

**Full Grant Proposal
Library Services and Technology Act FFY 2010**

This form is available for download on our web site via:

<http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/grantmainalt.shtml>. Use 12 point Times New Roman, with one inch margins. The deadline for receipt of the Project Proposal is **5:00 pm on Friday August 14, 2009**.

Part I: General Information

1. Project title: Preparing Black Children for Kindergarten: A Library Planning Grant
2. Applicant: Multnomah County Library
3. Address: 205 NE Russell Street Portland, OR 97212
4. Contact person: Renea Arnold, Early Childhood Services Supervisor
Phone: 503.988.5458 Email: renea@multcolib.org
5. Project URL (if any): N/A
6. U.S. Congressional District: 1st, 3rd
7. List geographic target area to be served by the project: Multnomah County
8. Estimated number of persons benefiting from the project: 10,000
9. Description of persons benefiting from the project: Black parents and their children, ages 0-6
10. Participating libraries and other partners (if any). Note that all participating organizations must also sign section IV.
11. Project abstract (one paragraph): This project's goal is to plan culturally appropriate library services for Multnomah County's Black residents by conducting a needs assessment, in collaboration with other service providers and agencies, to seek information and guidance from community members and leaders. Recommendations from this planning grant, when implemented, will help to ensure that young children from at-risk Black families are ready to learn to read by kindergarten, and that these children receive the needed early literacy interventions and support to make the crucial transition from their preschool years to kindergarten.
12. List the text of the single most relevant goal and high-level outcome from the *Five-Year State Plan 2008-2012* that will be addressed by the grant project.
Goal #3- *Fostering the Joy of Reading (All Oregonians experience the joy of reading and develop and maintain a high level of reading ability); High-level outcome: A. School readiness and educational performances are improved through library programming for children and young adults.*

13. Briefly describe how the LSTA project will continue after the grant ends, especially noting local support:

The purpose of this grant is to fund the needs assessment process required to create a realistic plan of action for the solution to our stated problem. This planning grant will put together a list of recommended service options, with the end point serving as the starting point for implementing a culturally appropriate library services plan for improving outreach to Black families, together with strategies to address the achievement gap. Once our stated goal is accomplished, there is no need to continue this LSTA planning project.

14. List letters of support for the project (name, affiliation) that are attached to this application. Do not include letters from project partners listed in #9.

Charles McGee, President and CEO, The Black Parent Initiative; Jan Wallinder, Early Childhood Services Manager, Multnomah County Health Dept; Sue Hildick, President, Chalkboard Project; and Marcus C. Mundy, President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland.

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE ANTICIPATED LENGTH OF YOUR GRANT PROJECT:

(Check applicable boxes)

THIS IS THE 1st YEAR OF A ONE YEAR GRANT PROJECT
 2nd YEAR TWO YEAR
 3rd YEAR THREE YEAR

For projects that are multi-year be sure to include an estimate of the funds anticipated to be needed for the future years in the budget discussion.

OF THE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY THIS AGENCY, THIS ONE HAS A PRIORITY OF: 2.

Part II: Project Budget

Proposed project budget (use this format only – do not alter):

(Double click on the table to enter data. Before closing the table, be sure to scroll to the top of it)

Item	Local Cash	Local In-kind	LSTA	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$14,186	\$0	\$14,186
Benefits	\$0	\$4,245	\$0	\$4,245
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$111	\$111
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$3,120	\$0	\$3,940	\$7,060
Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$40,050	\$40,050
Library Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Direct Charges	\$3,120	\$18,431	\$44,101	\$65,652
<i>Indirect Charges</i>	\$0	\$0	\$1,200	\$1,200
Total Budget	\$3,120	\$18,431	\$45,301	\$66,852

Proposed second year LSTA amount: N/A Proposed third year LSTA amount: N/A

Part III: Project Narrative (Attach additional pages. See the criteria for grant proposal evaluation in the Grant Guidelines as well as the Grant Application Instructions for more information on this section.)

A. Background of Applicant (describe the agency's ability to undertake this project)

The mission of Multnomah County Library is to enrich lives by fostering diverse opportunities for all people to read, learn and connect. In addition to being the oldest public library west of the Mississippi, the Multnomah County Library is Oregon's largest public library, serving nearly one-fifth of the state's population as it provides public library service to the 714,567 residents of Multnomah County (2008 Population Estimates, U.S. Census).

The latest national public library survey from the Public Library Data Service shows that only the Queens Public Library serving a population of 2.2 million had higher circulation than Multnomah County Library. In this same report, Multnomah County Library had the highest circulation per capita of any library with a service area population greater than 162,610. Circulation continues to rise; librarians and clerks are helping people deal with a wide array of urgent needs - how to fill out an online job application for the first time, prevent foreclosure, keep a small business afloat, live on reduced means or just have fun as a family on a limited budget. Every day, 13,000 people visit the library, library staff answers more than 2,100 inquiries, and 57,000 books and materials are checked out or renewed. Statistics reported for FY 2009 indicate that Multnomah County Library hosted 16,935 public programs for kids, teens, adults, and families that were attended by 301,900 people. Multnomah County Library's literacy programs reach more children in our county than any other children's literacy program statewide. Last year, the library reached more than 300,000 children, parents, grandparents, and educators with its award-winning children's and family literacy programs. The Summer Reading program, rolled out in library branches, public parks, housing units and community centers to position the library as being "everywhere," attracted 60,000 children participants last year.

