LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT

FIVE-YEAR PLAN

October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2012

Introduction

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is a federal program for all types of libraries and is administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). LSTA requires that each state library agency present a five-year plan. The following document covers the federal fiscal years from October 1, 2007–September 30, 2012.

Since LSTA funds are used to support all types of libraries, the following describes the current status of the state's libraries.

Virginia Libraries

- **The Library of Virginia**. The Library of Virginia (LVA), established in 1823, serves as the archival and research library for the commonwealth and has the responsibility "to give direction, assistance, and counsel to all libraries in the Commonwealth." Furthermore, the Library of Virginia is empowered "to engage in such activities in aid of city, county, town, regional and other public libraries as will serve to develop the library system of the Commonwealth... and to administer and distribute state and federal funds in accordance with law and its own regulations." The Librarian of Virginia reports to a policymaking board of fifteen members appointed by the Governor. The collection of LVA includes 808,459 volumes, 412,049 AV materials, 678,789 federal documents, and 102 million documents/archival items. Exemplary collections include records of Virginia government from the colonial period to the present including gubernatorial papers from Patrick Henry forward; a collection of original records from Virginia's county

courts; a growing collection of private papers, including letters, diaries, journals, and other records documenting the everyday life of Virginians; and an extensive genealogical collection related to families with roots in the commonwealth. With the assistance of LSTA and other funds, LVA offers an extensive collection of online materials, unique to our collection, and now available 24/7.

- **Virginia's Public Libraries**. Ninety-one public library systems serve the 7,576,278 residents. When you compare Virginia libraries to other states using statewide statistics, Virginia is clearly average. However, there are vast differences in the levels of services and resources provided due to widely varying economic and demographic conditions. According to library consultants Himmel and Wilson, they have never seen such disparity in one state between libraries comparable to the "best of the best" and those that are substandard in every respect. Statewide services, made possible with LSTA funds, are of enormous assistance in setting a basic service level. Due to leveraging LSTA, Infopowering the Commonwealth, and Gates Library Initiative funds and activities, all public library outlets have high-speed Internet connections in the approximately 350 buildings.

- **Virginia's Academic Libraries.** Virginia supports some of the largest and most distinguished academic libraries in the world within its system of higher education. The 39 state-assisted colleges, universities, and community colleges in the commonwealth, along with Virginia's private colleges and universities, created the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA) in 1994. VIVA's mission is to "provide, in an equitable, cooperative and cost-effective manner, enhanced access to library and information resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia's non-profit academic libraries serving the higher education community." VIVA acquires digital library resources for the VIVA community, provides enhanced and expedited interlibrary loan services, and creates a forum for collaboration that has generated significant efficiencies and new resources for Virginia higher education. Among other recognitions, VIVA was awarded the Governor's Technology Gold Medal for Government Service in 2003. In support of the award, the chair of the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia stated that "In our opinion, VIVA represents the single most important technological development in Virginia higher education in the past decade; moreover, we believe that VIVA is one of the most

significant developments of any kind in Virginia government over this period."

- **Virginia's School Libraries**. There are more than 2,400 public and private school libraries in the commonwealth. Due to different economic and demographic/geographic conditions, the school library media centers present extreme differences in service and resource capacity similar to the public library situation. There seems to be little support at the statewide level for school media centers. The vacant school library media coordinator position will not be filled.
- **Virginia's Special Libraries**. There are a wide variety of special libraries ranging from sophisticated research facilities operated by federal agencies, law firms, and manufacturers to small hospital and local business collections. Electronically accessible resources developed by the Library of Virginia have drawn compliments from many special libraries.

Mission

Vision Statement

The Library of Virginia will be the commonwealth's leader in statewide library and archival information services and the world's foremost research and educational institution dedicated to the history and culture of Virginia.

Mission Statement

The Library of Virginia provides and preserves unique and comprehensive information resources and services for the citizens of the commonwealth and the world.

The Library of Virginia recognizes and appreciates the many analogous purposes between its mission and LSTA. Historically, LSTA funds have assisted LVA in achieving its mission. For this five-year period, the funds will continue to support needs in all of Virginia's libraries.

Identified Need #1

The library community needs to build strong leadership skills, to foster innovation and equity, to build cooperation and collaboration, and to cultivate increased visibility and stronger advocacy for libraries.

