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**Q1**

Applicant Information

Name	Kathy Severson
Company	School District of DeSoto County
Address	Family Service Center
Address 2	310 W. Whidden Street
City/Town	Arcadia
State/Province	FL
ZIP/Postal Code	34266
Email Address	kathy.severson@desotoschools.com
Phone Number	8639931333

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**Q2**

Yes

Is your organization a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or government-based agency that provides adult basic education/literacy, ESOL and/or family literacy instruction in Florida?

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**Q3**

School District-Based Program

Organization Type

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**Q4**

Organization's total operating budget (school districts and community colleges may use the adult education program budget.)

\$601,752.27

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**Q5**

Does your organization charge a fee for instructional services?

**Yes,**

If yes, please explain.:

As a result of the State of Florida Legislative Body determining that adults receiving instruction from organizations with the Division of Career and Adult Education/FLDOE would have to begin paying tuition as of July 1, 2011 in order to attend class, we in turn had to begin charging our students for such services.

**Q6**

Number of adult ESOL and/or family literacy students provided instruction during fiscal year 2019.

119

**Q7**

Number of volunteers (if none, enter "0")

8

**Q8**

Number of paid instructors (if none, enter "0")

7

**Q9**

Number of students to be provided with instructional services under this grant.

25

**Q10**

**Yes**

Are you a 2019 recipient of this grant?

**Q11**

County or counties served by this grant.

DeSoto



## **Florida Financial Literacy Initiative**

**A statewide Initiative managed by the Florida Literacy Coalition and supported by Wells Fargo**

### **2020 APPLICATION**

Please complete the following application electronically and submit it online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8JJR92B> before **August 5th, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.** The narrative and budget should be submitted as one PDF document.

#### **Part I: Narrative**

**1) Project Abstract/Summary** - The Family Literacy project, Learning Together, is a comprehensive family literacy program that incorporates the four main components of family literacy: 1) adult education, 2) child education, 3) parent education, and 4) parent and child together education. The room is completely equipped with the same materials and technology resources as the Adult General Education classrooms. Parents interact with their child through reading books "together" and weekly themed units and projects. The program stresses the importance of the parent being the child's first teacher by offering assistance in the areas of: academic skills; suggestions to parents on how to reinforce these skills at home; development of language expansion activities; building strong family values; and, assisting parents who may need remediation in their personal reading ability and English language acquisition skills. For students that do not feel comfortable returning to the traditional style of learning on campus, we will be offering distance learning giving students the opportunity to participate with in-class activities via Zoom and Google Docs.

**2) History and Accomplishments** - Family Literacy, in DeSoto County, was first initiated in 2000 in cooperation with the DeSoto County Library. On June 15, 2001, DeSoto County received a \$50,000 grant from the Barbara Bush Foundation to complement this literacy effort. Initiated in 2004, *Learning Together Family Literacy Academy of DeSoto County*, established by Jeb Bush, is still very much thriving today as a successful family literacy project.

We are currently offering: 1) two large separate rooms for the children and their program, 2) a separate self-contained room, with a teacher, for parents who cannot leave their child to attend adult education classes, and 3) separate ESOL, ABE and GED programs for the parents of the older (2-3-4-year-old) children.

**3) Needs Statement** - Project Learning Together facilitates a program to include our under-served populations (Hispanic families & adults initially performing below an eighth grade level). Our overall target population is families who need assistance in the improvement of basic literacy skills, English language acquisition, or obtaining knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, or assistance in preparing for the GED test. The project will also assist adults in becoming full partners in the educational development of their children. The need for this project is compelling. Funds received by this project will provide financial literacy services to these identified under-served families. Through the course of providing educational services to the adult students, funds from this grant will allow the coordination of a financial literacy component in the instruction. Not having sufficient literacy skills puts the parents at risk of becoming unemployed, receiving governmental assistance, resorting to homelessness, and living in poverty. Their children, however, face even bleaker risks. They are at risk of becoming high school dropouts, teen parents, and unemployed or under-employed as adults (National Center for Family Literacy). It is the intent of this program to provide a financial literacy curriculum so that students are better equipped to provide basic financial skills beginning with their own families.

**4) Objectives –**

Objective	Verification	Steps	Outcome
25 students will complete the <u>Hands on Banking</u> curriculum  Approximately one (1) hour per week, for a minimum of 30 weeks, will be designated as financial literacy instruction	1. <u>Hands on Banking</u> 2. Attendance	1. Provide <u>Hands on Banking</u> instruction 2. Guest speakers 3. Weekly attendance record	1. Completed <u>Hands on Banking</u> curriculum 2. Completed Project-based Learning Activity

**5) Project Description** - As a result of receiving this grant for the 2019-20 year, as a school we embraced the mission to ensure that our students know how to apply information in real-world situations. Since the beginning of the project, students were introduced to a series of projects to complete throughout the duration of this endeavor. These projects connected classroom instruction and activities with their personal lives.

