



Reading and Beyond Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund June 2017

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Name of Project: Emerging Technology Fund
Grant Number: 90201701RB
Start Date: January 2017 **End Date:** June 2017

I. Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: \$50,000
- CETF Match Amount: n/a
- Organization Match Amount: \$0
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget) n/a

II. Project Description Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

Reading and Beyond, Family Success Zone (FSZ), is a place-based initiative targeting children and families in the high-poverty 93701 zip code in the City of Fresno. FSZ, through its Family Navigators, works directly with families in this zip code to help them build self-sufficiency skills, ensure children read and perform at grade level and adults overcome educational and professional barriers to employment. Based on our experience working with families in this area, we believe lack of access to broadband Internet and computer technology adversely affects student's academic performance as well as job skills and job connections for adults. FSZ is working with the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) to plan a "School2Home" program expected to start in the fall of 2017. Reading and Beyond will use the grant amount from the California Emerging Technology Fund to prepare the ground for implementation of this program and accomplish the set goals and objectives.

Goals and Objectives Summary

The goal was to assess the digital literacy and broadband connectivity needs for 300 residents in the Zip Code 93701 participating in the Family Success Zone and the Fresno Bridge Academy clients was accomplished. We exceeded target outcome levels by surveying 308 families. Reading and Beyond was also able to collaborate with California State University Fresno, Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) to assist interested participants in subscribing to affordable home broadband service. In order to provide affordable computing devices for the residents who do not have devices Reading and Beyond applied for a Comcast grant to get funding to help provide computing devices for those families that sign-up for affordable Internet.

In order to provide technical assistance to residents who subscribe to broadband and/or acquire a computing device Reading and Beyond Information Technology Manager and his assistant will provide technology support and train Family Navigators who work with families that subscribe to broadband or acquire a computing device. Workshops for the Family Navigators will be provided as needed in order to help residents connect to the Internet.

Reading and Beyond is currently working with Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) in collaboration with CETF to develop a plan for implementation of School2Home program.

Project Outcomes Summary

We surveyed 308 residents at a combination of locations including; Jefferson Elementary, Yokomi Elementary and Lowell Elementary. We also included individuals from the Fresno Bridge Academy program. During the initial in person survey we assessed their digital literacy and broadband connectivity status. We then shared this information along with their phone number with Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED). OCED conducted phone calls and attempted to assist residents in subscribing to affordable broadband service.

The surveyors asked the respondents for the following information if they currently have Internet service in their home:

- Who their current service provider is?
- How confident they are in their abilities to use a computer?
- How confident they are in their ability to navigate the Internet?
- How many internet capable devices they have in their home?
- Who uses those devices and for what purpose?
- Who helps them with troubleshooting and technical support when needed?
- What kind of skills or training would help them to be able to use the computer and Internet as effectively as possible?

A summary of the results of this survey is available below.

Survey Outcome Description	Goal	Actual	Percent Completed
In-person survey to assess the digital literacy and broadband connectivity	300	308	103%
OECD attempted calling to assist residents in subscribing to affordable broadband service	308	308	100%
Residents reached	308	154	50%

Survey Results

Do you currently have Internet service in the home? (This includes connecting from a smartphone)

	Total	Percent
<i>Internet in the Home (No)</i>	71	22.7%
<i>Internet in the Home (Yes)</i>	238	77.3%

Who is your current Internet service provider?

	Total	Percent
<i>Subscribed with Comcast/Xfinity</i>	147	61.8%
<i>Subscribed with AT&T</i>	48	20.2%
<i>Other provider</i>	32	13.4%
<i>Don't know</i>	11	4.6%

How confident are you in your abilities to use a computer?

	Total	Percent
<i>Not Confident at all</i>	60	19.5%
<i>Somewhat Confident</i>	92	29.9%
<i>Confident</i>	80	26.0%

Very Confident	76	24.7%
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How confident are you in your ability to navigate the Internet?

	Total	Percent
Not Confident at all	40	13.0%
Somewhat Confident	91	29.5%
Confident	95	30.8%
Very Confident	82	26.6%

How many of the following Internet-capable devices do you have in your home?