Public libraries are an essential part of life in the United States. After years of investment and support from taxpayers through voter-approved bonds and local option levies, Multnomah County residents have shown what a public library can become to the people it serves. The library is a recognized force in Multnomah County that significantly contributes to positive outcomes for individuals and communities. Yet even as the library celebrates the success of meeting its community needs, it recognizes the necessity for continual improvement. In 2006, Multnomah County Library completed the six-step planning process outlined in *The New Planning for Results* in order to create its next five-year strategic plan. Working with a small group of influential committee members that were broadly representative of the larger community, the library defined excellent services that matched the community's needs, interests, and priorities. Seven new Multnomah County Library goals were approved by the Library Board and endorsed by the Board of the Multnomah County Commission.

- **Goal 1:** People of all ages and backgrounds will find welcoming, inviting neighborhood spaces where they can interact with others and participate in public discussion.

- **Goal 2:** People of all ages and backgrounds will find a wide variety of current and popular materials and programs in the languages they read, speak or understand, to satisfy their personal reading interests and educational needs.
- **Goal 3:** People of all ages and backgrounds will find literature, information and answers to questions related to work, school, cultural, civic and personal life.
- **Goal 4:** People of all ages and backgrounds will have the tools and skills to find, evaluate and use information resources that best meet their needs.
- **Goal 5:** Babies and preschoolers will have access to a wide variety of early literacy programs and materials; school-age children and teens will have access to reading motivation programs and materials.
- **Goal 6:** Adults and families of all ages and backgrounds will have materials and programs to help them reach their personal literacy goals.
- **Goal 7:** People in Multnomah County will have a public library system supported by stable funding adequate to meet the above goals.

To address the needs of its community, Multnomah County Library has significantly expanded its services to speakers of languages other than English. LSTA funding has played an important role in funding the planning research and assessments that have revealed the needs of these rapidly growing groups. For example, thanks in large part to the LSTA-funded project LIBROS (*Library Outreach in Spanish*), Multnomah County Library has been able to expand its Spanish language programming and develop a Spanish language website that parallels the English version. This same desire to fully serve all residents led the library to successfully seek an LSTA 2006 (*Planning Culturally Appropriate Library Services*) grant to fund a comprehensive needs assessment for local Russian, Vietnamese, and Chinese speakers. Today, Multnomah County Library provides printed information about its programs and services in four languages – Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese. The library has added “Talk Time” to its list of programs offered —English conversational practice sessions held in several neighborhood libraries—as well as citizenship classes. Further, thanks to an LSTA 08 grant (*This is How I Use My Library*), speakers of Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian throughout the state have recently benefited from a new informational orientation DVD.

Multnomah County Library also offers many programs and services designed to address the early childhood years of 0-8, the most important period for literacy development. For example, in 2007 library staff created *Every Family Reads*, a community reading project to motivate families to read and experience books together. To enhance that experience, the library offers related programs, such as art exhibits, puppet performances, craft workshops, and author visits. In 2009, the library focused *Every Family Reads* on encouraging reluctant readers, especially boys, to engage with popular children's literature. The library hosted the first National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, a two-year position appointed by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, to get kids excited about reading. Ambassador and author Jon Scieszka attracted 30,083 young readers and their families to participate by completing a pledge to read together during March and April 2009. The library featured a bilingual (Spanish) paperback of his book *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* (10,000 of which were printed exclusively for Multnomah County Library). Participation increased from the previous year by nearly 4,000 people, and exceeded the program's goal of 27,000 participants by more than 11%.

Over 31% of participants indicated that Spanish is the primary language spoken in their home. The library did significant cross-promotion for *Every Family Reads* with its Día de los Niños y Día de los Libros program; Scieszka also delivered the 2009 Children's Author Lecture, which allowed for additional program promotion with a different audience. Thanks to seed money from LSTA funding (*Families Reading Together*), the library now has a new staff person with special expertise to specifically target parents of older children with a parent education training program that can significantly impact skill-building for parents in a meaningful way.

Multnomah County Library's Early Childhood Services is another example of a unique combination of outreach programs and specialized library materials that serve children from birth to kindergarten, their families (including expectant parents) and caregivers. In 08-09, Early Childhood Services offered 1,769 outreach programs attended by 14,564 people. These included 670 storytimes for 8,105 children and 310 "talks" (educational presentations) to 4,977 adults; Early Childhood Services also circulated 1,731,382 books. The goal of Early Childhood Services' outreach programs is to support parents and caregivers in the process of building the experiential and linguistic foundations necessary for future reading and academic success. Early childhood specialists and librarians coordinate programs, with staff working closely with the early childhood community to tailor and promote library services. *Raising a Reader*, created in 2004 to reach at-risk families with literacy services, today serves over 30,000 children annually, offering materials in four languages.

Multnomah County Library plays a leadership role to address issues faced by all public libraries. For example, to provide better early education and care for Oregon's children between the ages of 0-3, the library led the creation of an action plan that proposed strategies to coordinate and implement a statewide early literacy effort by Oregon's public libraries. Its leadership on the LSTA-grant-funded "*Planning for a Statewide Early Literacy Initiative*" led to the development of a coordinated statewide early literacy initiative plan featuring public libraries as the leaders in the implementation of the best evidence-based practices. Credit also belongs to its partner libraries and agencies (e.g., The Oregon Commission on Children & Families, Oregon Health Division of the Department of Human Resources, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon State Library, Oregon Child Care Resource & Referral Network, Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care & Education, Oregon Child Care Division of the Employment Department, Early Childhood Care & Education Council of Multnomah County, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and the Oregon Commission for Child Care). Thanks to Multnomah County Library's initial leadership, continuing efforts by these partners has led to The Oregon Commission on Children and Families and the Oregon State Library's *Reading for Healthy Families (RFHF) Oregon: Building Communities of Learning*, a statewide early literacy and community engagement effort.

