APPLICANT NAME AND LEGAL ADDRESS
Johnsburg Public Library District
3000 W. Johnsburg Rd.
Johnsburg, IL  60050

PROJECT DIRECTOR
Maria Zawacki

PHONE NUMBER  815-344-0077
FAX NUMBER  815-344-3524
E-MAIL ADDRESS  mzawacki@johnsburglibrary.org

GRANT OFFERING PROGRAM
Model Or Innovative Grant Offering

PROJECT TITLE
“Establishing a Homeschool Resource Center at the Johnsburg Public Library”

LSTA GOALS - CHECK WHICH ONE GOAL YOUR APPLICATION ADDRESSES

__________ Goal 1 - Ensure access to information by citizens by enabling all Illinois libraries to share resources in regional and statewide databases.

__________ Goal 2 - Ensure that Illinois libraries have access to all sources and formats of information.

__________ Goal 3 - Enrich the quality of life for citizens of Illinois by advocating the pleasures of reading, the ability to read, and the importance of reading.

__________ Goal 4 - Develop training methods and activities that will allow library personnel and Illinois citizens to become technologically literate and have full access to information available through libraries.

__________ Goal 5 - Continue expanding the role of networks, consortia, and partnerships in library development.
County  McHenry

Congressional District  16

Library System  Northern Illinois Library System (NILS)

Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)  36-3307129

Do not complete the information below. To be completed by the Illinois State Library upon grant award

Contract Dates:  

LSTA Amount:  

Contract Number:  

Obligation Number:  

ISL 4/19/00
A. PREPLANNING AND GROUND WORK

Johnsburg Public Library is located in northern McHenry County near the Wisconsin border. Johnsburg itself is a small, rural community where there are few large industries, some small business centers, much open farm area, and mostly single family homes. Based on the 1990 census, the library district services a population of almost 11,000. While McHenry County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Illinois, it still maintains a rural flavor as a whole. The preplanning for this grant began as a result of our library receiving a list of McHenry County homeschooling group contact names that was compiled by one of our library patrons, Ms. Kathy Wentz. Ms. Wentz homeschools her children and is the activity coordinator for one of the homeschool groups, as well as being on numerous Internet listservs and discussion groups for homeschoolers. She tutors students from the local school district and is a former science teacher. She took it upon herself to compile this list for reference purposes for the library. Some McHenry County homeschool groups are specifically denomination based, while others are non-denominational. Library staff was astounded to discover from this list that there are ten different homeschooling groups that specifically serve the needs of homeschoolers in McHenry County. There are no clear statistics on how many homeschool families exist in Johnsburg or McHenry County, but Ms. Wentz informed us that many homeschool families settle in the Johnsburg area oddly enough because of the school district. She said many school districts provide little cooperation with homeschool families. But the Johnsburg school district is well known in the homeschool community for its cooperation with homeschool families. This is a result of the school district’s desire to provide children with the best education, whether it is in the schools or in the home. In discussing the library’s astonishment regarding the number of homeschool groups that serve our library patrons, Ms. Wentz relayed that her dream some day was to have the public library provide an extensive homeschool resource center for the many homeschool families in the area. This would include such things as math manipulatives, science equipment such as microscopes, telescopes, and scales, educational board games, quality software, curriculum materials, and catalogs from a variety of homeschool suppliers. Ms. Wentz is not aware of any such resource center existing for homeschoolers in any public library in northern Illinois or southern Wisconsin. Thus, the idea for the Johnsburg Public Library’s Homeschool Resource Center was born.

With limited funding available, it became clear that LSTA funds might be the perfect solution for finding monies to equip a Homeschool Resource Center at the library. The Johnsburg Public Library is a small library with total annual tax revenue of only $300,000. Extra funds for expensive special programs or services, such as a quality Homeschool Resource Center, simply are not available from within the library’s budget. Providing this segment of our population with materials unique to homeschoolers needs, is clearly addressing LSTA Goal #2 by providing access to a variety of sources and formats of information. After realizing that LSTA funding might be a possibility, the next step was sending out a survey to homeschool families in the area to determine exactly what they would like to see in a Homeschool Resource Center. Ms. Wentz
constructed a survey and was responsible for sending it to as many of her homeschool contacts as possible. There were 112 people who responded to the “Homeschoolers Library Usage Interest Survey”. Certainly not all respondents were from the Johnsburg area, but the large number of respondents provides an excellent sample of what homeschool families in general would want in a Homeschool Resource Center at a public library.