	Total	Percent
Have at least one smartphone	295	95.8%
Have at least one tablet	179	58.1%
Have at least one laptop	139	45.1%
Have at least one desktop	55	17.9%

Who uses the Internet-capable device(s)? Check all that apply

	Total	Percent
Only children	26	8.4%
Only adults	85	27.6%
Both children and adult	197	64.0%

What do each of those users use the Internet-capable devices for? Check all that apply

	Total	Percent
Used for email	198	64.3%
Job search	146	47.4%
Online courses	87	28.2%
Monitoring child's grades and attendance	107	34.7%
Entertainment	271	88.0%
Other	77	25.0%

Who helps you with IT/technical support or troubleshooting when needed?

	Total	Percent
Service provider	170	55.2%
Relative	54	17.5%
Friend	27	8.8%
N/A	57	18.5%

What kind of skills or training would help you to be able to use the computer and internet as effectively as possible? (Qualitative Data)

Some of the identified computing skills desired by residents included the following: Microsoft Office, how to navigate the Internet, check student academic progress, homework assistance, e-mail and job searching skills.

(OCED) Call Center - Deliverables and Outcomes

California State University Fresno, Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) conducted phone calls to selected residents receiving Reading and Beyond Services in the Family Success Zone and Fresno Bridge Academy program to help them subscribe to affordable Internet services. The results are as follows:

FSZ/FBA combined programs: (308)

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	52	16.9%
Did not answer:	102	33.1%
Not interested in subscribing:	77	25.0%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	74	24.0%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	3	1.0%

Residents with no Internet service: (71)

<i>Family Success Zone: (47)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	9	19.1%
Did not answer:	23	48.9%
Not interested in subscribing:	10	21.3%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	3	6.4%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	2	4.3%

<i>Fresno Bridge Academy: (24)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	7	29.2%
Did not answer:	10	41.7%
Not interested in subscribing:	7	29.2%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	0	0%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	0	0%

<i>FSZ/FBA combined programs: (71)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	16	22.5%
Did not answer:	33	46.5%
Not interested in subscribing:	17	23.9%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	3	4.2%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	2	2.8%

Residents with Internet Service: (237)

<i>Family Success Zone: (151)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	17	11.3%
Did not answer:	41	27.2%
Not interested in subscribing:	37	24.5%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	55	36.4%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	1	0.7%

<i>Fresno Bridge Academy: (86)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	18	20.9%
Did not answer:	28	32.6%
Not interested in subscribing:	24	27.9%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	16	18.6%
Subscribed to affordable Internet service:	0	0%

<i>FSZ/FBA combined programs: (237)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
# not in service:	35	14.8%
Did not answer:	69	29.1%
Not interested in subscribing:	61	25.7%
Already enrolled in low cost Internet service:	71	30.0%

Subscribed to affordable Internet service:

1

0.4%

III. Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

Reading and Beyond achieved 100% of outcomes #1 and #2. Reading and Beyond was unable to achieve 100% of outcomes #3 and #4 due to challenges outlined below. Outcome #5 will be achieved by the submission of this report.

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement

The program completed the target number of surveys by combining families from two different Reading and Beyond programs; Family Success Zone program and Fresno Bridge Academy Program to survey a total of 308 residents. As originally proposed we provided the results of the survey to California State University Fresno, Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) to reach out to the parent and assist them in subscribing to affordable home broadband service. As a result of the phone calls made by OCED 3 participants enrolled in affordable broadband service. The data from this survey was used by Reading and Beyond to identify 71 families who did not have computer devices at home. Through a partnership with FUSD, we were able to provide 25 devices to families. Fresno Unified is considering expanding the program to increase the number of devices available. Independently, Reading and Beyond has applied for a Comcast grant to get funding to help provide affordable computing devices for more families. We are also in conversation with AT&T to identify some funding for us to increase the pool of resources to help families to acquire affordable computer devices. Our goal is to fund 20 additional devices through these grant programs.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation

The original goal was to work with Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) in collaboration with CETF to develop a plan for implementation of School2Home program during 2017-2018 school year. After several rounds of discussion with Fresno Unified, the program encountered some hurdles to successful implementation. The District was unwilling to involve faculty or administrators in School2Home program, but they did send a few representatives from Parent University to participate in the Training for Parent Trainers workshop on May 31, 2107. This training was sponsored by CETF and was attended by 8 Family Navigators from Reading and Beyond as well as the school district representatives. The purpose of this training was to prepare Family Navigators to work directly with parents to increase their computer literacy.