Multnomah County Library keeps its promises of service to its community by: (a) its commitment to serve children and young adults, from their earliest days as infants through their school years and into early adulthood; (b) its strong love and appreciation for the value of books and reading; (c) its pledge to provide library facilities in which the community can take justifiable pride; (d) its partnerships with schools and other groups to ensure that all are able to make a positive contribution to the community and realize one's highest potential; (e) its determination to meet the community's information needs, using the means and formats that are

desired in as timely a manner as required; and (f) its sustainable pride in its responsiveness to the community it serves. Two new neighborhood libraries will be built within the next few years as part of its commitment to service. Multnomah County Library’s ongoing commitment to serve its entire community and to ensure that families receive culturally and linguistically appropriate services, coupled with its successful track record of serving children and families, especially those from unserved and underserved populations, makes it highly qualified to undertake the proposed LSTA project.

B. Detailed statement of problem

The term “achievement gap” refers to the difference between how well low-income and minority children perform on standardized tests as compared with their White peers. For many years, low-income and minority children have been falling behind their White peers in terms of academic achievement. In July 2009, the National Center for Education Statistics released a new statistical analysis report called “*Achievement Gaps: How Black and White Students in Public Schools Perform in Mathematics and Reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.*” While the nationwide gaps in 2007 were narrower than in previous assessments at both grades four and eight in mathematics, and at grade four in reading, White students had average scores at least 26 points higher than Black students in each subject. Oregon’s mathematics achievement gaps at grade four (22) was not significantly different from the nation’s gap (26); its achievement score gap in reading at grade 4 (25) was also similar to the nation’s (27). Closing the racial academic achievement gap is a problem that must be solved in order for future society to properly function. A number of factors have been identified as contributing to the academic achievement gap, including students' socioeconomic backgrounds and teachers' racial expectations. In order to close the gap, educators agree that there must be equivalent standards and expectations for high and low achieving schools, as well as regular evaluation of instruction.

Since the early 1990s, the number of Hispanic students in Oregon has increased over 200 percent, and the overall minority population has doubled. With this large influx of minority students, state political and education leaders realized Oregon needed to support these underserved and often vulnerable students. In 2005, Susan Castillo, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Oregon, named closing the achievement gap as a top instructional priority in Oregon. Superintendent Castillo noted three aspects to the achievement gap: (1) Performance gap: The discrepancies between the educational achievement and performance of students of diverse races, ethnicities, income levels and other groupings (e.g., students with disabilities, English Language Learners); (2) Resource gap: The disproportionate access of students to equitable funding, highly competent and trained teachers and administrators, highly engaging and rigorous curriculum, and opportunities for educational supports and experiences beyond the classroom; and (3) Willingness gap: The collective will of society to tolerate or reject the inequities in both the educational system and society at large that disproportionately and negatively affect students who are poor, minority, disadvantaged and disabled.

Multnomah County has the greatest number and largest proportion of minorities in Oregon. This percentage is broken roughly into 74% White; 11% Hispanic or Latino origin; 6% Black; 1% American Indian/Alaska Native; 6% Asian; and 3% reporting two or more races. The most recent forecast is that the Portland Metro area will take in nearly a million new residents by

2030, a 46% increase from 2005. In Multnomah County, there are measurable differences in outcomes based upon race and ethnicity in many areas, including education. Children of color and from low-income homes are underachieving at disproportionate rates. Children and families also face significant other challenges to success: 24% of children in the County under 18 years of age live in poverty and 48% of school-age children qualify for free or reduced lunch, an indicator of poverty.

A recent report commissioned by the Black Parent Initiative, a community group formed to address the achievement gap in local schools, found that:

- 79% of Black students enrolled in the County’s eight school districts qualified for free or reduced lunches.
- A disproportionate number of Black and Latino fourth graders are having reading difficulties: 85% of Black, non-Latino and 66% of non-Latino fourth graders could not read at grade level.
- For every 100 Black students enrolled, there were 7.3 suspensions, but for every White student enrolled, there were 5.3 suspensions. (Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.)
- 10.4% of youth between ages 16 to 19 were neither enrolled in school nor high school graduates.
- Children of color are disproportionately represented in both the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

This study of Multnomah County school data recommends a shift in addressing the achievement gap: focusing more on prevention than intervention — and starting the prevention even earlier. By the time Black students reach third grade, most are behind in their studies compared with White children in Portland. They rarely catch up. This local study suggests the best way to narrow the gap is to “nip it in the bud before it begins.” *The State of Black Oregon*, published in late July 2009 by the Urban League of Portland, contains a stark inventory of similar statistics that show a persistent gap in living standards between Black and White Oregonians — a gap that is growing wider as a result of the current economic downturn. The Urban League of Portland is one of the oldest civil rights and social service organizations in the state. Its mission is to empower African Americans and others to achieve equality in education, employment, economic security and quality of life. *The State of Black Oregon* is modeled on the National Urban League’s annual *State of Black America* report. “During the last eight years, the poverty gap in America and in this state has continued to grow,” says Marcus C. Mundy, president and CEO of the Urban League of Portland. “If there’s a poverty gap for Americans generally, the African-American poverty gap widens to chasm proportions. This flies in the face of the ideals our country stands for, and simply should not be acceptable here in Oregon or anywhere else.”

Among the reports findings:

- Median income of households headed by Blacks in Oregon is less than two-thirds that of White households – showing virtually no improvement since this study was last compiled in 1990.

- 38% of Oregon's Black children live in households with incomes below the poverty level; and 60 percent live in households with income below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- Black children born in Oregon are 50% more likely to suffer from low birth weight; and infant mortality in the state is 50% higher for children of Black mothers.
- Although Blacks represent just 7% of Portland's population, a disproportionate percentage of the city's homicide victims are Black (45% compared to 35% of homicide victims that are White). Black Oregonians are also six times more likely to end up in jail than Whites.