Survey results show that 84% of the respondents plan on homeschooling through high school. This figure indicates that there is a significant long-term interest in homeschooling. When asked what subject area(s) concern them most about homeschooling, a large majority stated science. The next most frequently mentioned subjects, in order, were math, English, foreign language, history, reading, writing, computer science, music, social studies, and art. This illustrates that while there is a clear need in most homeschool families for science information, there is concern and interest in all curricular areas. When asked regarding their interest in basic homeschooling information, response choices were “very interested”, “interested”, and “not interested”. There were 61% of the respondents who were “very interested” in being able to preview curriculum materials from a variety of publishers, with 56% being “very interested” in having access to catalogs from a wide variety of homeschool suppliers. Other requests for basic homeschooling information were for books and magazines supporting homeschooling, information on learning disabilities, homeschool convention videotapes, teacher materials from area museums, local field trip information, and lists of mentors and tutors. Regarding having access to manipulatives, 66% were “very interested” in math manipulatives such as fraction circles, tangrams, algebra blocks, etc. There were 76% who were very interested in science equipment such as glassware, scales, and other non-consumables. 86% were “very interested” in having access to both microscopes and telescopes, with 90% being “very interested” in science kits on topics such as light, magnetism, rocks and minerals, anatomy, etc. Educational board games such as Fraction Action or Elemento were rated as “very interested” in having access to by 76%. Other manipulatives that respondents requested were geography puzzles.

In rating their interest for having quality software available, 56% were “very interested” in foreign languages. Only 36% were “very interested” in language arts software, with 49% being “interested”. Regarding math software, 41% were “very interested” and 50% were “interested”. Science software rated 54% as “very interested” and history software rated 51% “very interested”. Other quality software requested by the respondents in order of frequency were geography, fine arts, music and anything at the high school level. The results of this survey clearly point to the fact that homeschoolers in our area do indeed have a real desire to have access to a variety of materials. The local public library is the ideal place to provide these resources for the many homeschool families that exist.

B. PROJECT PLAN

As demonstrated by the Homeschoolers survey we conducted, there is a definite need in this segment of the population for a variety of information and material that is desirable to successfully educate their children at home. Homeschooler needs and
requests differ from other library patrons whose children do attend local schools, and thus have access to a variety of instructional formats and materials. More than likely, expense prevents many homeschool families from providing their children with a large variety of quality supplemental learning materials traditionally found in a school setting. If our library were able to establish a Homeschool Resource Center that would house these learning materials, they could be checked out and easily shared, much as other library materials currently are. These materials would include a large variety of books and magazines supporting homeschooling, subject area information for homeschoolers, curriculum materials to preview, homeschool supplier catalogs, quality educational software and games, and math and science manipulatives and equipment. The only materials that the library currently provides that is geared specifically for homeschoolers interests are a few books on that topic in the general collection. By providing this segment of the population with a Homeschool Resource Center we are clearly addressing LSTA Goal 2 by providing homeschoolers with access to all sources and formats of information. We anticipate that the Homeschool Resource Center would have an impact much beyond the local Johnsburg community. Out of necessity, homeschoolers do a great deal of networking. As word of our Homeschool Resource Center spreads, we fully expect that members of many of the homeschooling groups from throughout McHenry County would frequent it and take advantage of its resources.

With statistics that are available showing that the homeschool movement is becoming more and more popular, there are probably few libraries that currently exist that do not serve this segment of the population. Other libraries could contact their area homeschooling groups and conduct a survey similar to ours to find out what their particular needs and wants are and then work towards meeting those needs and wants. Just as other library materials are shared by all in the community, these homeschool resource materials can be cataloged and processed in a similar manner, housed in an area together, and made available to the homeschool population in their community.