Although we were not successful implementing the School2Home program with FUSD as proposed, because students were not permitted to take school computers home, we were able to work with FUSD to provide 25 Kindles to families who did not have computer devices at home. In the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, Family Navigators offered training workshops to assist parents in using the Kindle devices provided by FUSD. The parents were trained to use the devices to; identify educational websites; access the ATLAS Parent Portal to monitor student grades and attendance; understand the importance of parental controls and Internet safety; and how to develop a resume and search and apply for job opportunities from the convenience of their homes.

Due to the ease of use of the kindle devices as opposed to desktop computers or laptops, further technical assistance was not required by the families. Resources allocated for Reading and Beyond's Information Technology manager were reallocated to fund Family Navigators who worked directly with the residents to educate them on the importance of Internet connectivity and provide basic technical assistance.

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

Other positive results include:

1. Computer Lab: Access for computers in our different office locations were made available to those residents who completed the survey and didn't have access to the Internet or a computer device.

2. **Atlas Parent Portal:** Family Navigators provided residents with the tools on how to access the Fresno Unified School District student portal. Parents are able to track their child's progress by gaining access to their child's grades and attendance.
3. **Digital Literacy:** Residents received basic digital literacy skills as needed on how to use a computer, how to navigate the Internet, how to create a resume, and cover letter.
4. **Family Navigators:** Family Navigators informed parents of different options to subscribe to affordable home broadband service through their monthly home visitations.
5. **Tablets:** 25 residents were selected to participate in a Digital Literacy Training and were provided a tablet to take home for one month. The tablets were provided by Fresno United School District.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation

Reading and Beyond faced two major challenges during the grant period.

- Implementing the program was impacted by a very contentious battle between members of the board and the superintendent. The superintendent resigned, an interim was appointed, and a contentious search for a permanent superintendent ensued.
- Securing funding to provide affordable computing devices for the residents who don't have devices. Limited devices (25 Tablets) were provided by Fresno Unified for the program.
- Pursuing the School2Home program at Yokomi, Lowell, and Jefferson Elementary Schools was not an option since the FUSD was not interested.
- Contacting residents about affordable offers after the survey was more difficult than anticipated, some already had Internet service, some were not interested, or their phone number was disconnected.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

- Reading and Beyond applied for grant with Comcast to provide computer devices and also in conversation to receive funding from AT&T to purchase computer devices.

IV. Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: It is very challenging to implement School2Home without a commitment from the superintendent of the District. Any future attempts should be conditioned on obtaining such a commitment.

Lesson 2: In wanting to connect the residents to affordable Internet service, we found out that some residents prefer to keep paying high Internet prices for several reasons. One factor is that they are locked in a contract package that includes cable and other home service devices. Another reason why residents want to maintain their current plan was because they prefer to pay more for a faster Internet service. In the future, it may be helpful to focus on participants who have never had access to internet service.

Lesson 3: Considering the level of resident's knowledge of computer skills, we found out that many residents lack basic computer skills. Approximately 50% of the residents who completed the survey responded not feeling confident at all or somewhat confident when it comes to their abilities to use a computer. Some of the identified computing skills desired by residents included the following: Microsoft Office, how to navigate the Internet, check student academic progress, homework assistance, e-mail and job searching skills. For future program design, we may consider working directly with the residents through our Family Navigators to train residents on the skills needed.

Lesson 4: Due to FUSD policy not permitting to take computer devices home, FUSD provided 25 Kindle tablets in place of laptop or desktop computers. We've learned that we may need to be more flexible to work within district policy to meet families' needs. In the future, we should attempt to secure a commitment from the newly appointed superintendent and secure a signed School2Home Partnership Agreement with Fresno Unified School District. This will require a personal appeal from the CEO of CETF as well as Reading and Beyond.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation 1: Continue to identify and seek funding to provide affordable computing devices for the residents who do not have devices, especially for those households wanting home broadband service.

Recommendations to Close the Digital Divide Based On Your Experience

Recommendation 1: The public and private sector should work together to continue finding ways to provide low-cost Internet service providers to low-income households.

Recommendation 2: Foundations, corporations, and government programs should increase the level of funding directed towards educational and technological skills for residents to close the digital literacy gap.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation 1: While we have worked with many funders throughout the year and have many years of experience in reporting, we found that reporting process for this grant required a significant time commitment that was burdensome to our organization. We recommend that CETF spends more time early in the process to ensure that the organization has a complete understanding of reporting requirements.

V. Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

No equipment was purchased by Reading and Beyond.

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

All of the CETF grants funds were expended.