"This report is a wake up call to Oregon," concludes Mundy. "The statistics reflect a consistent trend over decades – a trend fueled by social and economic disparities that demonstrate a deeply-rooted, systemic disadvantage for its African-American citizens. Our hope is that this report can serve as call-to-action for addressing these disparities through policy proposals aimed at both the public and private sectors."

Research has shown that children who do not participate in high-quality early education have higher rates of juvenile delinquency, arrests, and juvenile court petitions. A review by the National Black Child Development Institute revealed that families who are most at risk of developing early literacy deficits are not adequately represented by organizations at the forefront of the emerging early literacy movement. Further, state-by-state data released by the National Center for Education Statistics provides evidence of a strong, positive link between the amount of children's materials circulated by public libraries and fourth-grade reading scores. Storytimes, lap-sit programs, and other services for young children play a significant role in preparing children for success as readers. As reported in *School Library Journal* (9/1/2008): "*These findings support the position that, the greater the amount of circulated materials and the greater the attendance at library programs, the more likely kids will do well in reading.*"

The family's cultural influence on health, growth and development, child-rearing, family relationships, and learning expectations can shape the child's (and family's) school readiness as well as the child's success in school. These factors can also impact the family and child's approach to work, play, and access to services and supports in the community. More culturally appropriate programs and services can be used to create a safe community space in which these values are respected. Conversely, when the impact of a person's race, ethnicity, language, and culture is not recognized and understood, there is risk of isolation and alienation. "Cultural competency" refers to the ability of educators (formal and informal) to successfully educate students of all backgrounds and cultures. Developing that ability is a process that evolves over time and requires that individuals and organizations have a defined set of values, principles, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively in a cross-cultural manner; demonstrate the capacity to value diversity and manage the dynamics of difference while also engaging in self-reflection and adapting to changing contexts; and incorporate these concepts into all aspects of leadership, policymaking and practice.

Public libraries are great democratic institutions, serving people of every age, income level, location, ethnicity, or physical ability, and providing the full range of information resources needed to live, learn, govern, and work. "Equity of Access" is a powerful concept that characterizes the central tenet of librarianship; inherent in this goal are activities as diverse as

working for universal literacy; defending intellectual freedom; preserving and making accessible the human record in all languages; and ensuring that preschoolers have books to read. The strength of our nation is the diversity of its people, but how we deal with this diversity continues to be a challenge. The strength of libraries has always been the diversity of their collections and commitment to serving all people. Libraries of all types – public, school and academic – provide a forum for diverse ideas and points of view that can help us learn about and better understand ourselves and each other. If libraries are to be their best, their services and staff must reflect both the people they serve and the larger global community. Libraries can provide a wide range of opportunities for people with diverse needs and interests. These include: cultural heritage collections; materials in alternate formats such as large print; multilingual Internet training; story hours in languages other than English; English as Second Language classes; and many other creative and resourceful programs.

However, meaningful and authentic inclusiveness by the Library cannot be achieved until the Library takes the critical first steps to assess community needs; we recognize that we presently do not know enough about Black culture. The LIBROS Program has advanced the Library's service to Spanish speaking residents, and other LSTA-grant funded planning and outreach grants have allowed us to assess and address the needs of Chinese, Vietnamese, and speakers of Slavic languages. We now seek to undertake a similar planning approach, focused on early literacy, with our Black community.

In April 2009, Multnomah County Library submitted a brief grant proposal for a proposed two-year project entitled *Kindergarten Readiness: Reaching out to Latino and African American Families*. However, the LSTA Advisory Council's comments upon issuing us an invitation to submit a full grant application caused us to rethink our ambitious scope and revamp our proposal. One of our priorities is to increase our impact in underserved communities. However, unlike with past efforts to ensure our services to Latinos are more culturally appropriate, Multnomah County Library has not been able to launch a similar systematic strategy to assess the needs of our Black community. For this reason, we have decided to submit a full grant application that exclusively focuses on the needs of the Black community, with a priority on learning how to help close the achievement gap. By establishing relations with the communities and agencies that support Black families during a comprehensive needs assessment, Multnomah County Library will be better able to identify service gaps, develop culturally appropriate responses, and hire staff to implement culturally appropriate programming, collections, and services that will help close the achievement gap.

C. Goal, quantified objectives, and activities to address problem (include timeline)

The goal of "*Preparing Black Children for Kindergarten: A Library Planning Grant*" is to plan culturally appropriate library services for Multnomah County's Black residents by conducting a needs assessment, in collaboration with other service providers and agencies, to seek information and guidance from community members and leaders. Culturally appropriate services are characterized by an acceptance and respect for difference, continuing self-assessment, careful attention to the dynamics of difference, continuous expansion of knowledge and resources, and adaptation of services to better meet the needs of diverse populations. With the proposed project, Multnomah County Library will focus its stakeholder conversations around the achievement gap

to learn more about the precise types of actions it can take to help close the gap.

Recommendations from this planning grant, when implemented, will help to ensure that young children from at-risk Black families are ready to learn to read by kindergarten, and that these children receive the needed early literacy interventions and support to make the crucial transition from their preschool years to kindergarten.

The needs assessment will focus on Multnomah County's Black population to identify the essential resources already available within the library; identify the essential resources to be acquired; and determine how to use, develop or obtain those resources.