Several guest speakers presented to our students addressing concerns of specific financial related literacy needs in their field of expertise. We feel very fortunate to have established a strong relationship with our local Wells Fargo branch. Representatives from our local branch have visited our classrooms offering for a time of question and answer, including instruction on basic banking services that our made available to our students in the local office.

Additionally, one of our on-site career counselors met with students weekly to address issues relating to living within a monthly budget, using credit cards vs. paying with cash, what are the benefits of a mortgage, etc.

Through collaborating with United Way Suncoast, we had the opportunity to invite The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) into our building to assist with free tax preparation for a short time before we were closed due to COVID-19. While this opportunity was available to all DeSoto County residents, our students were able to comfortably meet and talk with trained counselors asking pertinent tax related questions regarding their individual taxes in an environment that they were familiar with.

Our students compiled a portfolio throughout the duration of the year. In the portfolio, we have included: 3 financial goals and an appropriate timeline for meeting the goals; and an area to track their spending with an opportunity to decide if the spending was out of necessity or desire.

In addition to working with their individual portfolios, students wrote weekly in a journal. Their writings all pertained to their finances and any difficulties, as well as exciting things that are occurring in their lives that pertain to their finances. This proved to be a great opportunity for our students to privately share their feelings and often times their concerns knowing that their teacher will keep the information confidential and provide guidance and advice should the student ask for assistance.

As a school we participated in the 'America Saves Week 2020' promotion where daily themes were presented with the desire to promote different savings strategies. During the promotion, every student made a pledge to 'save money, reduce debt, and build wealth over time'.

**6) Collaboration and Partnerships** - The Learning Together Academy is rich in its ability to portray the ultimate program in family literacy. All four components of a "true" family literacy program are included in the core of the academy. During the project year, the project director, instructional, and support staff are involved in outreach activities.

Examples include:

UF/IFAS Extension Office  
Ministerial Association Mtgs.  
Rotary Club Meetings

School Board Meetings  
School Advisory Council  
Chamber of Commerce

County Fair  
Kiwanis Club Meetings  
Career Pathways Fair

**7) Recognition** - Wells Fargo and the Florida Literacy Coalition will be recognized for its generous support thru the publication of school newsletters, program flyers, brochures and the school website ([www.fsc.desotoschools.com](http://www.fsc.desotoschools.com)).

## 8) Timeline –

Activity	Action Step	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Person Responsible
Secure/order materials, supplies, and guest speakers	Download materials; prepare purchase orders	Sept.2020	Ongoing	Program Director
Begin <u>Hands on Banking</u> Curriculum		Oct.2020	August 2021	Family Literacy/ESOL Adult Instructors, Pre-K Teachers

**9) Evaluation** - Objectives and outcomes of the proposed project will be measured by the student pre- and post- health literacy knowledge assessment test; teacher and student evaluation/feedback forms; and other information relevant to the program's success (class discussions, etc.). In addition to these tools, we will also document and share the group project/activity that the students developed during the year.

## Part II: Budget

### 2020-2021 BUDGET

REVENUE	Amount
Florida Financial Literacy Initiative Grant	\$5000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$5000.00</b>

PROJECT EXPENSES	Grant Amount
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>	
Fam. Literacy Assist.(4hrs./wk X 1 Assistant @\$15.00/hr. X 40 wks.	\$2400.00
Fam. Literacy Assistant benefits (FICA, retirement, unemployment)	\$375.00
<b>Total Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>\$2775.00</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>	
Supplies/instructional materials used to promote financial literacy curriculum	\$1,325.00
Project-based learning activity	\$500.00
Annual Florida Literacy Conference	\$400.00
<b>Total Non-Staff Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,225.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$5000.00</b>

IN-KIND RESOURCES	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Volunteers 8 @ \$24.04/hr. X 450 hrs.	\$86,544.00
Classroom space/Custodial/Maintenance/Etc.	\$12,750.00
<b>TOTAL IN-KIND RESOURCES</b>	<b>\$99,294.00</b>



DeSoto County Literacy Council  
310 W. Whidden Street  
Arcadia, FL 34266  
863-993-1333 Phone or 863-993-9181 Fax

July 20, 2020

Dear Director:

The DeSoto County Literacy Council Inc. (DCLC) supports the *Learning Together* Family Literacy Program in its quest for assistance through the Florida Financial Literacy Grant Initiative 2020-2021. The families that are being touched as a result of *Learning Together* are simply incredible, especially in a county such as ours. Accordingly, the Council has supported the Family Literacy Program since its inception in 2000.

DeSoto County Literacy Council will continue to support this organization with monetary donations. In addition, we have committed to supplying tutors and training for new volunteers. The DCLC has tutor trainers certified through Pro-Literacy America available to train tutors to work with adults and older teens. I personally support this program and I will solicit a vote of support from our members at our next meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Barnes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan Barnes, President  
DeSoto County Literacy Council