

Making a difference @your library™



Nebraska Library Services and Technology Act Plan for Library & Information Services

2003-2007

Five-Year Evaluation Report

Nebraska Library Commission

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March 2007



This publication was supported in whole or in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State of Nebraska

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Introduction

The Nebraska Library Commission's 2003 – 2007 long range plan – Making a Difference @ your library™ – was conceived in part following a project that involved Library Commission staff visiting 269 public libraries in Nebraska in a fifteen-month period. Each visit included discussions with library personnel about the impact federal and state grants have had on services and programs. Library Commission staff collected stories and data about local library service successes and challenges and other community resources and support venues.

Each visit also included a community dialogue session, attended overall by hundreds of Nebraskans, representing library customers, members of Friends and Foundation groups, community and county officials, and other interested community representatives. The data collected at these dialogue sessions were analyzed to determine prevailing statewide trends and issues, and to identify the existing and anticipated needs for library and information services listed below.

Programs and services:

- materials, services, and personnel to meet growing multi-cultural diversity;
- accessible space for technology and community meeting opportunities;
- increased staffing;
- more knowledgeable staff;
- increased hours at local library facilities;
- programming for people of all ages; and,
- remote access to local, regional, and statewide library resources.

Knowledge, skills and abilities:

- computer technology, including Web, database, office suite software, and digitization;
- ability to work and succeed in local, regional and state political arenas;
- community assessment;
- ability to locate grant opportunities and write successful grant applications;
- maximizing use of subscription databases;
- staff development and volunteer recruitment and training;
- long range and strategic planning;
- marshalling advocates;
- leadership, budgeting, and outreach; and,
- knowledge of marketing and public relations.

The Making a difference @ your library™ initiative has had significant and positive results, some anticipated and many not. The technology evolution has enabled new and creative approaches to education for library workers, new and effective library services, and support for the management and delivery processes critical to service delivery. Websites have been revamped and re-tooled to offer easier to find and easier to use information resources.

During the nearly four year period of the Nebraska Library Commission's long range plan, significant progress has made in improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of library workers. The Commission's five-year report documents numerous training initiatives – Now hiring @ your library™, scholarships and financial aid, online courses, Nebraska community colleges Library Technical Assistant program, professional library science education, revamped online resources and tools for educational program management, and more.

The five-year report includes in-depth coverage of the revision process and outcomes for Commission's *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* program. The Guidelines provide a framework for library service improvements and a device for measurement.

Library Services and Technology Act funds have aided a variety of library service and technology projects described throughout the five-year report. Clearly, LSTA funds make a significant difference in elevating and enhancing library services throughout Nebraska. Making a positive difference requires multi-faceted, broad-based and collaborative approaches to building the resources, capabilities and service delivery methods of Nebraska libraries. The Nebraska Library Commission's five-year report describes the goals, activities, strategies and results.

Goal 1: Nebraska library personnel will have the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to provide quality library and information services for all Nebraskans.

People make the difference and the Nebraska Library Commission has given priority to providing the information, training, advising, information and resources needed to support the work of Nebraska library personnel and to address the need for recruitment and renewal of library workers. Many accomplishments have been made during the 2003 – 2007 period.

There are more than a thousand library workers in Nebraska libraries. Their job performance is directly related to the kind and quality of library services offered in Nebraska. One of the more significant successes of the past several years is the variety and quality of education and training provided for Nebraska library personnel. The Nebraska Library Commission, the six regional library systems, Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Educational Media Association have, individually and in combination, conducted hundreds of training sessions in recent years on a wide variety of topics on traditional and contemporary library related topics. The number and variety of training options have grown steadily with the introduction of new technologies. The factors of space and time have been reduced as barriers to training. Web based training, training on demand, online courses, distributed education along with the traditional on-site group and person-to-person methods are used for training on an on-going basis.

A success within a success is the creation of a new formal training program for library workers. A collaborative effort of Nebraska's community colleges, the Nebraska Library Commission, regional library systems, the University of Nebraska at Omaha library science education program, and others. The new community college based program is now providing exceptional training for library workers who seek more in-depth and broad based training. The program provides a step beyond the "Basic Skills" training for public librarian certification that continues to be offered on an on-going basis. It also provides a step in the continuum pre-baccalaureate education. Financial aid provided by the Nebraska Library Commission has also helped increase the number of students and the potential pool of library workers requiring skills and competencies.

Librarians have new online resources and tools for use of data for planning and management purposes. The Library Commission licenses Bibliostat Connect and Bibliostat Collect for online reporting, compilation, management, analysis and reporting of library data. The Nebraska Library Commission's Omnibase is an internally developed online system which is updated regularly with data submitted by public libraries using Bibliostat Collect, as well as through other updating activities. The information in this Omnibase also feeds the library directory available on the Library Commission Web site.

1A. Provide library personnel with targeted continuing education, training and grants to meet the needs identified through the Making a Difference @ your library™ project, and other needs assessments.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Library personnel will be better able to meet the changing needs of their customers.

2. Library personnel will have multiple options for access to continuing education and training.
3. Library personnel will be able to use online data tools to analyze income, expenditure and service information, and to evaluate and compare local data with that of regional, state and national peers.
4. Personnel in NEBASE member libraries will use existing and new OCLC products to improve customer service.
5. Library personnel will provide better reference service locally.
6. Library personnel will have the ability to play a more integral role in community and economic development by providing strategic information.
7. Libraries will receive increased support as a result of the strategic use of information.

The Nebraska Library Commission plans, provides and sponsors several dozen continuing education programs annually. Commission staff collaborates with Nebraska's six regional library systems, the Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Educational Media Association, along with other organizations, to offer timely and topical training. A variety of formats are used including on-site training at locations throughout the state, online programs, satellite downlinks, and individual instruction. Evaluations collected from participants provide a sense of training effectiveness and usefulness, and perspectives on additional training needs.

