**Needs Statement Examples from ICfL’s Kindergarten Readiness Grants**

**Example 1:**

Our library serves four Title 1 schools in our surrounding area (School A, School B, School C, and School D). During the 2017-18 school year, three of these schools saw high rates of children in grades K-3 scoring below proficiency on the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) (School B- 61%, School C- 50%, and School D- 49%).

In addition, 38% of households in \_\_\_\_\_County are living below the ALICE (asset Limited, Constrained, Employed) indicator, developed by the United Way. Many of these households have children that attend the four Title 1 schools directly served by our library branch, and those in surrounding areas as well. All four of these schools also qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a program that provides free lunch to all students at schools in low-income, high-need areas.

Given these statistics, a strong barrier families face is access to educational tools inside the home. This includes books, but extends to other tools that can support early literacy, including writing materials, STEAM tools, and objects to encourage imaginative play. Providing a well-rounded set of tools to encourage the five early literacy practices, as well as exploration of STEAM concepts, and a love of reading and learning, is a primary goal of our program.

We believe our program will work to close the gap that often exists between lower income and higher income students entering kindergarten by not only providing tools to enhance early literacy skills in the home, but to educate parents about what their children should know and be able to do before they enter school.

**Example 2:**

The city of \_\_\_\_\_ has a rural, low-income, high-immigrant population that consists of 3,800 people. Our library serves around 400 children in our community. Age ranges vary but are typically between 1 and 15. All children qualify for the free breakfast and lunch program at our elementary school through the Community Eligibility Program (CEP). We do not have school on Fridays, and our library is the only source of free out-of-school educational programs after school and on Fridays.

Preschool is not mandated or funded in the state of Idaho. In the current school year there are 94 children in \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School, and only 23 of them attended a preschool program; there are 24 children in \_\_\_\_\_\_ School and only 5 of them went to preschool.  In our town, we currently only have two private preschools, and they cost over $130 per month to attend; this cost makes it impossible for many low-income families to afford either preschool. Our local school district has a developmental preschool that works with 3- and 4-year-old children who qualify for the program with a developmental delay, but no free preschool programs for children who do not qualify.

There are about 120 pre-school students in our community ready to enter kindergarten each year. The Idaho State Reading Indicator shows that 51.7% of Kindergarteners in \_\_\_\_\_ School District enter school below proficient. In addition to having limited access to books, additional challenges these young children face are self-control, social skills for interacting with peers, and a basic idea of what is expected of them in a classroom. Vocabulary development is also an issue.

To help support the development of these skills, the \_\_\_\_\_\_ Public Library would like to provide an affordable Kindergarten Readiness Program in locations that are safe and supervised.

Through a three-pronged approach, pre-school youth will be introduced to the basics of core curriculum prior to beginning Kindergarten. The curriculum areas for the readiness program have been identified by our local kindergarten teachers, and will include letters, sounds, numbers, animals, colors, rhymes, beginning computer skills, and some music and art. Children will be learning alongside other children their age in a setting similar to a classroom. This will expose children to the social cues and behaviors that go on in a classroom: listening quietly, focusing attention, raising hands, being respectful of other students. All of the content offered through this kindergarten readiness program will correlate to both state and academic standards. Essential to this program will be a Spanish, bilingual version for the large Hispanic population our library serves.

Project Description:

The \_\_\_\_\_ Library can accomplish this goal by securing funding for the following three requests.

1. Provide internal access to early learning resources by designating computers for children specific to the target population. The first is having designated children’s computers that serve to provide internal access to early learning resources within the library.

2. Provide local families with devices and/or internet access to existing early intervention programs using mobile hotspots. These devices would be utilized by community outreach programs such as WIC, school migrant program, and local daycares.

3. Provide hands-on activities to reinforce skills learned from the digital technology resources mentioned above.  These learning activities would be purchased to use in conjunction with our Every Child Ready to Read program and a Kindergarten Readiness program currently offered at the library. Some of these materials will be left at the library and some will be taken home for additional practice. These hands-on activities would be facilitated by library staff, exposing the children to an teacher-learner environment similar to what they will encounter in Kindergarten.

**Example 3:**

Elementary Schools in the \_\_\_\_\_ School District are reporting that an increasing number of entering students do not have the foundational pre-reading skills necessary to be successful in kindergarten.  An article published in IdahoEdNews, (*link was included*) describes how the \_\_\_\_\_ District has tried to address this problem by offering full-day kindergarten in its most needy schools. These four schools are near and in the service area of the \_\_\_\_\_ Public library. Fall IRI scores for these schools show that more than 50% of the students entering kindergarten in 2017 were not proficient in early literacy skills.  In addition, these schools also have a high percentage of families eligible for Free/reduced lunch.
2017 IRI scores of proficiency for students entering kindergarten were lower in 2017 than 2016.  The \_\_\_\_\_ School District average was 53.1 % proficient. The proficiency scores for the four downtown were:  School A 38%; School B 51%; School C 49%; and School D 48%.(Data from www.sde.idaho.gov/assessment/iri/)

The District served 414 homeless students through its \_\_\_\_\_ services program; 23 of which were preschool children.

Free and Reduced lunch rates for these schools are high: School A CEP 100%; School B 61.4%; School C 58.1%; and School D 66.11%.

It is imperative that we provide quality preschool experiences rich in language and vocabulary for children in our area. Our Health District estimates there are 3,700 preschool children in our community.
There are number of preschools operating in the area, but the waiting lists are long (Preschool A, a quality preschool that we partner with has an enrollment of 115 kids and a waiting list of 200.) Pre-schools, especially the smaller ones, need help with quality programming resources and quality materials. Many families cannot afford to pay for preschool.

The library would like to step in and do more than our in-house story times to reach preschoolers and fill this need.  Through this grant, we intend to:
• Provide access to on-line literacy resources such as Smarty Ants, Vroom, TumbleBooks, Ready4K and Ready Rosie by creating a mobile lab that will go to preschools and to low-income housing common areas in a “pop-up library,” along with quality story time programming.
• Partner with the United Way to offer three “Ready! For Kindergarten” classes for parents here at the library.
• Send “Take- home” Literacy kits with a book and related resources with families attending these trainings. This will enable us to support parents as their child’s first teacher.
• Create Take-home Literacy Kits to be made available for checkout from the library.