Needs Statement

The *Code of Virginia* §42.1-1 grants LVA the responsibility "to give direction, assistance, and counsel to all libraries in the Commonwealth, to all communities which may propose to establish libraries, and to all persons interested in public libraries as to the means of establishment and administration of such libraries, selection of books, retrieval systems, cataloging, maintenance, and other details of library management, and to conduct such inspections as are necessary." Furthermore, the Library of Virginia is empowered "to engage in such activities in aid of city, county, town, regional and other public libraries as will serve to develop the library system of the Commonwealth... and to administer and distribute state and federal funds in accordance with law and its own regulations."

The Library of Virginia has a leadership role in helping facilitate cooperation among all types of libraries in seeking to develop equitable services to all Virginians. LVA works closely with the public library community as we strive toward meeting Thomas Jefferson's goal of a public library in every county. The structure of public libraries in Virginia is relatively recent, with many libraries established since the 1970s. Issues of governance, funding, and library administration remain, even though the newer issues of information overload and Web 2.0 dominate the meetings. Of the many different libraries in the commonwealth, public libraries serve the greatest number and types of users.

The Library of Virginia collaborates with the 700 public and private museums throughout the state, which in turn partner with local and state tourism offices. LVA works with the academic libraries via participation in the State Council of Higher Education Library Advisory Committee and the VIVA project. LVA works with the K–12 community through the Find It Virginia database project, through youth services initiatives, and encourages partnerships with public libraries. LVA is well represented in professional association activities, including, but not limited to, the Virginia Library Association (VLA), the Virginia Educational Media Association (VEMA), and the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM). Continuing these partnerships and seeking other communities of interest is necessary if libraries are to meet the challenges posed by modern society.

Reevaluation of LVA services, relationships, and leadership functions will no doubt occur with the appointment of a new Librarian of Virginia, effective July 1, 2007.

Goal 1

The Library of Virginia will create opportunities for library leaders to build skills and will provide leadership and direct support for planning, evaluation, collaboration, and professional development that foster and advance libraries' innovative responses to community needs that address any of the six LSTA priorities.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Evaluation/Targets

By 2009 complete revision of *Planning for Library Excellence.*

By 2009 complete review of all public library long-range plans.

Annually assist libraries in developing long-range plans and technology plans.

Conduct a formal planning workshop every other year. Conduct a post-workshop survey/evaluation of workshop participants as to enhanced services resulting from the planning process.

By 2012 at least 50% of libraries engaged in long-range planning will report finding *Planning for Library Excellence* a useful tool in their planning process.

By 2012 complete and disseminate revision of *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook* to provide guidance in all issues of trustee boardsmanship.

Annually review constituent information/assistance requests from all types of libraries to determine patterns and identify topical issues for proper follow up.

Annually assist libraries with participation in the E-Rate Program.

As necessary, offer training in outcome-based evaluation processes as part of a program of targeted competitive grants.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome-based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

Activities

The following activities will address one or more of the six LSTA priorities.

Update *Planning for Library Excellence.*

Continue to review long-range plans from Virginia public libraries.

Collect and disseminate statistics for use in improving library services.

Update *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook*.

Continue to serve as the "librarian's reference librarian" by answering requests for assistance from users including libraries and citizens.

Monitor E-rate program including review and certification of technology plans.

Biennially collect and report on the Acceptable Internet Use policies of the public libraries.

Serve as agent/contact for SOLINET and statewide resource sharing.

Expand collaboration with all library communities and appropriate agencies, organizations, etc., to achieve progress in all other LSTA goals.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration.

Outcome-based evaluation training will be offered throughout the state for subgrant projects that require such evaluation.

Identified Need #2

All Virginians, regardless of age, location, social or physical condition, or level of intellectual achievement require equitable access to quality library and information resources.

Needs Statement

As previously stated, there are great differences among the school libraries and among the public libraries due to the diverse economic and demographic/geographic conditions. In *Planning for Library Excellence*, public libraries are grouped into planning profiles based on similarities. Profiles 1 and 5 are compared below:

Profile 1	Profile 5
Library Size: Small	Library Size: Large
Setting Rural and Towns	Setting: Urban and Large Suburban Counties
Population: Low	Population: High
Diversity: Limited	Diversity: Extensive
Level of Service: Limited	Level of Service: Limited
Service Responses: 1 or 2	Service Responses: 5 or more
Outlets: One Site (Median)	Outlets: Nine Sites (Median)
ALA MLS: 1	ALA MLS: More than 30
Operating Expenditures per capita: Median = $7.64	Operating Expenditures per capita: Median = $30.65
Materials Expenditures per capita: Median = $1.49	Materials Expenditures per capita: Median = $4.99
Staff Expenditures per capita: Median = $4.55	Staff Expenditures per capita: Median = $22.07

Fairfax County Public Library serves a population in excess of 1,030,700 individuals in 402 square miles near Washington, D.C. Highland County Public Library serves a population of less than 2,500 individuals in 416 square miles on the border of West Virginia. The two counties are nearly identical in geographic size, but their demographics represent the state extremes.

In *Inventing the Future of Public Library Service in Virginia*, Himmel and Wilson report:

> "If one sought a single word to capture the state of public library services in Virginia, it would have to be 'uneven.' Himmel and Wilson have worked on statewide studies of library services in more than twenty states. The spectrum of public library services in Virginia is among the widest we have witnessed."

K–12 school funding also represents extremes. The statewide average cost per pupil (all funding sources) for FY06 was $9,755, but Arlington County in northern Virginia spent $18,242 per pupil while Warren County in the northwest spent only $5,287. Per pupil expenditures for Warren County actually decreased between FY01 and FY06 by $613. For local funds only, the data is similarly spread. Lee County, deep in the southwestern portion of the state, spent only $1,419, while Falls Church, an affluent city in northern Virginia, spent $14,587 per pupil. Differences in the school media center resources mirror these extremes.

The *Daily Press* reports, in a January 4, 2007, article "Virginia tops in education report: A national report says the commonwealth leads the nation but may have hidden trouble spots,"

> "Statewide statistics place Virginia above Connecticut, Minnesota and New Jersey based on 13 factors that can affect the health and prosperity of residents from age 3 up through adulthood. The state also ranks fourth nationally based on several academic indicators, such as 4th- and 8th-grade scores in math and reading, which were above the national average in 2005.

> "While the state's graduation rate was about 5 percentage points above the national average of 69.6 percent, the rate dropped by about 3 percentage points starting in 2000, while the nation's graduation rate rose by that amount over that period. The poverty gap among Virginia's students also stayed above the national average in 2005 and increased by 2 percentage points between 2003 and 2005."

Infopowering Virginia and the Find It Virginia database have been identified as a key program to address equitable access to information. In their report, Himmel and Wilson indicate

"One bright spot in the equity of access issue is 'Find It Virginia.' The statewide licensing of a package of quality electronic information services offers residents of all parts of the Commonwealth extremely valuable, comparable resources. The importance of this program cannot be overstated."

However, Find It Virginia needs increased resources in science, history, and literature to support Virginia's Standards of Learning and provide a more balanced and equitable collection of statewide resources.

The Library of Virginia is a key guardian of our heritage as the state archives and as a critical resource for historical and genealogical research. It is imperative that these resources be available to Virginia's students and scholars. To ensure relevant and equitable access to quality library and information resources, the Library of Virginia must continue to select, develop, preserve, present, and maintain unique Virginia-related collections in close cooperation with community public library, museum, historic site, and other cultural and educational organizations. History is one of Virginia's leading assets, both in defining ourselves and in attracting tourism. It is particularly critical that the Library and its project partners continue to refine cost-effective collection selection, processing, and preservation methodologies and to effectively use digital technology to increase access to these resources.

Goal 2

All Virginians will have improved access to quality library and information resources and services that help develop skills for and provide support for responding to changing needs, opportunities, and environments.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Evaluation/Targets

Annually monitor and report the use of the Find It Virginia resources.

Biennially survey users of the Find It Virginia resources to assess how resources are being used and determine whether resources are meeting needs.

Annually monitor and report the use of the unique Virginia resources.

By 2011, survey online Virginia's social studies teachers about impact of the availability of these primary resource materials on their teaching and their students' research.

Activities

Choose and license comprehensive databases for full-text electronic resources for the residents of Virginia. Continuously review existing database content and prioritize needs for new or different resources.

Schedule, publicize, and conduct workshops in effective use of the databases for library staff.

Continue the reformatting of selected Virginia-related collections, particularly Civil War–era diaries and collections of letters set in Virginia currently owned and housed at the private Huntington Collection in California.

Continue to reformat Virginia-related collections loaned by institutions, newspaper publishers, and individuals. This would include, too, the Library's efforts to reformat as many as 450 Virginia newspaper titles scattered among local libraries, historical societies, and collectors—all otherwise "lost" to research until copied and available.

Continue a video reformatting project as funds are available. This year, for the first time, we began to reformat archival film footage of state government activity, political campaigns, service announcements, etc., that was rapidly deteriorating and too fragile for use.

Investigate options, plan, and implement competitive grant programs (as funds allow) to continue to improve access to underserved persons and

those with difficulty using a library, such as, but not limited to, the disabled, visually handicapped, and individuals living below the poverty level, etc.

