

## Abstract

**Lead Applicant and Primary Goal:** Pittsburg (KS) State University will collaborate with school districts in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas to train new school librarians who are Hispanic and/or serve in a school district with 15% or more Hispanic student population. The primary goal of the project is to enhance the quantity and quality of Hispanic and Hispanic serving school librarians in order to help meet the information needs of the Hispanic student and community populations in the four-state area. Over the past five years, school districts in the four-state region of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma have experienced significant growth in Hispanic populations. In contrast to the changing demographic makeup of the student population, the American Library Association reported in 2017 that 81% of school librarians identified as being Caucasian females between the ages of 35 and 64. With the rising Hispanic student population, culturally responsive teaching is needed to assist Hispanic students with not only academic achievement, but also in retention of their heritage within the educational setting (Parker, Segovia, & Tap, 2016). The *Building Bridges Across Cultures: Meeting the Information Needs of the Hispanic Community* addresses the IMLS Lifelong Learning Category through cultivation of CRT practices, helping teachers form a deeper understanding of other cultures and backgrounds through critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, and enhancing their ability to support all students.

**Project Timeframe:** Over the 3-year (2019–2022) grant period, candidates in the project will be equipped with skills and knowledge necessary to be successful school librarians, along with research-based instructional practices and culturally responsive teaching methods for working with diverse students in school and community library settings.

**Recruitment Needs and Audience for the Project:** The project will recruit 25 quality teachers from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas who are Hispanic and/or teaching in one of the 22 identified four-state area school districts having Hispanic student populations ranging from 15% to more than 50%.

**Project Activities, Goals and Outcomes:** Project candidates will participate in a Jump Start program, two years of online coursework and field experience resulting in a Master's Degree with a Library Media emphasis, and one year of leadership mentoring. The project will implement an ongoing Evaluation Plan to measure the IMLS Performance level Goal of Learning, Performance Goals 1 (train and develop library professionals), 2 (support communities of practice) and 3 (develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities), as well as project specific objectives. Intended project outcomes include 1) Further modify the PSU Library Media Specialist curriculum by incorporating culturally responsive teaching methodologies and assessments, and including TESOL objectives. 2) Recruit and graduate 25 school librarians competent in implementing research based instructional practices for working with Hispanic and other culturally diverse students and adults. 3) Educate the next generation of school librarians working with school, community, and national stakeholders to build institutional capacity while developing a diverse library collection. 4) Provide supervised leadership opportunities to project participants, supporting future growth in service to school library and community stakeholders. 5) Mentor the school librarians throughout the project to serve as stewards of cultural legacy in the school library for the growing Hispanic population. 6) Develop collaborative partnerships between school and community libraries to promote programming, events, and collections to support the information and literacy needs of the Hispanic population. This project seeks to increase best practices for meeting the information needs of all cultures in our public schools, and are preparing to do so through curriculum revision and building strategic partnerships between the candidates, their school districts, and community libraries. School librarians trained in this grant-funded program and employed by partner districts, would help schools reframe their vision for Hispanic students.

### Statement of Broad Need

Pittsburg State University is seeking funding of \$539,281 and contributing \$394,317 in Cost Share (Total \$933,598) for a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant to supply scholarships and mentoring for 25 teachers from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas who are Hispanic and/or teaching in one of 22 partnering districts with Hispanic student populations ranging from 15% to greater than 50%.

***Identification and Assessment of Field-Wide Need:*** Over the past 5 years, school districts in the four-state region of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma have experienced significant growth in Hispanic populations. In the state of Kansas, the Hispanic student population ranks as the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the state and is the fastest growing of all demographic groups (KSDE, 2018). Districts within Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma also report a growth trend with district Hispanic student populations ranging from 10% - 65% (DESE, 2018; ADE, 2018; OSDE, 2018). In contrast to the changing demographic makeup of the student population, the American Library Association reported in 2017 that 81% of member librarians identified as being Caucasian females. Only 4.7% identified as being Hispanic or Latino (ALA, 2017). The 2017 IMLS Positioning Library and Information Science Graduate Programs for 21st Century Practice report further cited a lack of diversity in school librarian graduates, supporting the need for improving diversity and cultural sensitivity in the field. IMLS statistics from the 2017 report also reinforce the need for formal education programs to be intentional and proactive in recruiting a diverse pool of future librarian candidates.

