

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY – EVERYBODY LEARNS GRANT – NARRATIVE

Narrative

Answer the following questions on a separate page, numbering each answer to correspond with the question.

- 1. Describe how the grant funds were used to expand capacity at your library.**
- 2. Describe the impact of the funded improvements on library patrons and your community.**

1. Describe how the grant funds were used to expand capacity at your library.

The grant funds received from Gov. Lamont's Everybody Learns Initiative were used to expand capacity throughout Bridgeport Public Library's system by enabling us to purchase enough PPE and cleaning supplies to last us through several months. We purchased two electrostatic cleaners that are used in the sanitizing process when needed. We were also able to purchase vinyl gloves in various sizes, and masks, including children-sized masks. We have also purchased acrylic barriers and acrylic sheets to install in all public areas and service desks through the library system. We have also purchased some personal PPE packs, that have two gloves, two masks, and two applications of hand sanitizer, that can be given to the public when the situation arises. We realize that our patrons are responsible to wear a mask and use hand sanitizer when they use the library, but we also recognize that it is a goodwill measure to have some personal PPE packs on hand that can be distributed to help mitigate the occasional situation where a patron may have forgotten their mask.

We purchased lockable storage cabinets for each library branch to store their additional PPE. Other PPE items include touchless hand dryers for the public bathrooms, and non-invasive hand sanitizing stations that also take temperature to be placed at all library branch entrances. Disposable gowns for staff who empty our book drops were also purchased. For our custodial staff, we were able to purchase additional coveralls and goggles for when they clean and disinfect our branches. Finally, we purchased plastic sleeves to protect the computer keyboards and mouse, as many public libraries have also done.

Furniture was a large category since we were in the process of updating our main Public Information area around the time the grant was announced. In addition to the new carpet we had already planned for the space at our Burroughs Library, we were able to purchase a new information desk and smaller Info-Pod, which will enable us to reconfigure the space to accommodate social distancing requirements. The desks are higher than our old ones, will ensure added safety when interacting with the public. We also purchased room

dividers, smaller tables with casters, and colorful stools to be placed at new Kirby tables where patrons can sit and charge their devices while they read.

We purchased moveable maker tables for our North Branch. This was a very much needed upgrade for that branch, as these tables not only have casters to provide flexibility, but they conveniently fold vertically for easier, compact storage. For our Teen Center at Burroughs Library, we purchased a Mobile Charging Station and cables, so that our teens can charge their devices wherever they are, since the unit has wheels. Very appropriate for the Teens! Carpets and rugs in the Teen Center and Children's Department at Burroughs Library were cleaned and sanitized by an outside vendor using funds received with the Everybody Leans Grant.

Each library branch received a new book cart to help with new procedures as we offer limited browsing and quarantine items before re-shelving.

We purchased IT equipment improvements for our Black Rock Branch and North Branch, which will enable us to move our Wi-Fi to CEN for greater connection reliability.

Laptops were purchased to supplement chrome books received through the State Library's earlier Cares Act library grant. We also purchased lockable charging cabinets in which to house our new laptops. We will now be able to loan laptops for in-library use, and hold computer classes and instruction for the public using the additional laptops.

In order to enhance public meetings, programs, and instruction, we purchase large interactive monitors for one of our Burroughs Public Information rooms and for a smaller classroom. To round out the furniture purchases, we purchased a movable wireless Lectern for public programs.

Explanation for the "Other" Category expenditure of \$7,623.30: While we were not able to get quotes for enhancements to our HVAC systems in time for the spending window of the grant, we purchased 30 air purifier units with extra filters to be placed in public areas through the branches. These filters will give us cleaner circulated air. A small amount in this category was allocated for the personal PPE packs described earlier in this narrative.

2. Describe the impact of the funded improvements on library patrons and your community.

The funds received and expended through the Everybody Learns Grant came at the right time for Bridgeport Public Library as we embarked on several projects to improve and expand programs and services to the public. In addition, the grant funds helped us meet the increased expenditures for cleaning supplies and PPE that have been necessary as we continue to operate in this COVID19 Public Health emergency situation.

After being closed to the public on March 16, 2020, Bridgeport Public Library reopened three of its branch libraries and Burroughs Library on May 29, 2020 for its Quick Pick-up

Service, where patrons could place holds on library materials and pick up items safely by appointment. On November 16, 2020 the library started a computer by appointment service, and also included photocopying and fax services by appointment. Our Burroughs Library remained closed as we were in the process of a major abatement and re-carpeting project on our second floor, where the Public Information Desk, Fine Arts Room and Business collections are housed. The Everybody Learns Grant funds have been so timely as they enabled us to purchase a very much needed modern reference desk and add an “Info Pod” which is movable, and will be used to provide additional staff assistance in our newly socially distanced public computer area. The public will be positively impacted by the improvement of our second floor, not only due to the new carpet, but the new furniture provided for by the Everybody Learns Grant. We will have smaller tables, that can be moved as needed, room dividers, and a layout of furniture that will sustain us through this time and be readily expanded in time.

The new laptops that we have purchased will be made available to patrons needing to improve job skills, find employment or start new businesses. We will have a new Business Room that will house new laptops for public use and instruction, and an area for workshops and presentations. We will give this new innovative space a name in the near future to reflect our dedication to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

The community will also benefit from the measures the grant has enabled Bridgeport Public Library staff to take to keep everyone safe. From signs, floor markings for social distancing, touchless hand dryers and hand sanitizing stations, acrylic barriers, and air purifiers at each location, the Everybody Learns Grant has made a positive impact our efforts to thrive and safely increase community use of the library again. We are very grateful to Governor Lamont, the State Library, and everyone who has made this generous grant possible.

Photographs



Tables and stools for Public Information Services at Burroughs Library.



Items Have Begun Arriving: laptop charging cabinets, touchless hand sanitizing stations, book carts and tables to be sent to all Bridgeport Public Library Locations.



At Burroughs Library Children's Department, grant funds were used to purchase acrylic barriers for all public service desks.



Touchless hand sanitizer and temperature check stations for each library branch.

Elaine Braithwaite
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Bridgeport Public Library
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