Identified Need #3

Virginia youth require access to both traditional and technological library resources and services, as well as the skills to use those resources and services effectively.

Needs Statement

In Virginia, children are the group most likely to live in poverty. The number of children receiving free and reduced lunches at school is 394,860 or one-third (33%) of the school-aged population of approximately 1.2 million. The average poverty level in Virginia for all age groups is 10% and the average aggregate number of children living in poverty under the age of 18 is 18%.

Despite the initiation of educational standards several years ago, significant numbers of children fail to meet minimum educational goals. In 2005, 16% of students in 3rd grade failed to pass the English test, 13% failed in 5th grade, and 22% in 8th grade.

According to the National Center for Education in 2003, the poverty level of students sets the social context for their progress and achievement in school. In the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades, the average mathematics scores of students decline as the percentage of students who receive free or reduced-price lunch in the school increases.

Assistance must also be given to families, as low-income parents often lack the education and ability to fulfill their role as their child's first teacher. Children whose parents are at low literacy levels are not able to provide basic emergent literacy skills to their children, who then enter kindergarten without the necessary abilities for educational progress.

Goal 3

All Virginia youth will experience improved traditional and technological library services and programs that are targeted to enhance academic

performance and to develop the strong information literacy skills necessary for the digital age.

LSTA Purpose

Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; targeting library services to persons of diverse geographic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Evaluation/Targets

The annual statewide summer reading program will expand by developing partnerships with agencies serving children with disabilities and with public schools, especially those with high percentages of children receiving free and reduced-price lunches. Participation target of twenty-five percent of the total population aged 5–14 will be achieved. Libraries will fill out annual evaluations, and surveys will be obtained from a sample group of participants and their parents.

Training in providing family literacy services and developing community partnerships will be presented to staff at least every other year. Family literacy services provided by libraries will be tracked and participating families will fill out evaluations.

A minimum of two training sessions will be offered to library staff serving children and youth each year.

Activities:

Offer a statewide summer reading program for children and teens.

Improve promotion of statewide summer reading program to underserved groups.

Provide training to libraries about family literacy programs and services.

Continue working with the Governor's Smart Beginnings initiative.

Offer workshops to libraries on how to help low-literacy parents develop skills for parenting literacy.

Assist libraries in partnering with the Family Literacy Consortium for improving patron access to literacy services.

Provide information to libraries on how to serve children with disabilities and network with service providers for improved access.

Promote reading aloud through statewide celebration of Read Aloud to a Child Week.

Provide training to libraries to improve their curriculum support capabilities.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program with priority for collaborative projects.

Identified Need #4

Library staff and trustees need on-going training to foster the continuous development and improvement of library services statewide.

Needs Statement

The need for on-going training results from a combination of circumstances: the need to constantly learn new skills and/or the need to train new hires since staff turnover is frequent. Virginia has no library school and thus no obvious partnerships for continuing library education. LVA works with the Virginia Library Association, SOLINET, the Virginia

Educational Media Association, Virginia Association of Museums, and others to offer workshops across the state. Furthermore, due to the size of the state, it is necessary to offer the same workshops in multiple locations.

Of the public libraries, approximately 36% have no professional librarian or only one professional librarian. Overwhelmingly the front-line staff that first represents the agency and serves the user relies on training provided directly or indirectly by LVA. With the looming retirements of the baby boomers, there is great need to train mid-level managers in skills needed to become effective public library directors.

The public schools have similar issues in library training and frequently seek cooperative venues. Their certification procedures already require continuing education credits for re-certification.

Goal 4

Appropriate library staff will have access to training opportunities that address the six LSTA priorities in order to improve library services, make effective use of new technologies, implement planning and evaluation programs that incorporate leading contemporary methodologies and skills, and create exceptional cutting-edge library services for all Virginians.

LSTA Purpose

Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Evaluation/Targets

Annually sponsor or co-sponsor a workshop in each of the six VLA geographic regions. Topics will be determined by a continuing education assessment and by evaluations done after each workshop.

At least 50% of workshop participants responding will indicate using at least two new skills.

Annually, at least 60% of the libraries with boards will send a representative to the trustee workshops.

Annually, at least 70% of the directors will attend or send a representative to the directors meeting.

At least 50% of the responding directors who attend the directors meeting will indicate services to their communities were improved as a result of information gained at the workshop.

By 2008, complete a continuing education needs assessment.

By 2008, develop a continuing education section on the public library extranet that includes a calendar of activities in Virginia and link to distance education opportunities.

Activities

The following activities will address one or more of the six LSTA priorities.