With the rising Hispanic student population, culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is needed to assist Hispanic students with not only academic achievement, but also in retention of their heritage within the educational setting (Parker, Segovia, & Tap, 2016). CRT uses cultural traits, practices, and viewpoints to make meaningful connections to content as a way to provide effective instruction (Gay, 2002). It recognizes that culture plays a part in learning, and that making meaningful connections to content requires acknowledging those differences (Vavrus, 2008). This type of targeted instruction, focused on the literacy needs of Hispanic students, has shown significant impact on literacy skills and reading success, with benefits lasting well past the time frame of initial instruction (Gay, 2002; Gunn, et.al., 2005).

A needs assessment given to local districts for the currently proposed project indicated that over 90% of respondents felt information needs of Hispanic students were not currently being met by the school or community library. All (100%) respondents indicated that the information needs of Hispanic students are not currently being met by the school library. Their responses also indicated that the schools could benefit from having educators specifically trained in meeting the information needs of the Hispanic community, and that collaborating with community libraries to share Hispanic cultural resources would benefit their schools. One respondent added, “Research shows that school libraries help to not only improve reading test scores/comprehension, but also lead to lifelong readers. This in turn, fosters a love for learning. A love for learning will prepare our students to be successful in postsecondary education or in the workforce and beyond.” Another respondent indicated “there is a strong need for training for librarians to recognize appropriate reading strategies for learners of a second language” (*Supporting Document #1: Needs Assessment*).

Through awareness of the demographic shift, needs assessment, review of current literature, analysis of past project data, and communication with area districts, teachers, administrators, and current program participants, a need to provide highly qualified school librarians with expertise in CRT was recognized. The *Building Bridges Across Cultures: Meeting the Information Needs of the Hispanic Community* project addresses the IMLS Lifelong Learning Category through cultivation of CRT practices, helping teachers form a deeper understanding of other cultures and backgrounds through critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, and enhancing their ability to support all students. (*Supporting Document #2: Letters of Support*).

***How the Proposed Project Meets the Identified Need:*** Participants in the project will graduate equipped with skills and knowledge necessary to be successful school librarians, along with possessing research-based instructional practices and CRT methods for working with diverse students and adults in school and community library settings. Through an introductory program (Jump Start), coursework, and field-based experiences, participants will be able to build personal and institutional capacity while developing diverse library collections. In addition, they will develop ongoing, strategic collaborations that can provide other educators and community librarians with support and training. Once this networking is established throughout the grant process, a natural alliance will be built. When the new school librarian returns to the public school, the connection to the community libraries will serve as a bridge linking awareness of programming and resources to better meet the information and literacy needs of Hispanic students throughout the community.

***Audience for the project:*** Because faculty recognized the prevalence of the growing Hispanic population in the region and the need to provide highly qualified school librarians with expertise in CRT, plans were made to focus on that underserved population in the geographic region. The project will recruit 25 teachers from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas who are teaching in 1 of 22 identified partnering districts having Hispanic student populations ranging from 15% to more than 50% and/or are Hispanic themselves (*Supporting Document #3: Targeted School Districts*). Participants will be provided a full scholarship to earn a Master of Science degree with a Library Media emphasis along with a laptop, all textbooks, and a stipend to provide funding for licensure tests, professional membership fees, and expenses associated with travel to leadership mentoring year meetings.

***Building on the past and looking to the future:*** In 2013, Pittsburg State University was awarded an IMLS Laura Bush 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian Program grant with the goal of empowering future school librarians with knowledge of regional American Indian cultural mores to better serve students and tribes in their schools and communities. As a result, 25 highly trained school librarians graduated with a Master of Science degree. In addition, systemic changes occurred at Pittsburg State University College of Education and Department of Teaching and Leadership, as well as the nine participating American Indian tribes/Nations and sixteen Native American serving school districts. The grant project incorporated CRT practices by embedding a modified version of the Purnell Model for Cultural Competence (2002) throughout core curriculum, while continuing the focus on meeting the existing state and technology standards, Kansas State Department of Education Library Media Standards, and 21st Century Learning skills. Project scholars were equipped with skills necessary to apply principles of library and information studies to create effective, integrated school library media programs promoting equity and diversity, and to recognize and support the role of library media programs within the community. Participating tribal libraries implemented new systems for cataloging and classifying collections as a result of collaborations with students during practicum and internship. In addition, districts were equipped with procedures to effectively establish and maintain culturally relevant collections. As a result of the previous grant project's final data, the PSU Educational Technology program has continued modifying its library media curriculum to embrace the unique abilities of students from all cultures into their libraries, and to see future librarians encourage classroom teachers to do the same. The success of the previous grant highlighted the need to continue to develop graduate programs promoting equity and diversity through culturally responsive practices. By building on lessons learned, the *Building Bridges Across Cultures* project will complement our previous project and strengthen the number of highly qualified school librarians by 25, increasing the expertise of school librarians in meeting the needs of culturally diverse students. Combining data from the two projects will assist PSU Educational program leaders in their process of continual program improvement, with a primary focus on diversity and promotion of cultural competence. The project will further impact area school and

community libraries by developing collaborative relationships with and providing support for community library patrons, programming, and events. (*Supporting Document #4: Final Performance Report*)

### **Project Design**

The *Building Bridges across Cultures* project will reach 25 future school librarians along with the students and school communities they influence. Project participants will earn a Master of Science degree with a Library Media emphasis and experience one year of leadership mentoring. Courses in the online, two year Master's Degree program will focus on best practices for CRT, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and school library and information science.

### **Project Goals and Objectives**

The primary goal of the project is to enhance the quantity and quality of Hispanic serving school librarians in order to help meet the information needs of the culturally diverse student and community populations in the four-state area of Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

*Objective #1:* Further modify the PSU Library Media Specialist curriculum by incorporating culturally responsive teaching methodologies and assessments, and including TESOL objectives.

*Objective #2:* Recruit and graduate 25 school librarians competent in implementing research based instructional practices for working with Hispanic and other culturally diverse students and adults.

*Objective #3:* Educate the next generation of school librarians working with school, community, and national stakeholders to build institutional capacity while developing a diverse library collection.

*Objective #4:* Provide supervised leadership opportunities to project participants, supporting future growth in service to school library and community stakeholders.

*Objective #5:* Mentor the school librarians throughout the project to serve as stewards of cultural legacy in the school library for the growing Hispanic population.

*Objective #6:* Develop collaborative partnerships between school and community libraries to promote programming, events, and collections to support the information and literacy needs of the Hispanic population.

### **Project Personnel**

Drs. [Michelle Hudiburg](#) and [Elizabeth Mascher](#) will be responsible for project planning, implementation, and management of the project including recruitment, practicum placement, and teaching courses in the Master's program. Both project Co-Directors were faculty delivering all instruction and advising in the previous project and are for this project. They continually refine their expertise through practical research in culturally relevant teaching practices, library science, and online learning. They were invited to, and recently submitted, a book chapter to be included in *Social Justice and Cultural Competency: Essential Readings for Teacher-Librarians* to be published by School Libraries Worldwide. Project Co-Director, Dr. Michelle Hudiburg, has been a licensed library media specialist in Kansas. She was part of the KSDE committee that revised both state library licensure standards and curricular content standards for library information and technology PK-12. Project Co-Director, Dr. Elizabeth Mascher, holds expertise in online learning and technology leadership. She has been instrumental in improving online learning experiences for university students, bringing new ideas for integrating practical experience into theory-heavy courses. Having been the lead instructors and supervisors on the previous grant project, these Project Directors have experience implementing and supporting a project of this nature. They will serve as the liaisons between PSU Axe Library, partnering school districts, and community libraries. Relationships and an open line of communication with these entities have already been established to support project implementation. Dr. Alice Sagehorn is assigned to manage the *Building Bridges Across Cultures* project

finances. She has more than 20 years of experience directing and evaluating federal, private, and other educational grants. The PSU Business Office and the PSU Research and Grants Administration in the Graduate School will work with Dr. Sagehorn to ensure the project finances are managed in a timely and efficient way, adhering to the letter and spirit of the fiscal requirements of the grant. Financial reports will be provided at all project Advisory Council meetings and progress reports will be submitted in a timely and efficient manner.

### **Project Implementation Timeline**

#### ***Phase 1 (4 months, July - October 2019): Advisory Council, Curriculum Changes, and Recruitment)*** Advisory Council

Phase 1 begins with creation of an advisory council to oversee planning and progress, curricular and course changes, and candidate recruiting/selection. Advisory council members will include:

- Project Principal Investigator (Dr. Alice Sagehorn)
- Project Directors (Dr. Michelle Hudiburg and Dr. Elizabeth Mascher)
- PSU Axe Library Representative (Dr. Randy Roberts)
- Project Consultant from REFORMA (*Supporting Document #5: Letter of Support*)
- Project Consultant program alumni (Michelle Broxterman)
- One member from each of the state school librarian associations (to be determined)
- Director of Kansas City Kansas school libraries (Candee Hoffman)
- Director of Pittsburg Public Library (Bev Clarkson)

External council members were chosen based on the need to draw on expertise and experience of those in the field, ensuring the program meets its stated goals and objectives. Responsibilities of the council will include reviewing scholarship applications, **Jump Start** planning, analyzing progress reports on participants, project budget review, providing input for project enhancements and leadership mentoring, and assisting with dissemination of project recruitment and results. Likewise, the Project Consultants will work closely with the Co-Directors when revising curriculum and making course changes. The advisory council will meet at the onset of the project (July, 2019) to review their responsibilities and begin the recruitment process. They will also meet at the end of August, 2019 to review and approve applications. During the remaining project time, the advisory council will meet at the end of each semester to review progress reports on participants, dissemination, budget, and any other pertinent data. Meetings may be face-to-face or virtual, depending on scheduling needs of members.

