

Examples of Strong Need Statements

Example #1: Short but very effective. Includes F/R lunch rate, IRI scores, ELL rate, Developmental Delay rate.

In the 2010-2011 school year 90% of our Kindergarten students qualified for free/reduced lunch. At the beginning of the school year 68% did not meet the benchmark for the IRI (Idaho Reading Indicator). 19% of our Preschool and Kindergarten students have developmental disabilities/delays. 23% of the Kindergarten students are English Language Learners. These children must have access to books in order to be better prepared when they enter kindergarten, and we can provide them through this program if our application is accepted.

Example #2: Lots of data, good supporting statements. Includes poverty rate, F/R lunch rate, ELL rate.

(City) is a rural, agriculture-based community. According to the US Census data, 15% of the approximately 2,400 residents live below poverty level. Current enrollment statistics for the XXX Elementary reiterate this fact – 63% of preschool through fourth grade students qualify for free or reduced-rate lunches, evidence of the low-income situations in which they live. In addition The Census indicates that over 22% of the population age five and older speaks a language other than English at home. With statistics showing such a high percentage of ‘at-risk children’ it is imperative to the academic success of our youngest citizens that XXX Public Library provide no-cost, enrichment opportunities and programs such as the Read to Me First Book program, that are language and vocabulary rich, with quality children’s literature as the base.

Example #3: Many statistics about school and community/neighborhood, as well as library objectives and how program helps meet those objectives.

School Information -

XXX Elementary is a Title 1 school with 65% of its students qualifying for free or reduced lunch rates. According to Idaho Kids Count:

- *73% of 4th graders in schools receiving Title 1 funding scored below proficient reading levels*
- *79% of children who qualified for free or reduced lunch rates scored below proficient reading levels*

Neighborhood/Community Information:

Community factors also impact the education/low reading proficiency rates in the area:

- *XXX Elementary is situated in a very large subdivision in (County) by the name of (Subdivision Name). This subdivision has been one of the hardest hit housing developments in (County) during the recent recession over the past five years. County records show that in 2011, 90 percent of the houses sold in (Subdivision Name) were foreclosures or short sales.*
- *In recent years, (Subdivision Name) has become one of the newest locations for (City) Refugee housing. Although too soon to provide statistics, the neighborhood includes a diverse mix of English Language Learners from all areas of the globe – Russians, Bosnians, Africans, Hispanics, etc.*
- *According to the County Sheriff’s department, the southern region of (County) has the highest crime rate in the county. Drugs, theft, vandalism, etc. are prevalent in the area. Many children in the area come home to empty houses after school, have incarcerated parents and siblings, and struggle with generational poverty issues.*

The (Library) opened in this neighborhood in April 2011. As the only non-business “third place” in the area, we have worked hard to create a safe place for children of all ages to visit. Although we already see many neighborhood children in the library, it is now our goal to increase school and neighborhood outreach and partnerships. As participants in My First Books we hope to achieve the following:

- *establish a positive, caring relationship between the neighborhood children and their community library*
- *inspire a love of reading through fun, interactive monthly storytimes*
- *the free books will provide a literary resource at home for children who may or may not have access to checking out books (many neighborhood families are transient and move frequently, are constantly between permanent addresses and in and out of collections -financial difficulties - which frequently prevents children from checking out library resources)*
- *strengthen the library’s ties and relationship with XXX School. Community organizations that have strong partnerships are always more effective and successful in diagnosing and troubleshooting community issues.*