Annually offer a minimum of three workshops for public library trustees across the state. Topics will be determined by annual assessment including evaluations from each workshop.

Develop an annual continuing education calendar that publicizes opportunities in Virginia. Although emphasis will be on training sponsored by LVA and funded by LSTA, it is also important to publicize all continuing education training being offered.

Investigate various options available for online training for library staff. This would involve research and testing different online training suppliers.

Annually sponsor or co-sponsor a workshop in each of the six VLA regions. Topics will be determined by an annual continuing education assessment and by evaluations done after each workshop.

Follow up at a pre-determined interval after a workshop to gather information about how items learned have been used in participant's workplace.

Annually sponsor a public library directors meeting to discuss current library issues, provide topical programs, and request feedback on LVA activities including the LSTA program.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration in continuing education.

Evaluation Plan

Each goal has evaluation targets. A variety of evaluation methods are utilized in these targets such as usage statistics, user surveys, workshop evaluations, and post workshop follow-up surveys. Targets will be evaluated yearly and reported in the state program annual report. Further information is contained in Monitoring Procedures section.

Stakeholder Involvement / Summary of Planning and Implementation Procedures

As permitted under the federal law, an LSTA Advisory Council has been appointed to assist the Librarian of Virginia. Representatives include academic (public, private), K–12, public, special, institutional, and museum libraries. The council meets no less than annually . Council members met in January to discuss priorities for the new plan. LSTA Council reviewed the draft plan during late April and May. The LSTA Advisory Council also plans the categories, reviews, and scores all competitive grants when offered. The Council chairman presents recommendations at the meetings of the Library of Virginia Board.

The draft plan was widely distributed to and feedback solicited from the library community through professional organizations such as the Virginia Educational Media Association, Virginia Library Association, and Virginia Public Library Directors Association.

The Library of Virginia works very closely with the various library communities at all times. Each community is made aware of LVA activities, including LSTA, by LVA staff attendance at meetings and through Web sites, presentations, and special contacts. The following are some of the Virginia library groups regularly contacted by LVA. The Virginia Library Association, representing all types of libraries, provides

legislative advocacy. The Virginia Public Library Directors Association (VPLDA) is also an active voice. The Virginia Educational Media Association (VEMA) serves the school libraries and hosts an annual and regional conferences each year. The library committee of the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) and the VIVA Steering Committee represent academic libraries. The Special Library Association is active as well. SWING (Southwest Information Networking Group) is a multi-type organization. Public library directors groups meet regularly in each region to discuss common issues. Among these groups are the Capitol Area Library Directors (CALD), Tidewater Area Library Directors (TALDC), Three Rivers Library Directors (Northern Neck region), Mountain 6 (Upper Valley), Wild Turkey (Southwestern), Washington Institutional Library Directors (WILD), and Southside Area Library Directors (SALAD).

LVA's Library Development and Networking (LDND) and Collection Management Services (CMS) staff are involved in many phases of LSTA projects. Site visits, planning visits, and training take place throughout the year.

Communication Procedures

LVA maintains an active Web site (http://www.lva.virginia.gov) to communicate "Who We Are, What We Have, and What We Do." Information on LSTA (and all library initiatives) can be found, logically, under "What We Do." Continuous development and refinement of the Web site is planned. LSTA materials posted (or to be posted) include LSTA Advisory Council minutes, Evaluation of the 1997–2001 Plan, Five Year Plan 2002–2007, Evaluation of the 2002–2007 Plan, and links to the IMLS including LSTA legislation. Our annual evaluation, lists of approved grants, and similar pertinent information will be posted.

LVA also maintains a public library extranet (http://www.vpl.lib.va.us) for faster and more informal communication. Information about LSTA can be found under "Funding and Grants Sources."

As noted above, LVA staff members are very active in statewide programs. Most committees or speaking engagements include a topic on "State Library Updates." A great deal of feedback is thus received directly from the users.

Other opportunities to communicate include posting to the various listservs maintained by the library groups and by LVA.

Monitoring Procedures

Monitoring remains both an ongoing and specific process. Ongoing monitoring includes the types of activities listed above and regular contact with the library communities. Specific activities include the annual report, LSTA Advisory Council meetings, and reports from the subgrantees if there are subgrants.

Both output and outcome measurements have been cited throughout this document. As part of the annual reporting process, LVA will determine and report progress toward the goals as necessary. As part of the planned five-year evaluation, LVA will undertake a mid-term review to be sure that the most worthy needs are still being addressed. Any substantial changes to the five-year plan will be submitted to IMLS for review, as required.