ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE BROADBAND ADOPTION

General Information

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration	2. Award Identification Number 12-43-B10501	3. DUNS Number 105964068

4. Recipient Organization

School Board of Miami-Dade County 1450 N.E. 2 Avenue, #931, Miami, FL 33132

5. Current Reporting Period End Date (MM/DD/YYYY) 12-31-2013	6. Is this the last Annual Report of the Award Period? ⦿ Yes ◯ No

7. Certification: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purposes set forth in the award documents.

7a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Certifying Official USER TEST	7c. Telephone (area code, number and extension)
	7d. Email Address
7b. Signature of Certifying Official Submitted Electronically	7e. Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YYYY): 04-15-2015

PROJECT INDICATORS

1. Does your Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) project foster a particular broadband technology or technologies? If so, please describe this technology (or technologies) (600 words or less).

This SBA project mostly fosters Broadband DSL service. Eligible students and their families received 12 months of DSL service from AT&T at no cost (e.g., subsidized by grant funding). The technology utilized by the project is: DSL 1.544 MBps x 256 KBps Fast Access Ultra.

This SBA project also fosters mobile broadband. Households in which AT&T determines cannot be connected via hard line (modem) connections, are connected via wireless Air Cards.

2a. Please list all of the broadband equipment and/or supplies you have purchased during the most recent calendar year using BTOP grant funds or other (matching) funds, including any customer premises equipment or end-user devices. If additional space is needed, please attach a list of equipment and/or supplies. Please also describe how the equipment and supplies have been deployed (100 words or less).

Manufacturer	Item	Unit Cost per Item	Number of Units	Narrative description of how the equipment and supplies were deployed
Acer	brand new netbook (Aspire One)	325	1,296	The hardware (brand new Acer netbook computers) were distributed directly to parents at training/distribution events held at 23 different school site locations in 2012. Parents were eligible to receive the computer once they attended the free Introduction to Technology training course and paid $25 (cash or money order) directly to the vendor.
HP	brand new netbook (HP 1104)	320	2,705	The hardware (brand new HP netbook computers) were distributed directly to parents at training/distribution events held at 37 different school site locations in 2012. There were 14 training/distribution events in Year 2 of the LINK program (during the 2011-2012 school year) and 28 events in Year 3 of the LINK program (during the 2012-2013 school year). Parents were eligible to receive the computer once they attended the free Introduction to Technology training course and paid $25 (cash or money order) directly to the vendor. The Unit Cost per Item is a combined estimate. During the 2011-2012 school year, 426 computers were distributed with a unit cost of $325, and during the 2012-2013 school year, 2,279 computers were distributed (1,989 with a unit cost of $315.80 and 290 with a unit cost of $332.80).
Totals		645	4,001	

Add Equipment	Remove Equipment

2b. To the extent you distribute equipment/supplies to beneficiaries of your project, please describe the equipment/supplies you distribute, the quantities distributed, and the specific populations to whom the equipment/supplies are distributed **(600 words or less).**

In calendar year 2012, the program distributed 4,001 computers (1,722 computers during the 2011-2012 school year and 2,279 computers during the 2012-2013 school year) to eligible students and their families. Participating families who complete the free Introduction to Computers training course receive a computer to take home loaded with software at a cost of $25. A trilingual tutorial video is pre-loaded onto each computer along with anti-virus (Microsoft Essentials) and word-processing software (Open Office). These low-income families are some of the highest-need populations in the District. To be eligible students must be enrolled in the National Free and Reduced Priced Lunch Program. These families received brand new netbook computers to enable students and their parents to get on the Internet. Each of the netbooks are WiFi enabled which allow students to be part of the digital age and experience online resources at their own pace. These portable devices allow students to access the Internet at home, school, or any Wi-Fi hotspot. In the training workshop, participants learn computer basics, how to use the Internet, and how to use District's Parent and Student Portals - valuable online educational resources. On the Portal, Parents can monitor their children's academic progress (view students' grades and assignments) and communicate more easily with their teachers and schools. The Student Portal provides free individualized tutorials that promote learning in subjects such as math and reading.