Nine **objectives** will achieve this goal:

1. By early **March 2010**, contract with an experienced library consultant to conduct a needs assessment that focuses on developing culturally appropriate early literacy library services for Black community members;
2. By late **March 2010**, identify and formally issue partnership invitations to school agencies, government agencies, and other service providers that serve Black families with preschool-age children;
3. By early **April 2010**, begin to collect and analyze existing demographic data, including the information collected during by the Black Parent Initiative, EcoNorthwest (the Northwest's largest economics consulting firm), the Urban League of Portland, and the Oregon Department of Education;
4. By mid **April 2010**, convene at least 4 meetings with the service providers and staff of these other agencies to outline and develop the final needs assessment process, and to identify participants to be invited;
5. By early **May 2010**, begin to conduct key informant interviews and hold 8-12 focus groups with representatives of Multnomah County's Black community;
6. By mid **June 2010**, distribute culturally appropriate surveys (in print and online);
7. By late **June 2010**, hold meetings with library staff in neighborhood libraries serving the greatest numbers of Black families to discuss service options and potential resources needed to reach out to their Black community members;
8. By **August 2010**, distribute and discuss the consultant's final report; and
9. By **January 2011**, begin to integrate the recommendations from the needs assessment into the library's service plan, strategic goals, objectives, and identify the indicators that will be used to measure success.

Specific project **activities** include: data collection and analysis; conducting key informant interviews; and holding focus groups. This needs assessment process will serve as the springboard for the development of culturally appropriate programming, collections, and services. Understanding the impact of cultural differences and diversity requires self-reflection and information gathering. The needs assessment can provide and help staff understand the resources and tools essential for understanding the impact of culture on every individual, families, and young children. By completing a community assessment, using strategies to gather family information, and exposing key cultural issues, such as those related to services to young children and their families, Multnomah County Library can begin to address concerns related to early care, education, school readiness, and the achievement gap.

Multnomah County Library will work with partners that include faith-based organizations; early care and education; health and mental health care; business; community and social services; literacy groups; advocacy groups; other community organizations; foundations/nonprofits; and professional associations. The library will ensure the meaningful involvement of all consumers, community stakeholders and key constituency groups. Those asked to participate in interviews and focus groups will be thought of as individuals, not solely as representatives of the culture they come from or the ethnicity they represent, but rather as authentic resources who know more than we do about their own ethnicity, culture, issues and what matters to them most. Other service providers who deliver health, mental health, or other social services to Black families may also be able to adapt some of the library's findings to enhance their service environments. Effective communities are those that respect the values, self-determination, and priorities of all people and translate their needs and desires into appropriate resources, supports, and services. Delivering culturally competent services requires specific knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and competencies. The text, tools, and resources identified during this needs assessment process will support future self-assessment, personnel training and preparation, and the planning of training activities for library staff.

Project Timeline

First Grant Quarter: In **February 2010**, the library will issue a request for bid for a qualified library consultant. In **March 2010**: the library will select the winning consultant; formalize partner agreements with agencies and organizations; and identify a variety of settings in which to hold community focus groups. A needs assessment of modest scope typically takes between four to six months to carry out. In **April 2010**, the Project Consultant will begin Phase 1 (the pre-assessment) to determine what is already known about the needs in the community; identify issues of concern; identify and begin to collect/analyze demographic data; attend project meetings to determine the final needs assessment process; and issue invitations to participants. The library will prepare and submit its first LSTA grant quarterly report.

Second Grant Quarter: From **May – July 2010**, Phase 2 (the main assessment) will begin as the selected consultant gathers data and opinions by conducting key informant interviews and 8-12 focus groups. The selected consultant will develop and distribute culturally appropriate surveys; meet with school representatives; and hold meetings with library staff in neighborhood libraries (e.g., North Portland, Albina, Woodstock, and the planned new library in the Kenton neighborhood) to discuss additional services they wish to provide and the types of resources they will need. The library will prepare and submit its second LSTA grant quarterly report.

Third Grant Quarter: In **August 2010**, the consultant will begin to write the needs assessment, which typically includes: a table of contents; executive summary; needs assessment methodology; community analysis (relevant factors that affect the library goals, objectives, and service plan, including other governmental agencies and community organizations); demographic information and analysis; analysis and discussion of community characteristics; analysis of library service needs; and the service limitations of what is presently offered to the target populations. In **September 2010**, the consultant will circulate a draft report for feedback and revision. In **October-November 2010**, library staff will distribute and discuss the consultant's final report, which includes a detailed description and analysis of the relevant

factors affecting the library's goal of providing equity of access, an analysis and discussion of community characteristics, library service needs, service limitations, and a summary of outcomes-based findings/recommendations, including those specific to addressing the achievement gap. The library will prepare and submit its third LSTA grant quarterly report.

Final Grant Quarter: Discussion of the consultant's final report continues. An LSTA peer review evaluation will take place. In **December 2010**, final grant closeout activities will commence. All final reports will be submitted in **January 2011**.

Post-Grant: After the final report is accepted in **January 2011**, the library will prepare to begin Phase 3 (the post-assessment) in which the data collected starts to be used to build the plan for action. The library will hold meetings and discussions to identify specific ways to integrate the recommendations from the needs assessment into the library's early literacy services plan, strategic goals, objectives, and will identify indicators for measuring success. Information on the needs assessment design, results, and recommendations will be communicated to decision makers and other stakeholders.

Project Staffing

The role of the Project Director

Renea Arnold, Early Childhood Services Supervisor, will serve as the Project Director. Renea is an Oregon-certified brain development research trainer and early childhood development specialist. Renea won statewide recognition in 2005 as an Oregon Library Association Employee of the Year, and again in 2009 as the winner of the Evelyn Sibley Lampman Award, which honors a living Oregon author, librarian, or educator who has made a significant contribution to Oregon in the fields of children's literature and library services. It is awarded annually by the Children's Services Division of the Oregon Library Association. In her 15 years at the library, Renea has emerged as a local, statewide, and national leader in early literacy work, focusing on providing children from birth to kindergarten with enrichment opportunities that prepare them for reading. Her early childhood team contributed to the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Community's development of *Early Words*, an innovative program that helps preschoolers develop early literacy skills and raises public awareness of the importance of early literacy. In addition to her work with *Early Words*, Renea has also been instrumental in the planning and implementation of a national early literacy project, *Every Child Ready to Read*. Renea will oversee the day-to-day operation of the grant project's activities, including:

