

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Opportunity Online Hardware Grant’s goal was to increase the percentage of libraries regularly investing in and upgrading their computer hardware every four years. To that end, the Foundation chose to focus on libraries that needed funding to improve technology access to low-income patrons, and needed to build greater capacity for generating sustainable funding streams. The grant program targeted hardware upgrades and advocacy training to reach those goals. Hardware upgrades provided funds to replace aging workstations with a projected cost of \$2,600 per workstation, assuming a four year lifespan for hardware and peripherals, and cost of maintenance, software upgrades and training until the end of the life cycle. This became known as the total cost of ownership. In tandem, the foundation granted to the American Library Association’s Public Library Association to develop an advocacy training program, available at in-person conference style training as well as online training modules to grantees, to support the capacity of staff to advocate directly in their communities to raise the required match. The training is called *Turning the Page*.

In South Dakota, 23 libraries (24 library outlets in total) participated in the grant, resulting in 111 computers valued at \$213,200. The original grant period was from 2009 – 2012.

Upon successful completion of all original required elements of the Opportunity Online Hardware Grant, there remained a balance of \$12,539.62 in administrative funds.

SDSL staff desired to provide a new type of tablet computer to libraries as a “kick-starter” for public accessing computers (PAC). Tablets designed specifically for children are still new to the market. While libraries in South Dakota have already begun the shift away from traditional PACs to laptops and tablets for patrons to use, tablets for designed specifically for children are as of yet an unknown quantity. This is an innovative approach for PACs in South Dakota’s libraries. Of the tablets currently available, the Nabi line is one of most highly rated for both the features and durability. Drop test conducted by Nabi labs comparing their product to a Kindle, a Nook, and an iPad were particularly impressive.

To make the most of the remaining funds, each library will be receiving one of the following: 1 Nabi Jr. (ages 3-6), 1 Nabi2 (ages 7-10), and 1 Nabi XD (ages 11-14). The set is valued at \$530 per library for a grand total of \$12,190. Remaining funds are being spent to cover mailing costs.

Participating libraries

A.H. BROWN PUBLIC LIBRARY (MOBRIDGE)
ALEXANDER MITCHELL PUBLIC LIBRARY (ABERDEEN)
ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
ARMOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY
BELLE FOURCHE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BISON PUBLIC LIBRARY
DEADWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
EMMA BURNHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY (FREDERICK)
FAULK COUNTY LIBRARY (FAULKTON)
GRANT COUNTY, REVILLO BRANCH

GRANT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN BRANCH (MILBANK)
IHANKTONWAN COMMUNITY LIBRARY (MARTY)
KIMBALL PUBLIC LIBRARY
LEOLA PUBLIC LIBRARY
M. P. BEEBE MEMORIAL LIBRARY (IPSWICH)
MOODY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY (FLANDREAU)
PHOEBE APPERSON HEARST FREE LIBRARY (LEAD)
REVEREND MARTIN BIEBER PUBLIC LIBRARY (BOWDLE)
SELBY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
SINTE GLESKA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (MISSION)
SISSETON MEMORIAL LIBRARY
VERMILLION PUBLIC LIBRARY
WAGNER PUBLIC LIBRARY
WHITEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY