

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Impact FY2013

Organization Information

Type: Fort Bend County Libraries
 Legal Entity: government agency
 Address: 1001 Golfview Dr
 City, State Zip: Richmond, TX 77469-5141
 Employer Identification Number: 746001969

Grant Information

Type: Impact
 Fiscal Year: 2013
 Application ID: 1443
 Term: 09-01-2012 to 08-31-2013

Please submit your grant application electronically using the TSLAC Grant Management System, <http://gms.tsl.state.tx.us>.

February 21, 2012

Organization Information

DUNS Number: 81497075

U.S. Congr. Distr No.: 22

State Senate Distr. No.: 18

State House Distr. No.: 27

Contact Persons

	Name	GMS User Role	E-mail
Director/ Coordinator	Clara Russell	Grantee Official	crussell@fortbend.lib.tx.us

Proposed Funding Sources

a. TSLAC grant:	9986
b. Other federal gov't funds:	0
c. Other state funds:	0
d. Local funds:	0
e. Program income:	0
f. Miscellaneous:	0
TOTAL:	9986

Is the applicant delinquent on any Federal debt? NO

Signature

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that the statements made in this application are true, that the information provided is correct, and that I am authorized to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organization.

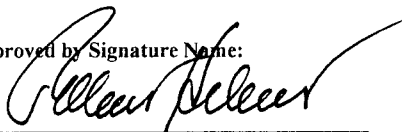
Application Completed by:

Clara Russell Date: 02-14-12

Application Approved by: Fort Bend County Commissioners Court

Date: February 28, 2012

Approved by Signature Name:



Date: February 28, 2012

Robert E. Hebert

Approved by Title:

County Judge

Budget Table for Fiscal Year 2013

Capitalization Level: 5000

3-2-12 copy received

Budget Category	Grant Funds	Other Funds(if applicable) (\$)	Description	Total Costs (\$)
Personnel	0	0	Fort Bend County Libraries (FBCL)'s current staffing level is sufficient to implement the proposed Nook Color loan project.	0
Fringe Benefits	0	0	None	0
Travel	0	0	None	0
Equipment/Property	8486	0	\$8,486.10 is budgeted to purchase 30 Nook Colors at a total cost of \$282.87 per eReader, including the devices and accessories (touch screen clear film protectors, wipe- clean shock- absorbing covers) and a 2-year multi- user protection plan for each. Thanks to the size of the initial purchase, a discount of 4.73% is being applied to the cost of the equipment, through collaboration with Barnes & Noble Corporate. No sales tax will be applied to the total since, as a government entity, Fort Bend County maintains tax-exempt status. Ten FBCL branches will house and loan out two or three eReaders each, evenly distributing availability to the public throughout the library system's service area.	8486
Supplies (incl. Library Materials)	1500	0	\$1,500 is budgeted for electronic versions of well- reviewed youth picture books and illustrated chapter books. At an average of \$10 per eBook, this amount should allow for the downloading of 25 books per eReader. Each eBook license purchased from Barnes & Noble allows for the downloading of the title onto at least 5 devices, multiplying the per- dollar value of the electronic content to the library system. At the beginning of the project, each reader will be loaded with the same titles. Funding for updating and increasing the number of titles per eReader will be written into the Youth Services Collection Development budget for the years after the grant project ends, sustaining and improving this service to FBCL's community.	1500
Contractual Services	0	0	None	0
Other	0	0	Printing of publicity materials is done in- house at FBCL.	0
Total				

Narrative

Project Location:

- Fort Bend County Libraries

Project Title:

- Nook Color Loan Project for Youth

Project Director (Name & Title):

- Clara Russell, Director

Has the TSLAC Library Development Consulting Staff reviewed a draft of this application?

- Yes

If yes, provide the Consultant's Name:

- Stacey Malek

New program?

- Yes

Program Abstract:

- Fort Bend County Libraries (FBCL) is a public library system of 10 branches serving a population of 585,375, who made 1,917,136 library visits last year. In 2011, FBCL successfully implemented an eReader loan service for adults, and now proposes a project to promote eReaders to youth for the first time in the county. The goal of the Nook Color loan project is to enhance access to electronic resources by providing eReaders for checkout to families with youth aged 10 and under in Fort Bend County. Project promotion will target library users, as well as parents and youth throughout the community via outreach to schools and Head Start centers. The Nook Color was chosen as the ideal eReader for this project because it features a child- friendly interactive color touch-screen and read- aloud options. Thirty Nook Colors with accessories, loaded with more than two dozen well- reviewed youth eBooks, can be put into circulation for under \$10,000, to fortify early literacy skills in area youth.

Grant focus area:

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1. Applicant Information (10 points): Applicants describe their their library, their mission, strategic goals, and their capacity to complete the project successfully.

- Fort Bend County Libraries (FBCL) is a public library system serving a diverse and rapidly growing population of 585,375 people, including 92,877 youth aged 9 and under, in a geographic area of 861 square miles (US Census 2010). FBCL operates 10 branches throughout the county, each with a dedicated Youth Services Department, employing 57 Youth Services staff members, including 11 Youth Services Librarians. The branches offer at least 150 regularly-scheduled youth programs per month. FBCL currently has 19,395 cardholders aged 10 and under and circulates nearly 2,000,000 youth materials annually. The mission of FBCL is to provide an environment of lifelong learning and enrichment for the entire, diverse community, through responsive service and access to timely and accurate resources. Although we serve our community in many ways, we have identified three major areas of service that are most important to the accomplishment of our expressed mission. (1) We serve as a Reference Center, e.g. by serving as a gateway to additional information resources. (2) We serve as an Independent Learning Center, e.g. by proactively and responsively providing high- demand resources. (3) We serve as the Preschoolers' Door to Learning, e.g. by strengthening preschool collections. In 2011, FBCL began a pilot program to lend eReaders to adults. Thirty Kindle eReaders were purchased, each of which was loaded with 28 titles to supplement resources available in print format from the library's adult book collections. Successful policies and procedures for circulation of the devices were established, and users from all branches have checked out each eReader an average of 25 times between June 2011 and February 2012. As evidenced by the strength of FBCL's youth services and the successful outcome of the Kindle program, it is clear that FBCL will be able to capably manage the proposed Nook Color loan project.

2. Community Need (10 points): Applicants describe the community they serve, why the program is needed, and the program audience.

- According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 152,039 families live in Fort Bend County, with 92,877 youth under age 10; 28% of the families have income of less than \$50,000. Fort Bend County was reported with a 24% rate of illiteracy compared to Texas at 19% (Natl Ctr for Education Stats 2009). FBCL's goal to provide well- reviewed eBooks to youth, including those in Head Start families, addresses the need to develop and enhance early literacy skills in the community. The Journal of Literacy and Technology presents evidence of a powerful relationship between early deficits in literacy skills and later risks for reading difficulties (Nov 2010). Youth who take advantage of the Nook Color loan project will increase their ability to become proficient readers and stay current with technological developments, resulting in a narrowing of the gap between readers and non- readers and an improvement in school performance. Youth eBooks meet the vital need to develop early literacy skills through:

- *Picture cues and read- aloud options to enhance comprehension
 - *Word pronunciation tools to assist with phonological awareness and decoding of text
 - *Exposure to print (print awareness)
 - *Opportunity to learn and use language
 - *Reading engagement for beginning readers, struggling readers, youth with disabilities, and ESL learners
 - *Exposure to recommended and award- winning literature
 - *Providing what may be the sole opportunity for families of at- risk youth to become familiar with an eReader device, lessening the technology gap caused by poverty and/ or disabilities
- FBCL's suitability to meet this need is demonstrated by the attendance record of its programs (93,850 youth attended library programs in 2011) and the circulation statistics of its youth materials (1,982,752 checked out during 2011). FBCL's early childhood programs and materials selection have a strong track record of building upon the six vital early literacy skills identified by the ALSC Every Child Ready to Read Initiative.

3. Project activities (20 points): Applicants describe project activities from start to finish.

- Nook Colors loaded with 25 titles selected for youth ages 0-10 years old, with an emphasis on Caldecott Medal winners, 2 X 2 Reading List, and Texas Bluebonnet Award nominees, will be distributed to all ten FBCL branch locations, giving new access to electronic materials to patrons throughout the county. FBCL possesses valuable resources for launching and sustaining the Nook Color loan project, including existing eReader policies and procedures, and staff members' prior experience with circulating and advertising eReaders. Additional staff training regarding the early literacy benefits of the new eReaders will be conducted throughout the project.

FBCL proposes the ordering and purchase of the Nook Colors and eBooks in Sept 2012, followed by preparation of promotional literature for the public and dissemination of information to staff. FBCL will advertise through flyers, newspaper articles, the main page of the library website and Facebook page, library marquees, and signs at circulation desks. Youth Services Librarians will conduct patron training during everyday interactions and story times throughout October and beyond. Parents will be instructed on how to use the Nook Colors and eBook content to enhance early literacy skills. Nook Colors will begin circulating to the public on November 1. Statistics on usage and evaluation of the project will be collected regularly, and a final report and summary will be prepared in August 2013. FBCL is committed to maintaining and expanding the program beyond the stated project period.

FBCL has a long-standing collaborative relationship with area school districts and Head Start programs in which FBCL librarians provide programs to schools and preschools, and schools promote public library offerings to their students. FBCL will create a presentation to be shared with school librarians and conduct demonstrations, and training during Head Start parent meetings to advance the awareness and usage of the Nook Colors.

4. Innovation/ improvement (5 points): Applicants describe how the project is innovative for their community, or provide an explanation of how project will enhance/ improve current programs and services and its potential replicability as a best practice in the fields.

- FBCL has set a goal to further serve the community by providing greater access to eBooks for all users, with an increased emphasis on making youth materials available in eBook format. FBCL emphasizes best practices, especially in its services to youth. For example, in 2008 10 FBCL locations introduced 44 AWE Early Literacy Stations designed for use by youth 10 and under. These desk- top computer stations provide a variety of educational programs including "living" story books. In 2011, over 90,000 users had the opportunity to enhance literacy skills, augment hands- on technological experience by learning to manipulate a mouse, follow auditory and visual instructions and view highlighted words on the screen (picture cues and decoding). In 2009 FBCL incorporated early literacy skill awareness and education in infant, toddler, preschool and kindergarten programs through story time content, flyers, and PowerPoint presentations during programs. In 2012, FBCL advanced an innovative online Family Reading Club to promote family reading. A natural progression would be to follow up by introducing a next- generation technological device while still focusing on literacy skills and reading. This would be the first program in the county (including schools) that would provide Nook Colors with youth titles for check out to the public. Area schools have acknowledged the potential benefits of eReaders to their students and have expressed interest in lessons learned from FBCL's initiative. FBCL will be in contact with area educators, first to introduce the Nook Color loan project, followed by a project summary report identifying best practices, so that schools in the community can use the Nook Color loan project as a model to implement similar programs. The Nook Color loan project will provide Fort Bend County residents with their first chance to borrow an eReader such as a Nook Color to share books with their families, providing a new tool with which to build early literacy skills.

5. Timetable (5 points): Applicants present a timetable for project activities within the fiscal year (i.e., a list of actions with a date by which they will be accomplished).

- TIMELINE:

SEPTEMBER 2012 – OCTOBER 2012

1. Order Nook Colors and accessories: eReader devices, clear film screen protector kits, sturdy cases, 2- year multi- user warranties
2. Order 25 youth titles per device, including 2x2, Bluebonnet and Caldecott eBooks
3. Load eBooks onto Nook Colors

OCTOBER 2012

1. Training of FBCL Staff (Oct 1-31)

*Train pertinent staff on how to operate and circulate Nook Colors

*Train Circulation staff on surveys that will be given at the time Nook Colors are returned

*Train Youth Services staff to promote Nook Color loan project to patrons during everyday interactions

*System- wide awareness training on introducing Nook Color loan project to patrons

2. Outreach to the public

*Prepare and release flyers, newspaper articles, library website article on Nook Colors, library marquees, library Facebook page, signs at the library circulation desks

*Youth Services staff begins promoting Nook Colors through PowerPoint presentations during library programs

*Youth Services and Youth Outreach librarians promote the early literacy benefits of the Nook Color loan project to teachers and parents at Head Start centers and area school librarians

NOVEMBER 2012 – AUGUST 2013

1. Begin circulating Nook Colors to public on November 1, 2012
2. Continue marketing to the public
3. Continue collaboration with school districts and Head Start centers
4. Collect statistics on Nook Color usage each month
5. Collect and compile monthly survey results
6. Prepare and present final report and summary in August 2013

AUGUST 2013 and beyond

1. Using FBCL Youth Services Collection Development funds, continue to update and add materials to circulating Nook Colors for check out to the public.
2. Prepare follow- up report on best practices to be shared with area educators

6. Alignment with desired outcome (10 points): Applicants select one or more uniform goals and outcomes provided by the State Library and explain how their project aligns with the desired goals.

- FBCL's proposed project of providing Nook Colors loaded with well- reviewed youth eBooks for check- out to families in Fort Bend County will provide FBCL users with enhanced access to electronic information and materials. Nook Colors featuring titles selected from Texas state reading lists are an innovative material choice. This project will present the first opportunity for Fort Bend County youth to access an eReader at home at no cost. This will provide the means for families in the community to develop and enhance early literacy skills, increase reading proficiency, and augment exposure to technological developments. By following on the heels of FBCL's successful 2011 introduction of eReaders for check- out to adults, and because of the commitment and training of FBCL staff, the new equipment and electronic materials necessary to implement the Nook Color loan project will be properly maintained and circulated beginning on November 1, 2012. FBCL's Public Information, Circulation and Youth Services staff already have the tools and relationship with the public necessary to properly promote this program to Fort Bend County families. FBCL is committed to maintaining and expanding the Nook Color loan project beyond the stated project period, providing the public with uninterrupted access to even more electronic materials for the foreseeable future.

7. Personnel (5 points): Applicants describe who is responsible for project activities and their qualifications to perform these duties.

- FBCL's current staffing level is sufficient to implement the proposed project, and has recent experience loaning eReaders to the public. Preparation for implementation will be performed by the following library staff members:

Youth Services Collection Development Coordinator [27 years as a Youth Services librarian and 8 years as Coordinator]

* 10 total hours ordering equipment

* 25 total hours selecting, purchasing and loading eBook titles onto devices

Support Services and Technology staff [5 to 30 years experience]

* 5 total hours processing equipment and cataloguing eBooks and Nook Colors

Public Information Office staff [Coordinator 28 years of experience; staff 5-15 years of experience]

* 5 total hours developing print publicity

* 25 total hours developing print promotional materials

* 5 total hours developing online publicity

Training Coordinator [7 years as a Youth Services librarian and 1 year as Staff Trainer]

* 10 total hours introducing the project and equipment to Youth Services staff

* 10 total hours introducing the project and equipment to Circulation staff

Youth Services Librarians [average at least 5 years as Youth Services librarians]

* 1 hour per week describing the Nook Color loan project to the public during story time and during everyday patron interactions

Time spent on project after implementation

Youth Services Collection Development Coordinator

* 0 to 0.5 hour per week overseeing the project

Public Information Office staff

* 1 hour per week maintaining print and online publicity

Training Coordinator

* 0.5 hour per week updating and/or troubleshooting with staff

Youth Services Librarians

* 1 hour per week describing the Nook Color loan project to the public during story time

Circulation staff

* 1 hour per week checking out equipment and explaining the Nook Color loan project to users

* 1 hour per week checking in, maintaining equipment, and conducting evaluation interviews with users

8. Evaluation/ Documentation of Impact (10 points): Applicants select one of the uniform measures (see program description) and describe how they will accurately collect, maintain and provide this data to the State Library. Note: The agency will provide the survey instrument. This section describes how the grantee will administer the survey.

- In order to track the enhanced access to electronic materials provided by this project, circulation statistics for Nook Colors will be monitored continually from the moment of implementation. A short survey (SEE BELOW) has been adapted from the existing survey included with each loan of FBCL's current eReaders to adults. FBCL's eReader loan policy requires borrowers to return the equipment to the branch from which it was borrowed, and to hand the eReader to a Circulation staff member at the desk (eReaders may not be returned via the bookdrop or when the library is closed). Surveys are conducted by a Circulation staff member upon the return of an eReader. Questions can be asked and answered efficiently during the time it takes to ensure that the eReader is being returned in acceptable condition. Surveys for Nook Color users will be conducted in the same fashion, and results will be monitored and tabulated on a monthly basis. A final report on usage statistics, customer satisfaction, and costs per use will be prepared and presented to TSLAC in August 2013.

Nook Color User Survey

Thanks for checking out our new Nook Color eBook reader. Please take a minute to answer the questions below. Circle the best answer.

We appreciate your help!

How many youths in your household took part in the use of the Nook Color?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

How many eBooks did you or anyone in your family open?

1-5 5-10 11-15 20 or more

Would you check out the Nook Color again?

YES NO

Additional comments (if you wish):

9. Marketing (5 points): Applicants describe how they will publicize the programs or services to their community, and how they will share best practices and lessons learned with the library community.

- Marketing of the Nook Color loan project will be based upon the successful marketing of FBCL's current eReader loan program for adults, and will be adapted to target families with youth. The public will be informed about the importance of developing early literacy skills, and how sharing the Color Nook experience with youth will reinforce these skills. Beginning October 1, all public service staff will be trained to promote the Nook Color loan project to users during everyday patron interactions. Public Information staff will prepare and disseminate print materials including signs, flyers, and press releases. The arrival of Nook Colors and youth eBooks will be announced on library marquee signs and in online promotions, including postings on the library's Facebook page and a banner on the homepage of the library website with a link to more information.

FBCL Youth Services staff members have an established thriving relationship with the target audiences of youth aged 0-10 and their parents, making them uniquely able to begin promoting the Nook Color loan project. Every interaction that involves requests for picture books and award books, or requests for information about electronic materials of any type for youth, will present an opportunity to introduce the Nook Color loan project's benefits.

FBCL story times for toddlers and preschoolers include PowerPoint presentations designed to enhance the experience through projection of song lyrics, finger play text, illustrations to support the theme and text for youth, and further information for parents. Beginning in October, slides will be added to each story time PowerPoint presentation to publicize and explain the Nook Color loan project. To further promote the awareness and usage of the Nook Colors and to share best practices with area educators, FBCL will create a presentation to be shared with Head Start teachers and librarians at local school districts.

10. Sustainability (10 points): Applicants describe how the program or services will be supported with other funding after the grant period ends. Plans must demonstrate that the program will be continued after the close of the grant period.

- FBCL is committed to enhancing access to electronic materials for its users. FBCL Youth Services staff's commitment to supporting the development of early literacy skills, promoting family reading, and providing high demand and award-winning youth materials supports the FBCL mission. Current FBCL's long-standing collaboration with area educators will facilitate marketing to the community.

In 2011, FBCL successfully implemented a grant project to provide eReaders for check-out to adults. This project was completed and is being sustained at no cost; Adult Collection Development funds are allocated for updating and adding to the content of the FBCL Kindle eReaders in the future. Policies and procedures regarding maintenance, repair, and fines and fees for damage and loss of the Kindle eReaders are in place, and can be replicated for the proposed Nook Color loan project. Youth Collection Development funds will be allocated for updating and adding to the content of FBCL Nook Color eReaders upon completion of the project timeline. More funding opportunities may be explored in the future, such as seeking donations from FBCL's Friends of the Library

groups and grants from established relationships with benefactors such as The George Foundation. Continued access to Nook Color eReaders through FBCL is guaranteed for the foreseeable future.