- Help issue the Request for Proposal (RFP) to select the Project Consultant
- Attend project meetings with the Project Consultant
- Adopt a final schedule for the needs assessment's activities
- Propose project roles and responsibilities to participating staff from neighborhood libraries serving on the project's Advisory Committee
- Participate in at least one focus group meeting
- Serve as liaison with partnering agencies and help identify the names of those who should be invited to participate
- Help facilitate library staff discussions

- Regularly report and share information with the Youth Services Director on project activities
- Supply information to the Project Consultant and comment on the draft report

The role of the Project's Advisory Committee

Pre-planning for this project has included two internal project meetings with staff (including three staff members who are Black) to outline the role to be played by the project's Advisory Committee. Led by Youth Services Director Ellen Fader, the Advisory Committee will include: the Project Director, one Youth Librarian, one Neighborhood Library Administrator, and three representatives from community-based organizations. Ellen Fader has been the Youth Services Director at Multnomah County Library since 1995. Active in the American Library Association (ALA), Fader has chaired, and served three times, on the Newbery Award Committee which annually chooses the most distinguished book published in the United States for young people. She is also a past president of the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of ALA.

The Advisory Committee will assist the Project Consultant by identifying key community members; recruiting potential focus group participants; supplying demographic and library use information; and networking with other neighborhood organizations and community center staff. In addition, community-based organization staff will assist the Project Consultant by locating community gathering places in which to hold focus groups; identifying influential community members/elders from the Black community to be invited; recruiting potential focus group participants; supplying demographic, health, employment, education, and other relevant information; and by networking with neighborhood organizations and community center staff. A library clerk at Multnomah County Library will assist with the printing and mailing of the invitations to focus group participants, and handle other project-related clerical responsibilities.

The role of the Project Consultant

The selected Project Consultant will be an independent contractor selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is expected that the selected Project Consultant, whose contract will be paid with LSTA grant funds, will have the following relevant education and experience:

- Masters in one of the following or related fields: Business, Education, or Library Science (required)
- At least 7 year (s) of relevant experience (required)
- Work that demonstrates an understanding of culturally appropriate library services (required)
- Experience working on library needs assessments (required)
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills (required)
- Experience working with diverse members of a Black community (required)
- Experience working with public libraries (required)
- Experience working with LSTA grant projects (preferred)

The Project Consultant will facilitate stakeholders, partners, and library staff’s participation in a number of needs assessment activities that may include thoughtful discussions around questions such as:

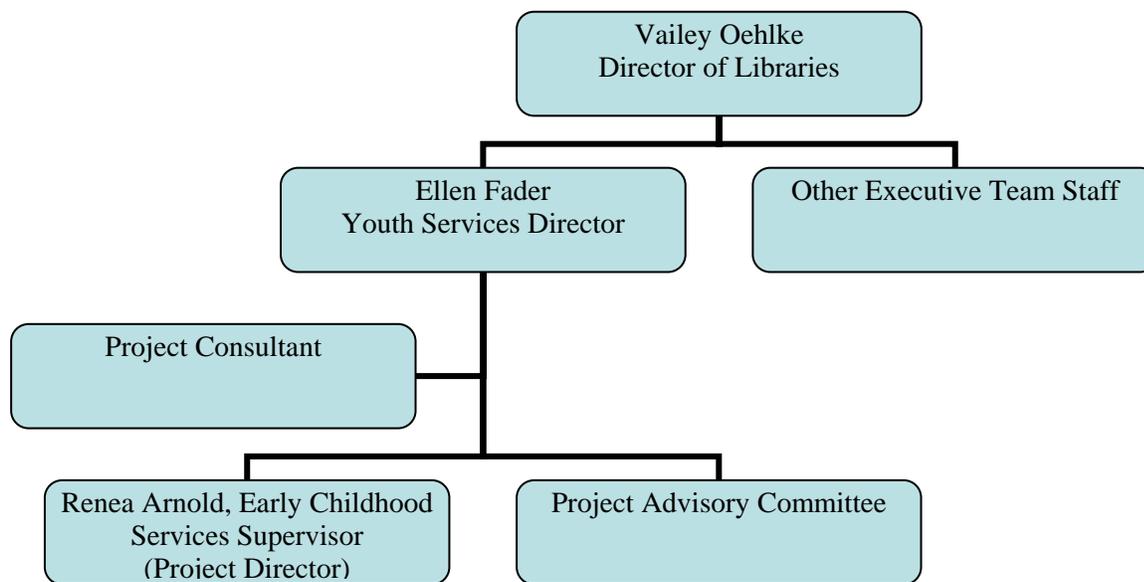
1. What are the diversity issues within our community and our service and support systems that most impact Multnomah County’s residents who are Black and have young children?
2. What indicators are there to support a need for cultural competency? In what services and systems?
3. What planning group already exists or needs to form to focus on this effort?
4. What key partners must be involved and how can participation by Multnomah County’s Black residents be ensured?
5. How will leadership and decision making processes be determined?
6. What resources or promising practices in cultural competency already exist within our community?
7. Is it realistic to expect library staff to create an environment where all families feel equally comfortable, particularly when they come from many different backgrounds?
8. How can a library staff member of a different background than the majority of his or her community members effectively serve them?
9. What specific behaviors should community members, parents, and their children expect from “culturally competent” library staff?
10. What role should the library play in conducting outreach to families of preschool and kindergarten age children in specific neighborhoods with large percentages of Black families, to encourage school registration and develop ways to engage them early in preparing their child for school?
11. What resources (including training and technical assistance) would be useful to us?
12. How will conflict be addressed (e.g. disagreement over whether there is an achievement gap or unresolved issues about teacher turnover, narrow thinking, preset low expectations)?
13. Once there is a plan, how will we assure implementation, monitoring progress, and evaluating outcomes?
14. How do we prioritize community needs to address the most critical ones in times of shrinking resources at the county, state, and national level?
15. How are student demographics changing in our County’s eight school districts? What are some of the challenges and issues that surround these shifts?

