long-time staff member expressed her vehement desire to not participate. The response was, “we only want you to join us if you want to and we sure hope you change your mind because this is going to be great”. As this staff member was leaving our last training session (she participating in all of the Yearn to Learn opportunities that came her way) she asked what was next and upon hearing this was actually concluding our gatherings for Yearn to Learn she expressed her disappointment and appreciation of what she had taken away from the experience. Her positive assessment of Yearn to Learn was a wonderful note to take away.

“Yearn to Learn; let’s talk about early literacy” received a bit of “push back” during the first training and we didn’t make it through the agenda. A sense of disappointment and deflation was lingering by those of us invested in the Yearn to Learn project that is until we started reading evaluations and hearing
conversations around the library. Yes, the library staff had been pushed but they were contemplative and finding themselves pondering and appreciating their role as early childhood enthusiast and just how they could support families with early literacy and learning. Staff had loved “Yearn to Learn; let’s talk about early literacy” for various reasons and were asking for more time together with this topic as the focus. In the end, we were thrilled by the overall reception of our first gathering and the results of opening the door to conversations surrounding early literacy. The next two Yearn to Learn training sessions were really well-received and staff were increasingly pleased to participate always asking for more time to explore early learning best practices.

An ongoing, fascinating conversation revolves around whether library staff who plan programs for young children perceive themselves as performers and entertainers or whether they recognize themselves as true agents of early literacy and early learning development. During the initial Yearn to Learn gathering this came up with one a staff member declaring that "we are, and need to be entertainers" while others reportedly viscerally cringed at the notion and appreciated finally being recognized for the meaningful, fun early literacy interactions they provide for families – way beyond that simply of providing entertainment. In the words of one such librarian, “So happy to see our library moving past the idea that we are just “entertainment” for families.” This division in perception appears not to be solely a local or rural phenomenon. The Family Literacy Specialist recently participated in a conference call with librarians from up and down the State and she heard a librarian on the phone call refer to the work she does in a large Bay Area library as “entertainment”. We have a feeling this topic of conversation is of national relevance as well. The Yearn to Learn gatherings, by design, provided acknowledgement sending the message that we can (and should) create meaningful library programming that meet the literacy/education needs of our users”

The crescendo of Yearn to Learn was a school readiness experience at two library branches called KinderGo! In the Fall we carefully started to pull in library staff working with families at the two target branches and began having conversations about everything from the logo to the intentional readiness activities we would be offering to families with a soon-to-kindergartners. One staff member noted her heartfelt appreciation of the inclusive team approach, expressing that she hadn’t experienced this type of teamwork prior to the planning of KinderGo. The intent is that those faces that sat around the table will feel confident enough to continue to implement KinderGo in the years to come.

And we celebrate receiving comments from librarians such as this one:

“I not only thoroughly enjoyed myself, but learned so much! I’m so thankful I was part of Yearn to Learn because I now have a whole bunch of early learning tools to take with me through my library career. One of the things that struck me most about the grant was seeing the community come together to serve young children and families: everyone from BCOE, to librarians, kindergarten teachers and bus drivers. It sends the message that young children and their caregivers are a vital part of our community and we are here to support them.”

**Please note, we believe part of our Yearn to Learn story is best shared in select photos from our journey as well as through documents that were developed during the year. These will be forwarded electronically to our grant monitor.**
Exemplary Project
If you feel your project was exemplary and others could learn from it and replicate it, please tell us why.

Yearn to Learn provides an example for partnering with your local early childhood professionals. We definitely had several contributing factors to the success, particularly in that our Family Literacy Specialist had such a close working relationship with our partnering agency, Butte County Office of Education, Child Development Programs and Services. With perspective and insight regarding the strengths and weaknesses of both agencies, she also had already established perhaps the most important ingredient for a successful partnership, trust. Our partner was able to step back and be comfortable with the Family Literacy Specialist designing the agenda and training content with their stepping into the day having only met once prior to the training. If the library has an intimate, trusted relationship with any agency outside of itself there is much to be gained for meeting the needs of a community in tackling a project together.

Here is what our partner’s had to say about our journey:

“I loved developing a partnership with folks who were just as excited as we are about Literacy…I learned so much from the ladies at the Library as we shared stories and challenged each other. I loved going into the Library and seeing what we talked about in action. Feeling heard is one thing but seeing it come full circle lets you know that your heart was heard, not just the brain.”

“I just want to say that I felt honored by the partnership. I was happy to share our knowledge of young children and appreciated getting to know the library folks. I am a fan of the library and anything I can do to support others for accessing this wonderful resource is a valuable use of my time.”

FEEDBACK FOR THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY ON THE GRANT PROCESS
We want to learn and improve our grant processes. Please let us know what worked and what we could do differently to make it a better experience. Thank you!

We think the Pitch An Idea proposal concept is fabulous in that it elicits such a broad range of applications and projects. We feel so fortunate that there was such a mechanism in place that we could take what started as a dream of an idea and have the opportunity make it happen. We also appreciate the design of submitting the two page application and being approved to go forward or not at that point rather than the development of a full-blown proposal only to be notified that the application wasn’t viable with so many hours lost as a result. We also value the guidance of the State Library and the well-thought direction provided throughout the application process. Locally, we experienced quite a set-back this spring after submitting a full-proposal in response to an RFP by a local funder who has in the past extended millions for various projects. Not only were we not funded, after dozens of hours of work poured into the application for a very well-thought project we were strongly behind, but "none" of the proposals submitted were funded. Clearly there were some elements about the intent of the RFP that hadn’t been adequately conveyed. This experience made us appreciate the State Library’s granting process all the more.

We also very much appreciate the support of the State Library staff. From the get-go, Suzanne provided insight and guidance in support of the project and it meant so much to us to be able to introduce her to the rest of the library staff at our first Yearn to Learn gathering. Her presence not only enriched the content of the discussion, but further highlighted the value placed on the project for all present to witness. We feel so fortunate to have gotten to work with Sandy Tosti, our grant monitor. She knows the field and possesses a common sense expertise we value along with a heart for our work. She was always so responsive and approachable. She came to be an important part of our team and we welcomed her site visits. Both Suzanne and Sandy offered encouragement and enthusiasm throughout
the project, reaffirming the importance of our work. Yearn to Learn was a stronger project because of their presence and support throughout. We’re so grateful!

file:mcp/lsta/managegrant/1314