C. PROJECT FEASIBILITY

In looking at where the library could set up a Homeschool Resource Center, it is clear that the library’s existing study room would be an ideal location. With the numerous manipulatives and equipment that we hope to provide, the Homeschool Resource Center needs to be housed in an area accessible to the public, yet not on the regular open shelves. The study room is an enclosed room visible from the circulation desk and able to be locked if so desired. It is infrequently used and has ample room to house such a collection. Currently housed in the room are a small collection of telecourses from the local community college and a study table with chairs. Additional shelving is available in the library’s basement and could be added to the study room to accommodate the components of the Homeschool Resource Center. All materials in the Homeschool Resource Center would be available for check out and added to the library’s online catalog. To address the concern regarding the security of some of the more expensive materials, the library has a security system and all items in the Homeschool Resource Center would be tagged with a security strip. The library also employs the
services of a collection agency to help retrieve overdue materials, should there be a
concern regarding the return of expensive materials.

With funds requested from this grant we hope to supply the Homeschool
Resource Center with the following items, based on the responses from the survey.
Books and magazines supporting homeschooling that will be purchased have been
selected from a recommended list in the book “The Librarian’s Guide to Homeschooling
Resources” by Susan G. Scheps, published by the American Library Association in 1998.
All items selected were checked to make sure they are still in print and available for
purchase. Grant funds would pay for 3-year subscriptions to 22 recommended
homeschool magazines and newsletters. Following this 3-year subscription period, usage
statistics would be analyzed to determine which of the more heavily used titles the library
would pick up the subscription costs for. We would also purchase 247 recommended
books. These books include general titles on homeschooling, as well as books on specific
content areas of literature, math, social studies, and science. This list of 247 books does
not provide a listing of recommended books for the specific subject areas of foreign
language, computer science, music, or art. We would then purchase materials in these
subject areas that are recommended in the book “The Complete Home Learning Source
Book” by Rebecca Rupp and published by Three Rivers Press in 1998. This would
include purchasing 25 of the recommended music items still in print, 16 books on
computers, 37 foreign language items, and 37 books on art. Our purchases would also
include textbook series from a variety of publishers covering the five main subject areas
of reading, science, social studies, math, and spelling. With a textbook averaging $50,
we would plan on supplying texts for all eight grade levels from ten different publishers.
Ms. Wentz has also suggested purchasing 100 historical literature titles, at an average
cost of $20 per book. She has a suggested list and has found that most homeschoolers are
now using a literature-based approach to history, rather than a textbook approach. We
will also purchase 59 other curriculum titles that are recommended in “The Complete
Home Learning Source Book” under the headings of “Curricula, Lesson Plans, and How-
Tos” and “Reading Programs”. All print materials to be purchased with these grant
funds total 921 books and 22 magazine subscriptions, totaling $35,764 based on current
prices.

Of the survey respondents, 66% were “very interested” in having math
manipulatives available for checkout at the public library. We plan on purchasing 33
math games and hands-on activities that are recommended in “The Complete Home
Learning Source Book” and suitable for repeated use in a library setting, as well as 40
science games and kits. In addition, as a former science teacher, Ms. Wentz has
recommended that we purchase three different kinds of microscopes. These include a
dissection microscope, a children’s microscope, and one appropriate for high school age.
In addition, she recommended purchasing a children’s telescope and one appropriate for
older children and adults. Other science equipment to be purchased includes 3 scales and
other measuring devices. 76% of the survey respondents were “very interested” in
educational board games. Again based on recommended lists in “The Complete Home
Learning Source Book”, we plan on purchasing 17 language arts games, 3 music games,
5 art games, and 8 history games suitable for repeated use. Grant funds would then allow
us to purchase a total of 106 educational manipulatives, games, kits, and hands-on
activities in all subject areas totaling $2,822. The recommended telescopes, microscopes
and other science equipment total an additional $8,438.

Specific software purchases will be selected again based on recommended lists in
“The Complete Home Learning Source Book” and a foreign language set specifically
recommended by Ms. Wentz based on homeschool family recommendations. These
include 31 foreign language titles, 5 math titles, 15 science titles, 10 reading titles, 11
history titles, 7 geography titles, 3 music titles, and 5 art titles, for a total of 87 software
titles at a cost of $7,117. Existing library staff would be responsible for cataloging and
processing all of the Homeschool Resource Center materials, as they do other library
materials. Since we anticipate that many of the software titles and some educational
manipulatives will need to be repackaged in studier containers to withstand circulations,
we are also requesting an additional $1,000 for processing supplies. All items in the
Homeschool Resource Center will have an extended checkout period. Should any items
not be available for purchase at the time of ordering, we will request replacement
suggestions from Ms. Wentz.