When designing and carrying out the needs assessment planning process, the Project Consultant will compile answers to the following questions as they relate to the estimated 10,000 Black parents and their children (ages 0-6) who make up our targeted service population. Answers to the following questions will be sought first from information found in *The State of Black Oregon*:

- What is the history of the Black community within each school district in Multnomah County?
- What are the major religious groups in these communities?
- What are the major support organizations or agencies within these communities?
- How is leadership determined within these communities?

- What are the important formal channels of communication?
- What are the important informal channels of communication?
- Where do these community members gather as an opportunity to share information?
- Who are the important opinion leaders and “communicators” within these communities?
- Who has the greatest authority in these communities?
- How do the leaders influence the members of these communities?
- How can the library work with other partners to eliminate and rectify the effects of racism in education and promote “Excellence for All?”
- What can the library do to more effectively address educational concerns of these communities?
- What role should the library play in creating a forum for the ongoing exchange of ideas, conversations, and strategies to improve the educational opportunities and achievement for Black students?
- What are the best practices for successfully serving young Black children and their families that can be replicated by the library?

Project Organization Chart



D. Budget narrative

Budget Narrative Summary

LSTA funds will pay for contractual services with the Library Consultant (\$40,050), supplies (\$3,940), travel (\$111), and indirect costs (\$1,200) at the approved rate of 2.72%. Local cash will pay for gift card incentives for invited focus group participants, and refreshments during focus group sessions. In-kind includes personnel and fringe benefits for 200 hours by the Project Director, 100 hours by the Youth Services Director, 30 hours by a Neighborhood Library Administrator and Youth Librarian, 10 hours by an Office Assistant, and 45 hours by community

organization volunteer representatives (3) serving on the Advisory Committee. A detailed line-item budget is below:

Description	Requested	Our	Community	Project
	LSTA Amount	Share	Share	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$13,266	\$920	\$14,186
Renea Arnold, Project Director, 200 hours	\$0	\$7,266	\$0	\$7,266
Ellen Fader, Youth Services Director, 100 hours	\$0	\$4,775	\$0	\$4,775
Senior Office Assistant, 10 hours	\$0	\$181	\$0	\$181
(1) Youth Librarian and (1) Neighborhood Library Administrator, 30 hours (Advisory Committee Members)	\$0	\$1,044	\$0	\$1,044
(3) Community Organization Volunteers/Representatives, 45 hours (Advisory Committee Members)	\$0	\$0	\$920	\$920
Personnel Fringe Benefits 32%	\$0	\$4,245	\$0	\$4,245
Renea Arnold, Project Director, 200 hours	\$0	\$2,325	\$0	\$2,325
Ellen Fader, Youth Services Director, 100 hours	\$0	\$1,528	\$0	\$1,528
Senior Office Assistant, 10 hours	\$0	\$58	\$0	\$58
(1) Youth Librarian and (1) Neighborhood Library Administrator, 30 hours	\$0	\$334	\$0	\$334
(3) Partnering Organization Volunteers/Representatives, 45 hours	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Library Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$3,940	\$3,120	\$0	\$7,060
Gift card incentives (Estimate 20 x 12 x \$10)	\$0	\$2,400	\$0	\$2,400
Promotional materials (invitations, fliers, posters) Estimate 1,000 items @ \$1/each	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
Printed Surveys & Questionnaires (Estimate based on 5,000 items at .50 each)	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$2,500
Postage: mailings to invitees (Estimate based on 1,000 items @ .44 cents/each)	\$440	\$0	\$0	\$440
Refreshments for Focus Group Sessions (12 sessions x 20 attendees x \$3/each)	\$0	\$720	\$0	\$720
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$111	\$0	\$0	\$111
Project Team Mileage Reimbursement (Estimate .556 cents x 200 miles)	\$111	\$0	\$0	\$111

Contractual Services	\$40,050	\$0	\$0	\$40,050
Library Consultant (\$150/hr for 267 hours)	\$40,050	\$0	\$0	\$40,050
Total Direct Charges	\$44,101	\$20,631	\$920	\$65,652
Indirect Costs 2.72%	\$1,200	\$0	\$0	\$1,200
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	\$45,301	\$20,631	\$920	\$66,852

E. Evaluation method

Expected outputs include a preliminary plan from the exploration and data gathering phases of the needs assessment; criteria for action based on high-priority needs; an action plan; written and oral briefings; and reports. The data-gathering methods used during the needs assessment process will lead to a decision-making process, in which the data are but one component.

In addition to the desired outcome of having useful information and input upon which to develop culturally appropriate services (especially those addressing the achievement gap) for Black families with children ages 0-6, performance indicators will be used to measure the success of our efforts, once the service plan with its selected early childhood and kindergarten readiness strategies is implemented.

Once the proposed planning process is completed, the library service plan will feature its own evaluation component that is likely to describe data gathering sources, methods, and outcomes of special interest to the Library:

- ▶ An increase in the number of Black residents who attend early literacy and other library programs;
- ▶ An increase in the number of Black parents, as well as their children, who feel welcome in the library — they are comfortable visiting and talking with staff;
- ▶ An increase in the number of library staff who have a better understanding of what they can do in day-to-day business to meet the needs of our Black patrons with young children;

This planning project is of great significance for statewide library development and other national library initiatives. The American Library Association has identified “Equity of Access” as one of the guiding principles for investment of energy and resources. In view of the need to gain public acceptance for initiatives to provide culturally appropriate library services for minority populations, this facet of equity of access and the results of planning project can stimulate discussions in other Oregon libraries about services and programs for unserved and underserved people. This project is relevant to the following LSTA goals, high-level outcomes, and strategies:

Goal #3- *Fostering the Joy of Reading (All Oregonians experience the joy of reading and develop and maintain a high level of reading ability)*

High-level outcome: A. School readiness and educational performances are improved through library programming for children and young adults.

