

## PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Library Name: Watsonville Public Library

Project Title: Express Learning Literacy Kits

Select category you are applying under:

Category A: Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant

Category B: Grant Replication Program

If Category B is selected, enter the name of the grant you are replicating:

1. Please provide a one paragraph project summary.

The Express Learning Literacy Kits provide an all-in-one glimpse into the many materials our library can offer on a variety of subjects. These “Express Learning Kits” will be targeted at families with children aged 0-10 and childcare providers. The kits will be COVID-19 conscious kits with a plastic tote, books, DVD/CDs and manipulatives, all of which can all be easily disinfected. We intend to support basic early literacy skills with common fun themes for younger audiences, as aligned with our current strategic goals. Our BiblioVan will be utilized to further support childcare providers by providing routine contactless delivery, a service modeled after our homebound lending program. However, our main focus will be on children who have outgrown storytime and the plethora of other community services offered to children aged 0-5. We see a need in our community to support English/Spanish learners and their busy families with a quick and easy kit that not only provides leveled reading but also supports relevant social themes. These “tough topic” learning kits will support the whole child and hopefully improve both their academic and social endeavors.

2. Explain how this project fits with the library’s strategic directions.

Watsonville Public Library (WPL) surveyed over 1,000 members of the community and stakeholders to gather feedback on future directions the library should undergo. With the insight of these surveys our organization developed the library strategic plan for 2021-2023. The following is a partial list of goals based on the library’s current strategic plan:

- 1) Improve the lives of Watsonville’s children and families by introducing them to library resources including, books, videos, music, and online educational programs for specific age groups.

- 2) Facilitate lifelong learning for all residents via outreach. Using the BiblioVan to schedule off-site visits, enabling and increasing equity of access.
- 3) Celebrate the unique diversity and heritage of our community both in the content of the materials and by mirroring Watsonville's demographics.

We learned that we needed to communicate the diverse resources available to our patrons, to increase outreach and celebrate the unique diversity of our community. This program will provide a clear vision for the BiblioVan outreach efforts; creating routine purposeful stops to patrons who are unable to get to the library. The diversification in collection development through the Express Learning Kits will enhance our ability to provide more content in Spanish thus mirroring the Watsonville demographics.

3. Please provide a detailed description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

WPL's current location is shared with the Santa Cruz County Supreme Court and the City of Watsonville City Council/Administration. WPL is located in the City of Watsonville which is recognized for its ethnic and cultural diversity. The City of Watsonville is 6.7 square miles and its economy is primarily centered around the farming industry. Its population is 54,384; the majority identify as Hispanic/Latino (81.8%). 75.7% of the residents speak a language other than English at home, approximately 50% of the children have at least one immigrant parent and 90.6% of our residents work in our community.

Watsonville is also a young town, with over 31.5% of its population under 19 years of age. Currently, Pajaro Valley Unified School District serves just under 20,000 k-12 students, a population in which 65% are English learners, 81% live in poverty, and 10% are migrant students (PVUSD 2020 State of the District). PVUSD State of the District also notes that they have taken steps to support the whole child, providing 14 Social Emotional Learning (SEL) counselors. However, this is an imbalanced ratio of 1 counselor for every 1,400 students. Our library would like to partner with the SEL counselors and families to make SEL fun and easy. The Express Learning Kits will help achieve our goal of connecting with the school district and young families in the community by providing a framework to be successful in a short amount of time. The library staff can form meaningful long-lasting partnerships with the school counselors, the PVUSD Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Program, and the 135 childcare facilities located in Watsonville. With the support of the school Counselors we hope to develop themes that appeal to the community needs. The Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Program can provide numerous connections and feedback for improvement, while the childcare facilities help support new members and early literacy efforts in our diverse community.

4. What are the goals and objectives of the project?

WPL has experience and success in similar kit programs. WPL had a "Read to Me" program that ran strongly for 10 years. "Read to Me" kits were highly sought after by childcare facilities who could not make time to hand pick materials from our shelves. Librarians delivered the kits along

with a short, in-person storytime to show the daycare provider how to utilize the kit materials. The ninety (90) “Read to Me” kits were bilingual and focused on common early literacy themes. Included in the kits were books, a cassette tape, and materials for storytime (i.e. a puppet or felt pieces). The circulation of these kits has since ceased due to budget cuts, creating a lack of staff time and an inability to update the bags with new materials. More recently, WPL has seen a strong need in easy grab and go services with the current COVID-19 landscape. We are providing over 50 storytime craft kits each week while also increasing our circulation of print materials to children aged 0-6 with our Book Bundles. This success is in part due to our outreach efforts with the Early Literacy Collaboration Cohort formed with over a dozen other community partners.

Our new Express Learning Kits will be targeted at families with children aged 0-10 and childcare providers. They will be COVID-19 conscious kits with a plastic tote, books, DVD/CDs and manipulatives, all of which can all be easily disinfected. We intend to support basic early literacy skills with common fun themes for younger audiences, as aligned with our current strategic goals. Our BiblioVan will be utilized to further support childcare providers by providing routine contactless delivery, a service modeled after our previous kit program. However, our main focus will be on children who have outgrown storytime and the plethora of other community services offered to children aged 0-5. We see a need in our community to support the English learners and their busy families with a quick and easy kit that not only provides leveled reading but also supports relevant social themes. These “tough topic” learning kits will support the whole child and hopefully improve both their academic and social endeavors.

The funds provided to WPL will reignite and expand a once successful program that supported our hardworking community.

5. Please include your project timeline (include detail of activities).

Activities	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Establish partnerships (gain insight in possible themes that would be desired by the target market)	X									
Assess themes based on unique demographic needs		X								



Book and rhyme selection and manipulatives		X	X							
Purchase totes			X							
Purchase books/media			X	X						
Develop & print promotional and information sheets for inside the bags				X						
Create an in-house, semi-permanent, English/Spanish display within the children's area to house the bags				X	X					
Catalog and process items					X	X				
Train staff on kit circulation and policies							X			
Promote kits: through partners, social media and in-house displays							X	X	X	
Begin Circulation of kits							X	X	X	X
Compile circulation data (i.e anticipated project outcomes)							X	X	X	X

6. Please indicate how you will evaluate success of your project.

Usage statistics will be gathered by collecting the following information from our ILS system and outreach visits:

- Number of kits circulated
- Number of BiblioVan outreach locations the kits have reached and frequency
- Number of people who have received marketing information
- Number of surveys received from kit users.

7. Please detail your project budget. (Note: Indirect costs are not allowed).

Item	Total Costs	PLP Grant	Other Funding Sources
60 clear plastic totes	\$500		
500 books in English, Spanish & Bilingual	\$5,500		
50 DVD/CDs	\$750		
50 manipulatives	\$1,500		
2 Shelving Units	\$1,500		
Printing/Promotional materials	\$250		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	

8. Please indicate how the project will be sustained after the grant term is over.

The totes will need to be high of quality. Damaged totes will not be charged at the patron's expense. The Library will include in its operating budget funds for replacement of lost or damaged items. We will have multiple kits of the popular themes in order to provide a number of options to patrons if a kit is awaiting replacement materials.

**Complete Only for Category B Grants:**

9. Explain what grant was selected to replicate and why.

10. If there are changes or enhancements to the original grant, including budgetary changes, please detail the changes and your rationale for making them.