3. For SBA access and training provided with BTOP grant funds, please provide the information below. Unless otherwise indicated in the instructions, figures should be reported cumulatively from award inception to the end of the most recent calendar year. For each type of training (other than open access), please count only the participants who completed the course.

Types of Access or Training	Number of People Targeted	Number of People Participating	Total Training Hours Offered
Open Lab Access	0	0	0
Multimedia	0	0	0
Office Skills	0	0	0
ESL	0	0	0
GED	0	0	0

Types of Access or Training	Number of People Targeted	Number of People Participating	Total Training Hours Offered
College Preparatory Training	0	0	0
Basic Internet and Computer Use	4,127	4,001	4,001
Certified Training Programs	0	0	0
Other (please specify):	0	0	0
Total	4,127	4,001	4,001

4. Please describe key economic and social successes of your project during the past year, and why you believe the project is successful thus far (600 words or less).

Education is one of the most important issues to address for positive social change. As technology advances at rapid pace, so does the digital divide between those who have access to technology and those who do not. LINK places technology within the reach of those who would ordinarily not be able to afford it or benefit from it – a group that includes a disproportionate number of low-income families and members of minority groups. Although many may take basic computer skills for granted, for those stuck on the wrong side of the digital divide, not having basic digital literacy can be a serious impediment. Access to broadband has become a necessity of modern life. Americans who don't have access to the Internet are increasingly cut off from job opportunities, educational resources, health care information, social networks, even government services. Broadband is critical to improving our educational system. It makes it easier for students and parents to communicate with teachers and helps engage parents in their children's schoolwork – sometimes providing the primary link between families and schools.

As the gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean, Miami truly is global city. Many District students may have ties to family abroad. Technology is a great tool for sharing information and keeping families connected. The District's goal is to promote educational excellence not only during school hours, but also at home by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and unlimited communication. It is essential that students have a basic knowledge of computers, software and the Internet, building technology skills that America needs to compete in the global marketplace of the 21st century. Preparing young people for the future is more than just outfitting the classroom with the latest technology; it's about evolved ways of learning.

This program has been a success thus far and many parents have expressed appreciation for their child receiving a LINK computer. For example, two parents contacted the LINK program via email:

"Wow. I just want to thank each and every one of [you] for making this happen. I'm just overwhelmed at this opportunity to own a computer. All I can say is thank you." – Barbara Goleman Senior High parent, 11/9/12.

"Thank you so much for the computer! It will be put to great use with all the projects and homework coming up! Great program! " – Miami Killian Senior High parent, 12/5/12.

South Miami Senior High School parent contacted LINK program partner, The Parent Academy to express her gratitude. Prior to receiving a computer, her son experienced many challenges. The parent would ride the bus with her son and spend countless hours in the local library. Due to high volume, the library has a two-hour maximum use time per computer and many of her son's assignments required longer. Often it would get late and her son would not be able to complete his work. However, now her son is very happy with his new computer and is able to download programs to complete his assignments, particularly with Language Arts and Math. Motivated and stimulated by the computer, her son is now active on the M-DCPS Student Portal – a free resource for students to engage in customized educational software. Her son no longer needs to go to the library to get online access to research his homework and complete school assignments. Computer assisted learning is reducing his frustration level and is providing her son a patient, noncritical, motivating teacher and tutor. The parent also regularly logs onto her Parent Portal account to check her son's grades, assignments, and attendance.

5. Please estimate the level of broadband adoption in the community(ies) and/or area(s) your project serves, explain your methodology for estimating the level of broadband adoption, and explain changes in the broadband adoption level, if any, since the project began.

5a. Adoption Level (%):	Narrative description of level, methodology, and change from the level at project inception (600 words or less).
74	Exact statics are unavailable as ISPs consider this as proprietary information. Therefore, we used information collected from the program in order to estimate adoption levels throughout the Miami-Dade community. We considered the number of households that were eligible to receive 12 months of free Internet service (1,722 households) and compared that to the number of connections provided by AT&T (1,044 households). We also included an estimated number of households that already had Internet service prior to the program (estimate a third of those eligible households not connected through the program already had Internet service). However, many households refused service and/or did not allow AT&T technicians onsite to establish connections. This was unexpected and the exact reason(s) remains unknown. A possible explanation could have something to do with a sort of "too good to be true" mentality or possibly not wanting their name and/or address associated with any sort of government institution (like a school) possibly due to a questionable immigration status. Since the program began, technology has continued to evolve. With Wi-Fi capabilities include in each of

5a. Adoption Level (%):	Narrative description of level, methodology, and change from the level at project inception (600 words or less).
	the netbooks distributed as part of this program, students do not necessarily need to be at home in order to be connected to the Internet. They can use the netbook to connect at school or at any Wi-Fi hotspot.