The library will absorb any costs for establishing a pamphlet file with materials of
special interest to families who home school. This would include state regulations
regarding homeschooling, homeschoolers support groups and local field trip information,
as well as pamphlets of local area points of interest. The library would also absorb any
costs associated with maintaining a collection of catalogs from homeschool suppliers,
lists of which are available in many homeschool resource books. The Children’s
Librarian would be responsible for assembling and maintaining these files on a
permanent basis. Regarding maintaining the resource center on a permanent basis, we
will maintain it as we do any other collection in the library. New items on
homeschooling that are reviewed in library journals will be added to the collection, based
on the reviews. Recommendations from homeschool patrons regarding new acquisition
requests will be taken into consideration for purchase. Worn or damaged items will be
withdrawn as other library materials currently are.

Following grant notification, all items already selected for purchase from the
recommended lists will be ordered. They will be cataloged and processed when they
arrive. The library will assume all costs for publicizing the resource center after all items
are received and in place. Information then will be sent to all ten of the McHenry County
homeschool groups. In addition, information on the resource center will be included in
the library’s newsletter which is mailed to all households in the library district, in the
village of Johnsburg’s newsletter, in the library’s local weekly newspaper column and in
the Chicago newspapers, and added to the library web site.

D. PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The library’s partners in this grant are the ten McHenry County homeschooling
groups and their members. They have already contributed significantly by responding to
our interest survey. It was their responses that formed the basis for what the Homeschool
Resource Center should be. Since they are a countywide group, the impact of our
resource center will reach much beyond the boundaries of Johnsburg. We fully expect
many homeschool families from throughout the county to take advantage of the resource
center. We will encourage and welcome their input regarding the resource center and any recommendations for it for the future.

**ABSTRACT**

The Johnsburg Public Library is providing services to the homeschool population by establishing a Homeschool Resource Center within the library. Items in the Resource Center that are available for checkout include curriculum materials, math manipulatives, science equipment such as microscopes and telescopes, educational board games and kits, quality software, homeschooling books and magazines, and catalogs from a variety of homeschool suppliers.
## LSTA GRANT BUDGET SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORY</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
<th>AMOUNT (in dollars only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials</td>
<td>Books, non-print, software</td>
<td>$45,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Outlay *</td>
<td>Equipment valued over $500</td>
<td>$8,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Contracts *</td>
<td>Hiring an individual on contract</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual Services *</td>
<td>Hiring an agency on contract</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Salaries and benefits for additional agency staff</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and CE for Staff</td>
<td>Agency staff travel and meeting registrations</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE and Meetings for Others</td>
<td>Travel, registrations and honorariums for others</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Advertising done by outside firm</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, Postage and Printing</td>
<td>Equipment/supplies valued under $500</td>
<td>$1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephones and Telecommunications</td>
<td>Phone charges and rental</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Rental, Repair, and Maintenance</td>
<td>Rental, repair, insurance and maintenance of equipment</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$55,141</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LSTA GRANT BUDGET SHEET

Capital Outlay:

- Zoom Stereo Dissection Microscope: $1,070
- Video Zoom Microscope System: $3,750
- Phase-Contrast Trinocular Microscope: $1,575
- Astroscan telescope and accessories: $750
- Meade ETX Telescope: $993
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORY</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
<th>AMOUNT (in dollars only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials</td>
<td>Books, non-print, software</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Outlay</td>
<td>Equipment valued over $500</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Contracts</td>
<td>Hiring an individual on contract</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual Services</td>
<td>Hiring an agency on contract</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Salaries and benefits for additional agency staff</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and CE for Staff</td>
<td>Agency staff travel and meeting registrations</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE and Meetings for Others</td>
<td>Travel, registrations and honorariums for others</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Advertising done by outside firm</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, Postage and Printing</td>
<td>Equipment/supplies valued under $500</td>
<td>$ 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephones and Telecommunications</td>
<td>Phone charges and rental</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Rental, Repair, and Maintenance</td>
<td>Rental, repair, insurance and maintenance of equipment</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS and LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT

Our partners in the grant are the ten McHenry County Homeschooling Groups. They are Apple Tree North, Apple Tree South, Cheer, Good Shepard Catholic Homeschooling Group, H.O.U.S.E. (Home Oriented Unique Schooling Experience) McHenry Co., ICHEA (Illinois Christian Home Educators Association) Chain of Lake Chapter, Pillar Tillers, Society of St. Scholastica Homeschoolers, Wonder Kids, and Northern Illinois Christian Home Educators Assoc.

LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT

This is the text of an e-mail received from Kathy Wentz regarding actual comments made on our survey, in support of our Homeschool Resource Center. (Please note there are some respondents that do not live in Johnsburg and therefore are not referring to our library in particular when making comments).

From: Kathy Wentz [kwentz@mc.net]
Sent: Monday, August 28, 2000 12:23 AM
To: Maria Zawacki
Subject: survey comments + mine

Here are some of the comments that were attached to the surveys when I got them back. Some of the comments have had individual names removed, but otherwise remain largely unedited. Yes, mine is the last - and you may attach my name to it if you feel that is appropriate. :-)

Kathy

1) This is a wonderful idea! I've passed out several surveys in hopes you'll get them back. Please let me know if I can help you in any way. I know Maria Zawacki, she is wonderful and helpful, so this type of program should work very nicely. Thanks for all your hard work on this project!

2) hope this helps!
we use our library so much that i'm happy to help any chance this may be able to be used for other areas?

i miss the library we had in Cleveland, that had software and magazines! but i'm just happy we have one that has videos! ;)

3) (on an out of state reply)

Hey, you forgot a comments section!<g> When this paradise exists, let me know. My dear husband is a librarian and I have found relatively little help locally for homeschooling. This particular library is under
financial stress and the collection is way out of date. I keep sending
in purchase requests and I
hear nothing back. My guess is they view homeschoolers as too small a
group to be concerned about their needs. They do have a toy lending
library at the main branch, but otherwise that's it.

4) (In response to the final line on the survey: "Thank you for your time!
I know how valuable it is!"

Yes, but well worth it, doing things like this (filling out surveys
about homeschooling and library usage) will probably not help me, but be
of enormous help to those who follow in our steps.

5) Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this survey.
We love our library but has so little to offer homeschoolers. Wouldn't
it be nice if we could reroute the tax dollars we pay to schools to the
public library to be used for these resources. Have a wonderful day

6) I would like to add a comment. I am very fortunate in that I belong to
a
group that supplies classes. Therefore I am less interested in the
library supplying that need. It would be a different story if I did not have
that group. Having the availability of scientific materials would be
wonderful, however! I hope this helps.

7) Let us know the outcome. Hope they get the grant!!!!

8) Generally speaking I think all of these are great ideas and would be
great resources for homeschoolers. The items/areas about which I am
less enthusiastic in the survey have to do more with my personal
needs and the materials we already have available to us (i.e., the kids
and I can already program, so no need for computer classes, and we
have a microscope and telescope, so while I'd be vaguely interested I
am not enthusiastic about these items).

Good luck with the survey.

9) All of the above would be great! Items like what I mentioned above -
learning kits, audio books, CD's, board games, teacher resource guides,
videos. Make it very much like a lending library, only specialized for
homeschoolers. You could even include items like posters, instruments
and music books - anything that people might like to try out for a
period of time to determine whether it would be a worthwhile investment
for them to purchase it personally.

10)
What a wonderful resource for homeschoolers (and schoolers interested in more or different materials!) a resource center such as this could be! What a great idea! It is so very difficult for homeschoolers, who are generally one income families, to provide more than a few of the vast wealth of educational materials available. I have spoken to many homeschooling families who have shared the same set of experiences. We have all found ourselves buying an expensive set of materials only to find they are not appropriate for the curriculum or are not useful to the child they were bought for. It is so frustrating to have spent all that money just to have the materials sitting on a shelf - and then try to resell them for a tenth of what you paid for them! This type of loan program would eliminate most if not all of those purchasing mistakes, saving homeschoolers thousands of dollars each and helping them truly get the best programs and materials to meet each of their children's individual needs.

All parents want the best educational resources and materials for their children's needs. With the wonderful inter-library loan system in this area, I can only envision these materials being used so much they will never be on the shelf for me! (Hey, can you buy two of everything???)

Thanks for your hard work!