Curriculum Changes: The *Building Bridges across Cultures* project will continue to strengthen CRT practices by focusing on Hispanic cultures. In addition, each course within the program will address relevant identified TESOL standards that will be infused into the curricular activities and assessed through performance tasks demonstrating mastery. These standards address the impact of culture on student learning, planning for content instruction, using resources and technologies effectively, and professional development, partnerships and advocacy. Courses include projects that focus directly on including cultural diversity in decision making for teaching practices, and also require students to read books and authors representing diversity of works in all genres. Further course revision of existing projects will include specific focus on Hispanic cultures, as well as the addition of best practices for CRT. One strategic curricular change will be the addition of a Methods for Teaching ESOL to the program's course rotation. Modules will be added to each course in the program, and professors will work together with the Project Consultant to align module assignments to the *Building Bridges across Cultures* project goals and objectives. (*Supporting document #6: Curriculum Map*)

Recruitment Plan: Recruiting and retaining quality participants will be key to success of the program. Participants will serve in a school district with 15% or more Hispanic student population or will be Hispanic themselves. Recruitment will include reaching out to four-state state school librarian organizations, regional

ESOL organizations, alumni of the school library and ESOL MS programs, four-state education service centers, the PSU Leadership advisory council (KAMO), partner districts, and community libraries. Social media applications and the MS program website will also be used to promote the program and recruit applicants. Recruitment materials will be ready for distribution and recruitment will commence upon funding notification in July, 2019, and continue for two months. Recruitment materials will include an online application, print flyers, social media advertisement, website banners, and other visual displays.

Participant Selection: The project will recruit 25 teachers from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas who are Hispanic and/or teaching in 1 of 22 identified partnering districts having Hispanic student populations ranging from 15% to more than 50%. The participant selection process will be competitive, ensuring participants desire to serve as future leaders in school libraries, acquire expertise in CRT, and work with the underserved Hispanic population. Application responses will include 1) What are the strengths and weaknesses of current library services for supporting Hispanic students? 2) What practical experience do you have in teaching Hispanic students? 3) Why is Culturally Relevant Teaching critical in today's school environment? And 4) What potential positive impact could you have on the school library profession by being part of this grant project? In addition, applicants and their building leadership will sign a commitment form, and a district support letter will be required at the time of application, ensuring participants and their administration recognize the projects' importance (*Supporting document #7: Scholarship Application*). Along with their open-ended responses and support documents, applicants will submit a resume, transcripts, and a College of Education recommendation form, all of which are required for admission to the PSU Graduate School and give a broad picture of experience and expertise as an educator. Applications will be reviewed by the Advisory Council, ensuring selection of a diverse group of quality participants from the applicant pool. Participant selection will be completed by the middle of September 2019.

### **Phase 2 (2 months, October - December 2019): Jump Start**

Phase 2 includes implementing the **Jump Start** experience in cooperation with the university library, local agencies, and [REFORMA](#). The Jump Start phase was not included in the American Indian project and was added as a result of that project. Participants from the American Indian project completed a follow-up survey of the project's impact. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported their training made them more aware of the diverse needs of their students. Also noteworthy was the fact that 11 participants indicated the most beneficial way to help colleagues be more culturally sensitive was experiencing cultural activities, with pedagogy training as the next most important (41%).

#### Kick-off Meeting

Project candidates will meet together as a cohort and be exposed to local and national speakers, events, and presentations emphasizing cultural expectations of the Hispanic community. Jump Start will begin with a one day, face-to-face meeting where the cohort will meet each other and their professors in person, receive laptops and textbooks for the first 2 courses, learn more specifics about the program, participate in team-building activities, and complete a Program bootcamp where professors put forth expectations and train participants how to engage in their online courses using the CANVAS learning management system.

#### Cultural Foundation

The remaining Jump Start events will be held online. Some events, such as webinars and in-person presentations, will be synchronous while other activities can be completed in an asynchronous nature. Pursuant to their communication of support (*Supporting document #5: Letter of Support*) and phone conferences with REFORMA and the project Co-Directors, these activities will be supported by REFORMA. These Jump Start events will place a focus on enriching participants' knowledge of the Hispanic community, including historical evidence, present circumstances, and future expectations. The Jump Start experience is intended as a cultural

immersion program, meant to provide meaningful context to future course work and leadership activities. Participants will be given a schedule of events, and the requirements for completing the Jump Start program during the selection process, when informed of selection to the program, and at the Kickoff meeting.