Strategies: Support emergent literacy efforts and school-readiness issues that affect a disadvantaged population.

The disenfranchisement of a significant portion of the population does not further the goals of a democracy that depends on an informed citizenry. Oregonians need libraries with strong ties to the community and awareness of community needs in order to provide quality, cost-effective library service. Culturally appropriate library services developed in partnership with other agencies and community-based organizations will benefit all family members. Therefore, this project also advances **Goal #6:** Positioning libraries to help build strong communities.

This project is also significant to a number of other organizations across the state that have been involved in the work to address the achievement gap, and to develop culturally competent educators, including the Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Leadership Network, Chalkboard Project, Oregon University System, and Teacher Standards and Practices Commission. In 2004, these organizations hosted a summit, funded by The Wallace Foundation, to identify indicators of cultural competency and the actions required to move from concept to implementation. Other partners have included the Oregon Association of Latino Administrators, Oregon School Boards Association, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, and Oregon Education Association. Recent efforts in the state have been spearheaded by the Oregon Leadership Network, a multi-agency/multi-district collaboration focused on changing how Oregon recruits and develops its school and district leaders. The network has identified cultural competency as necessary to strengthen leadership policy and development, and are working to include cultural competency in policy and state administrator licensure standards. The cultural competency development is now a large component of the Oregon Leadership Network's mission to strengthen education leadership to improve student success and eliminate the performance gap between different ethnic and socioeconomic student groups.

How this project will be publicized

A number of ways will be used to publicize this planning project, because it is vitally important to have broad participation by as many members of the target population and partnering agencies as possible. Special ethnic media may be used; Portland's *Skanner*, *Portland Observer* and *El Hispanic News* fill in the gaps about communities of color than more "mainstream" papers such as *The Oregonian* and *Willamette Week*. The library will seek the support of community supporters (e.g., Black Parent Initiative, Urban League of Portland, and Chalkboard Project) to encourage participation of the target population through their websites. Others, such as local school districts and faith-based organizations, will be asked to help with promotional activities.

Results from this planning process will be promoted to the Oregon State Library, as well as to the broader state and national library community through: written reports, public presentations at future conferences, and with published findings in appropriate print and electronic media, such as *American Libraries*, *Public Libraries*, and the *OLA Quarterly*. Our findings will be shared with other nearby jurisdictions' library systems facing similar challenges. Information on the

needs assessment design, results, and recommendations will be communicated to decision makers and other stakeholders. The findings uncovered during this planning process will be publicized and disseminated to other librarians, elected county commissioners, Board members, and key community leaders at meetings and project debriefings, as well as during meetings with library staff. The reports from this project will be shared with other librarians.

Part IV: Certification of Application

- 1. Documentation of project participation (signatures below for each participating library and other partner listed under Part I, number 9 above):

I HAVE READ THE PROPOSAL PRESENTED ON THE PRECEDING PAGES. I AM AWARE OF THE OBLIGATIONS THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD ENTAIL. BY MY SIGNATURE I CERTIFY MY LIBRARY'S COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT AS DESCRIBED IN THE PRECEDING PAGES.

Name *Library/Agency* *Date*

- 2. Certification of the fiscal agent

Fiscal Agent (if different from applicant):

Name and address: _____

Contact person: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

- a. I affirm that the jurisdiction or agency (henceforth, AGENCY) is the designated fiscal agent for the project described in this application and is empowered to receive and expend funds for the conduct of the proposed grant project.
- b. I affirm that the information contained in this application is true and correct and that the AGENCY for which I am an official has authorized me to submit this application for LSTA grant funds.
- c. I affirm that if this application were to result in the AGENCY being awarded grant funds to carry out the project described in this application, that the AGENCY would comply with all of the requirements for the administration of LSTA grants described in Appendix D of the General Information and Grant Application Guidelines, Library Services and Technology Act.

Name of official authorized to enter into contractual agreements for the AGENCY

Title

Signature

Date

Email

3. Certification for Children’s Internet Protection Act
Public and public school library applicants, and consortia with public or school members **must** check one of the options below (a, b, or c).

a.	The applicant public or public school library has complied with the requirements of Section 9134(f)(1) of the Library Services and Technology Act.
b.	<i>(for consortia only)</i> Prior to using any LSTA funds to purchase computers used to access the Internet or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet for a public library or a public school library, the applicant consortium or group will collect and retain a duly completed Internet Safety Certification from every constituent public library or public school library in accordance with requirements of Section 9134(f) of the Library Services and Technology Act.
c.	The requirements of Section 9134(f) of the Library Services and Technology Act do not apply to the applicant library because no funds made available under the LSTA program will be used to purchase computers used to access the Internet or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet for a public library or public school library that does not receive discounted E-Rate services under the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

Name of official authorized to enter into contractual agreements for the AGENCY

Title

Signature

Date

This form must be received at the State Library no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 14, 2009.

Faxed copies will not be accepted. There are no exceptions. If requesting indirect costs, attach appropriate sections of a federally approved indirect cost plan.

Mail or deliver **one copy** of your application to:

Library Development Services
Oregon State Library
250 Winter St., NE
Salem, OR 97301-3950

As a courtesy, the State Library asks that you email an electronic copy of your proposal, without letters of recommendation and appendixes, to ann.reed@state.or.us. This does not substitute for the signed, mailed copy.