6. Please describe the two most common barriers to broadband adoption that you have experienced this year in connection with your project. What steps did you take to address them (600 words or less)?

1.) Surprisingly we discovered that a higher number than expected of Free/Lunch Reduced households already had Internet service at home. Therefore, it was challenging for the program to provide as many broadband connections as initially anticipated. Although the majority of households do not already have broadband service at home and are receiving free (subsidized) service through this grant, the remaining households are considered as "users" rather than "subscribers".

2.) Lack of digital literacy training combined with high monthly costs is another common barrier to broadband adoption. If parents do not understand the benefits of being online they will not place the value on paying for such a utility for the student. We attempted to overcome this by providing free digital literacy training and also providing one year of free Broadband Internet service. The intention is that if parents can experience the value of Internet at home, they may be willing to take on another bill, if possible.

7. To the extent that you have made any subcontracts or sub grants, please provide the number of subcontracts or sub grants that have been made to socially and economically disadvantaged small business (SDB) concerns as defined by section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 647, as modified by NTIA's adoption of an alternative small business size standard for use in BTOP. Please also provide the names of these SDB entities. (150 words or less)

Not applicable.

8. Please describe any best practices / lessons learned that can be shared with other similar BTOP projects (900 words or less).

The best practices and innovations of LINK are replicable to other organizations. One of the first challenges LINK faced was how to best engage parents. Miami-Dade County is a large urban community with many newly arrived immigrants. For various reasons, many parents are not as involved with their children's education as they would like to be. Due to language issues, students often have to do their parents' jobs of navigating the school system. To overcome this, LINK partnered with The Parent Academy (TPA), a M-DCPS initiative that builds partnerships between home, school, and the District so that all students can be successful. TPA has tailored its approach to serve a large non-English-speaking community. All LINK materials are trilingual (English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole) as are TPA-led trainings. Challenges to target households do not end with technology. Many are interested in learning more about other services that the District provides such as tutoring, counseling services, and after school care. By partnering with organizations such as The Parent Academy, parents have access to one stop shopping that can provide solutions to many of these challenges.

Like many school Districts nationwide, M-DCPS continually seeks to provide innovative technologies while making the most of limited budget dollars. LINK provides a small, less expensive, and durable netbook for use at home and school. The parents are required to pay a nominal one-time charge ($25) to receive the computer. Through this contribution parents help to maximize program dollars and become an invested program partner. The $25 empowers parents and students with an inherent pride of ownership in their new computer. Further, it helps to reduce the stigma associated with another government handout or free giveaway. The combined impact over the life of the program has allowed more than 600 additional students to participate in the program that wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity due to limited funding. By making the basic hardware available to low-income students, LINK seeks to bridge the digital divide and afford all students the benefits of educational technology.

We have found that a single tool can transform students' learning. These computers provide a consistent learning environment for students as they use computers to learn in school during the day, and with the support of this program, they can now use computers to continue their learning at home as well. We have found that despite language and cultural barriers, students are teaching their parents and other family members how to use the computer . This program has allowed parents to have access to the M-DCPS Portal where parents can have access to students grades, attendance, and email access to teachers and administrators.

A lesson that we are continually learning is that availability of computers/hardware has been key. Due to the lack of availability in this economy combined with the ever evolving technology industry (particularly the increased popularity of the tablet/iPad market) our vendors have seen that netbook manufacturing is declining. Flexibility is key as technology is ever changing. The program has evolved from distributing refurbished desktops to distributing refurbished netbooks to likely distributing new netbooks in 2012. By adapting to the changes in available technology out in the market, we have been able to continue the program and provide more recent technology to our students.