### ***Phase 3 (24 months, January 2019 - December 2021): Coursework***

Phase 3 will consist of six continuous semesters of coursework and field experience as a cohort, resulting in a Master of Science degree with a Library Media emphasis. Project expectations are that all 25 participants will successfully complete the program and graduate in the Fall 2021 semester.

Coursework: participants will be enrolled in 6-credit hours of program specific curriculum each semester.

Courses in the online, two year Master's Degree program focus on best practices for culturally responsive education, library and information science, technology integration, and ESOL methodologies and assessments.

Formative marketing/dissemination: As part of course requirements, participants will be asked to create a public blog, sharing experiences and reflective thoughts about their project participation. Likewise, a project specific social media hashtag will be created and participants will be encouraged to use it when sharing project work as directed by their professors. Participants will host Twitter chats at various times throughout their coursework and field work semesters. Utilizing social media outlets will be a way to continually market the project and its progress. Another means of project dissemination will be encouraging participants to present projects at school library and/or ESOL conferences at the state and national level. Participants will also create instructional resources focused on CRT and will share those as Open Educational Resources (OER). Finally, participants will be required to submit research projects to the university's Research Colloquium, held each spring.

Field Experience (Practicum): Field experience (Practicum) will involve participants completing state of Kansas licensure requirements through 120 hours of library specific experiences, working personally with a mentor school librarian, implementing literacy projects, presenting professional development (PD) to current teachers and school librarians, compiling school library policies and procedures, and attending a professional conference. Field experience projects, presentations, and conference attendance will focus on CRT as well as meeting the needs of Hispanic students and the community. The three other states participating in this project have reciprocity agreements for teacher license endorsements; thus, a Kansas library media endorsement can be recognized in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas with minor adjustment. In addition participants will work with local public libraries, building collaborative partnerships to promote programming, events, and collections to support the information and literacy needs of their Hispanic population. These partnerships are important and were indicated by district school administrators as a means to meet information needs of Hispanic students, further benefiting their schools. (*Supporting Document #8: Practicum Guidelines and Evaluation*).

Leadership Experience: Three strategic means of encouraging leadership experience for participants will be included. 1) Students will be required to present Professional Development activities to current school librarians. These activities will help current librarians in their acquisition of relevant PD and serve as a means for obtaining continuing education units. 2) All participants and their school principal will be invited to attend the KAMO Educational Leadership Forum (KAMO) in the Spring of 2020 and 2021. KAMO is a joint conference presented by the Ed Leadership and Ed Tech faculty, and focuses on ways of enhancing leadership opportunities between principals and teacher leaders. 3) Project Co-Directors and two participants will travel to and apply to present at the ALA Midwinter meeting in 2021 and 2022. ALA Midwinter is a prime conference for this project because it includes AASL members as well as REFORMA. This annual meeting celebrates library and information services at all levels, including awarding the national book awards. Along with the ALA Midwinter meeting, travel to the REFORMA Conference in 2021 is expected. Project Directors and participants will benefit from this conference that melds both school librarianship and library service needs of Hispanic

individuals. Conference attendees will present key takeaways with cohort members as well as educators in their respective districts. Travel funds for conference attendance have been included in the project budget.

Formative Project Evaluation will be an ongoing process. Upon award notification, an Evaluation Team led by the Grant Evaluator will be formed. This team will be created to ensure the evaluation process matches the goals and objectives of the project. The team will meet quarterly to discuss the evaluation design, the results of project implementation, and evaluation of information to continuously improve the project. The Evaluation team will consist of an external evaluator, Principal Investigator, Co-Directors, Axe Library representative, and the university grant coordinator. Formative qualitative and quantitative data will be examined and analyzed based on the following questions: 1) Are the resources/activities/operations as described in the project design section in motion? 2) Is the program accomplishing its stated goal and objectives? If not, what immediate changes should be made? Supporting formative data may include project grades or rubric scores, participant communication (email, blog posts, social media posts, etc.), course syllabi, and results from participant satisfaction surveys. Formative data gathered and analyzed throughout the year will be reported in the form of annual progress reports.

#### ***Phase 4 (12 months, August 2021 - June 2022): Library Leadership Mentoring***

Phase 4 provides the participants twelve months of supervised leadership experience in school libraries and begins during the final semester of coursework. The leadership mentoring experience will begin in the final fall semester of coursework, hitting its full stride as the Practicum experience winds down. Just as in the Jump Start experience, participants will be versed in cultural expectations of the Hispanic community and reflect on how that impacts their service as a school librarian.

Establishing an Area REFORMA Chapter: During Phase 4, participants will work with the National REFORMA organization to develop a chapter to serve the four-state area. REFORMA will provide regional support in establishing the local chapter as well as assisting with recruitment efforts to extend the membership outside of the project participants to other educators and interesting parties within the four-state communities.

Library Leadership Mentoring: The year of leadership mentoring focuses on cultural events, family programming, literature immersion, and other opportunities planned in conjunction with partnering community groups, public libraries, REFORMA, and the project Advisory Team. Participants will be assigned to work together in district-level or regional teams. In August 2021, project Co-Directors will meet face-to-face with all participants for a half-day session of instruction and information about Phase 4 leadership mentoring. Although plans may change in the interim, specific activities may include: 1) Presenting experiences and take-aways in workshop settings at state ESOL and/or school library conferences in fall, 2020 and KAMO in spring, 2021; 2) Providing PD to practicing school librarians; 3) Presenting PD to preservice school teachers in the PSU undergraduate education program; 4) Collaborating with community youth/children's librarians to provide Hispanic cultural and literacy events; 5) Attending events and educational activities at local Hispanic cultural centers; 6) Working directly with community librarians to learn the library needs of Hispanic children outside the school environment; 7) Creating virtual experiences/sites for meeting library needs of Hispanic students to share with a national and international audience; and 8) Continuing to blog and use the project hashtag when completing projects and experiences. [The leadership mentoring year will not be limited to the activities presented, but will evolve as the project unfolds and the Advisory Team determines need and availability of partnering entities.]

Entering the Field: After graduation and passing of state licensure exams, participants will be given intentional assistance in locating school librarian positions, with the intent to place at least 40% within one year after graduation. Partnering and four-state area districts will be supplied a list of qualified participants highlighting their specialized training. Position vacancies will be communicated to participants through email and social



media. A list of qualified participants will be supplied to the PSU Office of Teacher Education. Program co-Directors will attend Teacher Interview Day at PSU and deliver qualified participant lists to employers. State school librarian organization listservs will be informed of program culmination and given contact information for seeking qualified participants. Even after the grant period has ended, vacancies will be continually updated on the program website and shared through the program's social media outlets.

**Summative Project Evaluation:** A comprehensive Evaluation Plan was designed to evaluate effectiveness appropriate to the scope of the project. This Evaluation plan was designed based on the successfully implemented evaluation plan applied during the previous grant. Direct measures of each Project Goal and Objective to demonstrate attainment of Performance Goals 1 (train and develop library professionals), 2 (support communities of practice) and 3 (develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities) of the IMLS Agency Level 1 Goal (Learning) will be evaluated. The Evaluation Team will meet one final time (May 2022) to analyze qualitative and quantitative data from the program's entirety. Results from PRAXIS II Library media specialist exam, graduation list, course grades, graduation portfolio rubric, KSDE assessment data, participant exit (satisfaction) surveys, mentor surveys, leadership mentoring lists and products, final program evaluation, and data from individual course evaluations will be utilized for data collection. Consistent with the formative evaluation process, the Evaluation team will analyze collected data based on the following questions: 1) How well did the program accomplish its stated goal and objectives? 2) How has participant perceptions of Hispanic student library information needs changed as a result of being part of the program? 3) In what ways are participants using program acquired knowledge to influence their current professional practices? Understanding that some factors are beyond the control of the grant program's process (including open positions, individual participant life circumstances, etc.) success in these areas would see all 25 participants completing the program, placement of 40% in a school library position within the first year of graduation. In addition, increased use of CRT practices in classroom teaching (for those not immediately entering the library profession), increased collaboration between school and public libraries, altered perspectives to diversity in the educational process, and increased advocacy for diversity in the school library profession are expected. After the team has met, analyzed program data, and shared findings with stakeholders the project Co-Directors will compile the IMLS Final Report and disseminate that information to partnering school districts and project personnel. The project will implement an ongoing Evaluation Plan to measure the IMLS Performance level Goal of Learning, Performance Goals 1 (train and develop library professionals), 2 (support communities of practice) and 3 (develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities), as well as project specific objectives. Specifics about project evaluation are included in the Evaluation Plan. (*Supporting Document: #9 Comprehensive Evaluation Plan*)

## **Diversity Plan**

**Identification of the diverse communities served by the project:** The *Building Bridges Across Cultures* project will address the information needs of underserved Hispanic individuals from public schools in the four-state area of Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Partnering districts or schools within each of those states reporting student populations exceeding 15% of the total students will be served. PSU is located in southeast Kansas, approximately five miles from Missouri, forty miles from Oklahoma, and forty-five miles from northwest Arkansas. This central location allows the project to target large and small school districts across a wide radius in the four-state region, meaning benefits will cross both rural and urban locales. Likewise individual teachers, not in partnering districts but identifying as Hispanic, will also be recruited to the program. Participants will be selected on an application basis.

**Meeting Challenges and Opportunities:** With the rapid increase of Hispanic students in local schools (some partnering districts saw a 5-7% increase in one year), it is vital to have well-trained and diversified school librarians. As identified in the IMLS 2017 report, this project is designed to support the need for diversity in the library profession, ensuring members of the local Hispanic community have professional librarians who can serve as advocates and promote cultural change while championing an unbiased climate and curricula in schools. Likewise, the 2018 *National School Library Standards* (AASL, 2018) address diversity specifically through the Shared Foundation *Include*, “Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community.” And, during the prior grant project, candidates expressed how ties to community gave them a “better understanding of the local Native American tribes, their cultures and histories.” The current project will further support connections through the Jump Start experience, with exposure to local and national speakers, events, and presentations emphasizing cultural expectations of the Hispanic community. Participants will work individually and collectively on course projects that pinpoint local, regional and national challenges for Hispanic students and create opportunities to alleviate challenges, first locally and then on a potentially broader scale. The field experience (Practicum) further supports this goal through completion of 120 hours of practical library experience, and will seek to include planning for cultural events, family programming, literature immersion, and other practical opportunities through strategic collaboration with community groups and public libraries.

**Development of a Diverse School Library Workforce:** Training future librarians to be more culturally aware and developing skills to better interact with all their patrons has the capacity for expanding the school library reach throughout the school community. Participants would leave the program better able to serve all students because of CRT practice and its influence on serving Hispanic students. Likewise, school districts struggle to fill school librarian vacancies. PSU frequently receives inquiries from districts looking for qualified school librarians. While districts work to fill positions with paras or substitutes, these assignments are temporary and not sustainable in the long-term. (*Supporting document #10: Letters of Need*) Development of a school library workforce with skills necessary to more fully embrace the diversity of its patrons will be accomplished by recruiting and retaining 25 future school librarians through program graduation and a year of leadership mentoring, as described in the Project Design.

### **Broad Impact**

**Build Skills and Abilities:** Collaboration and involvement with others at the local, regional and national level will assist with the project’s potential broad impact. Research has provided evidence that school libraries impact academic achievement (Lance, 1994; Lance, et. al., 2000; Lance, 2002; Lance & Hofschire, 2012; Lance, et. al., 2014; Lonsdale, 2003). The school librarians from this project will be able to work with classroom colleagues through collaboration and professional development to promote CRT, select library materials based on research and documented findings, and deselect materials which stereotype or perpetuate various myths about individuals of Hispanic descent. Scholarly knowledge of best practices for collection development and diversifying the collection will help the school librarians positively affect children, teachers, and administrators in the school, no matter the race or ethnicity.

**Transform Practice:** To prepare the *Building Bridges Across Cultures* participants for their roles as school librarians, the program will incorporate Toolkits for Engaging Family and Community Partners from the Institute of Education Sciences along with recently adopted AASL National school librarian Standards. With Advisory Council guidance, project faculty will modify current program outcomes and course curricula to heighten CRT and strengthen the focus on providing services to Hispanic children and adults, many of whom

live below the poverty level (Mahatmya, et. al., 2016; Howard & Rodriguez-Scheel, 2017). The curriculum will also be enhanced to educate participants in the organization, management, and presentation of partnerships with public libraries (Brown, 2015; Smith, et. al., 2014). By including intentional instruction for reaching literacy and information needs of Hispanic students and their families, along with training in fostering strategic partnerships, when participants graduate and are hired as school librarians, they will be better prepared to serve the information needs of Hispanic students in their school and community libraries.

### **Benefit Multiple Institutions and Diverse Audiences**

**Other Institutions:** The *Building Bridges Across Cultures* project will disseminate information and offer assistance to anyone who would like to replicate it. Restrictions will not be placed on course content created specifically for the project; additionally, content will be considered Open Educational Resources (OER) and will be licensed through Creative Commons for other educational institutions to use in the future. PSU Axe Library will also partner with the faculty and participants, resulting in location of relevant research, interlibrary loan, and other mutually beneficial projects.

**Local and Regional:** Participants will have multiple opportunities to share knowledge, experiences and reflective thoughts with diverse audiences. Participants will be 1) Encouraged to present at state school library and/or ESOL conferences; 2) Asked to blog and use an assign social media hashtag to continuously market program accomplishments; 3) Required to present project specific PD to practicing school librarians as well as inservice and preservice teachers; 4) Presenting results of program specific action research to the PSU research colloquium; 5) Organizing literature and literacy events organized with school librarians, community libraries, and Hispanic community organizations; and 6) Using their knowledge on a daily basis, when hired as school librarians.

**National:** Results of the project will be disseminated on a broader basis, making other school library professionals aware of the need to strategically target and recruit diverse individuals to the profession. Project co-Directors and participants will propose presentations for ALA Midwinter meeting (2021), AASL Conference (2021), and REFORMA International Conference (2022). Travel funds for conference participation at ALA, AASL and REFORMA by project co-Directors and two participants has been included in the project budget. Directors and various participants will also submit manuscripts to School Library Journal, School Library Connection, School Libraries Worldwide, and other peer reviewed journals for possible publication. Using social media outlets, including the project hashtag and participant blogs, to continue communicating project impact with each other and a broader audience will be perpetuated even after grant funding has ceased.

**Measuring Success:** One participant in the previous *21st Century Library Alliance* project noted the following when asked about previous bias, “I did not really have bias, but more insufficient information. I think I felt like all the tribes had similar traditions and characteristics, and through this program I have learned that I was mistaken about that.” We want to continue strengthening these enlightened perceptions for all cultures in our public schools, and are preparing to do so through curriculum revision and building strategic partnerships between our participants, their school districts, and community libraries. School librarians trained in this grant funded program, and employed by partner districts, could help schools reframe their vision for Hispanic students and all their diverse populations.



Formative Project Evaluation/Quarterly Advisory Council Meetings													
<b>Phase 4</b>													
Library Leadership Mentoring													
<b>2022</b>													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<b>Phase 4 continued</b>													
Leadership Experience continued													
Library Leadership Mentoring continued													
Formative Project Evaluation/Quarterly Advisory Council Meetings													
Summative Project Evaluation													



## DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

### Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded digital products (e.g., digital content, resources, assets, software, and datasets). The products you create with IMLS funding require careful stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and re-use by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

### Instructions

All applications must include a Digital Product Form.

- Please check here if you have reviewed Parts I, II, III, and IV below and you have determined that your proposal does NOT involve the creation of digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, assets, software, or datasets). You must still submit this Digital Product Form with your proposal even if you check this box, because this Digital Product Form is a Required Document.

If you ARE creating digital products, you must provide answers to the questions in Part I. In addition, you must also complete at least one of the subsequent sections. If you intend to create or collect digital content, resources, or assets, complete Part II. If you intend to develop software, complete Part III. If you intend to create a dataset, complete Part IV.

### Part I: Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

**A.1** What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (content, resources, assets, software, or datasets) you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright(s)? How will you explain property rights and permissions to potential users (for example, by assigning a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, or Creative Commons to the product)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.

**A.2** What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

**A. 3** If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

## **Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content, Resources, or Assets**

### **A. Creating or Collecting New Digital Content, Resources, or Assets**

**A.1** Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.

**A.2** List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

**A.3** List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG) you plan to use, along with the relevant information about the appropriate quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, or pixel dimensions).

## **B. Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation**

**B.1** Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

**B.2** Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period of performance. Your plan may address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

## **C. Metadata**

**C.1** Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata. Specify which standards you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., MARC, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

**C.2** Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.



**C.3** Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

#### **D. Access and Use**

**D.1** Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content).

**D.2** Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

### **Part III. Projects Developing Software**

#### **A. General Information**

**A.1** Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

**A.2** List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

## **B. Technical Information**

**B.1** List the programming languages, platforms, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

**B.2** Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

**B.3** Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

**B.4** Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

**B.5** Provide the name(s) and URL(s) for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

### **C. Access and Use**

**C.1** We expect applicants seeking federal funds for software to develop and release these products under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on its access and use? Identify and explain the license under which you will release source code for the software you develop (e.g., BSD, GNU, or MIT software licenses). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

**C.2** Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

**C.3** Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

## **Part IV: Projects Creating Datasets**

**A.1** Identify the type of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use to which you expect it to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate it.

**A.2** Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

**A.3** Will you collect any personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information? If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect such information while you prepare the data files for public release (e.g., data anonymization, data suppression PII, or synthetic data).

**A.4** If you will collect additional documentation, such as consent agreements, along with the data, describe plans for preserving the documentation and ensuring that its relationship to the collected data is maintained.

**A.5** What methods will you use to collect or generate the data? Provide details about any technical requirements or dependencies that would be necessary for understanding, retrieving, displaying, or processing the dataset(s).

**A.6** What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks) will you capture or create along with the dataset(s)? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the dataset(s) it describes?

**A.7** What is your plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?

**A.8** Identify where you will deposit the dataset(s):

Name of repository:

URL:

**A.9** When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?