Year	# CE Events	Total Attendance at CE Events
2002/03	162	2,066
2003/04	177	1,137
2004/05	173	4,112
2005/06	243	7,021

The Library Commission administers a public librarian certification program to encourage on-going continuing education for library workers. Online resources and tools have been created to readily identify available educational programs, register for training events, and manage programs.

The Nebraska Library Commission has maintained a license for use of Bibliostat Connect and Collect to obtain data from Nebraska public libraries and to compile the data in formats useful for comparison and analysis. The Commission provides training in the use of these data services. We prepared DVDs of training offered by Informata staff, and send these as supplemental training materials to libraries upon request.



1B. Create a task force to develop recommendations that address Nebraska library personnel recruitment and retention needs. (**Note: This Goal/Activity was selected for in-depth reporting**)

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. A meeting of statewide and regional library organization representatives (Nebraska Library Association, Nebraska Educational Media Association, State Advisory Council on Libraries, Regional Library Systems, and the Nebraska Library Commission) will be convened to develop a charge for the task force on library personnel recruitment and retention.
2. A task force of five to seven members will be identified and recruited to assess library personnel and recruitment and retention issues.
3. A task force report with action recommendations will be developed.

Outcomes:

Development of a Recruitment Task Force

The Nebraska Library Commission convened a broad-based Recruitment and Retention Task Force representing library staff and supporters from all types of libraries across the state. The task force developed recommendations to address Nebraska library personnel recruitment and retention needs. The recommendations led to the **Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies** project, focused on recruitment, education, and employment. Recognizing that funding must be identified in order to realize the ideas generated by the task force, the task force supports the Nebraska Library Commission in applying for IMLS funding to carry out these strategies. This broad-based task force, with representation from all aspects of Nebraska's library service and support infrastructure, committed to providing input into the development, implementation, and evaluation of this project for the duration.

Members:

Jim Bothmer, Director, Health Sciences Library, Creighton University
Gail Formanack, Supervisor, Library and Instructional Information Services, Omaha Public Schools
Kevin Leapley, Administrator, Republican Valley Library System
Beth McNeil, Assistant Dean, University of Nebraska - Lincoln Libraries
Deb Robertson, Director of Library Services, Northeast Community College
Rose Schinker, Director, La Vista Public Library
Ruth Seward, Media Specialist, Lexington Public Elementary Schools
Wally Seiler, Commissioner, Nebraska Library Commission
Susan Steider, Young Adult Services Librarian, Lincoln City Libraries

Steering Committee:

Tracy Bicknell-Holmes, President, Nebraska Library Association
Karen Drevo, Past-Chair, State Advisory Council on Libraries
Deb Grove, President, Nebraska Educational Media Association

Kit Keller, Library Data Services Coordinator, Nebraska Library Commission
 Richard Miller, Director of Library Development, Nebraska Library Commission
 Mary Jo Ryan, Communications Coordinator, Nebraska Library Commission
 Rod Wagner, Director, Nebraska Library Commission

Charter:

Ideas, research, dialogue, action and policy recommendations

- Improve knowledge, skills, and abilities of library personnel and (volunteers, friends, boards)
- Promote the profession
- Provide financial aid for pre-professional and professional education
- Improve library personnel compensation (salary, wages and benefits that provide equitable pay commensurate with knowledge, skills, and abilities, and performance).
- Foster librarianship as a desirable, challenging, and rewarding career choice.
- Research (studies, programs, etc.)
- Monitor and study related initiatives (ALA, other states, etc.)

The initial strategy is a statewide marketing campaign to change the image of library service work and to draw promising high school and college students to library service careers. This is reflected in the Library Commission goal (2I) to “Promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of the Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods including print, electronic, video, audio, and other technology as it emerges.” The marketing campaign will draw on the findings in the *Making a Difference Evaluation* to determine which Nebraska communities will be the focus of our initial marketing and implementation. The project identifies mentor/recruiters, provides training, and cultivates them, and provides resources for successful one-on-one, each-one-recruit-one, mentoring activities. This phase will be modeled after Nebraska’s highly successful TeamMates™ Mentoring Program.¹ Needs analysis and refinement was the first step in this project.

Baseline data about Nebraska Public Library Staffing, Compensation, and Retention

- Nebraska currently ranks 35th of fifty states and the District of Columbia, in the number of ALA-MLS librarians per 25,000 population.² Currently, 113 professional librarians are employed in Nebraska public libraries.
- The majority of public libraries in Nebraska serve communities of less than 5,000. In most cases, library personnel are employed part-time, do not receive benefits, are undereducated, and are poorly paid.

There are vast differences between small and large libraries in number of professional staff members, hourly wage of director, and percentage of total expenditures on salary and benefits. The following chart³ demonstrates this:

	Population Size						Statewide Averages/Totals
	Less than 1,000	Between 1,000 and 2,499	Between 2,500 and 4,999	Between 5,000 and 9,999	Between 10,000 and 49,999	Over 50,000	
Number of Libraries	105	66	19	16	15	2	223
Total Library Staff	212	226	110	149	264	413	1,374
MLS Staff	3	2	2	7	28	71	113
Staff Expenditures	\$ 6,503	\$ 21,851	\$ 68,036	\$ 142,671	\$ 375,960	\$ 5,387,244	\$ 22,114,222
Staff Expenditures percentage of Total Expenditures	43.8%	51.4%	58.1%	66.0%	73.5%	78.5%	64%
Average Director’s Hourly Wage	\$ 6.93	\$ 8.89	\$ 11.89	\$ 16.12	\$ 27.54	\$ 34.50	\$ 10.37

1 TeamMates™ Mentoring Program, www.teammates.org

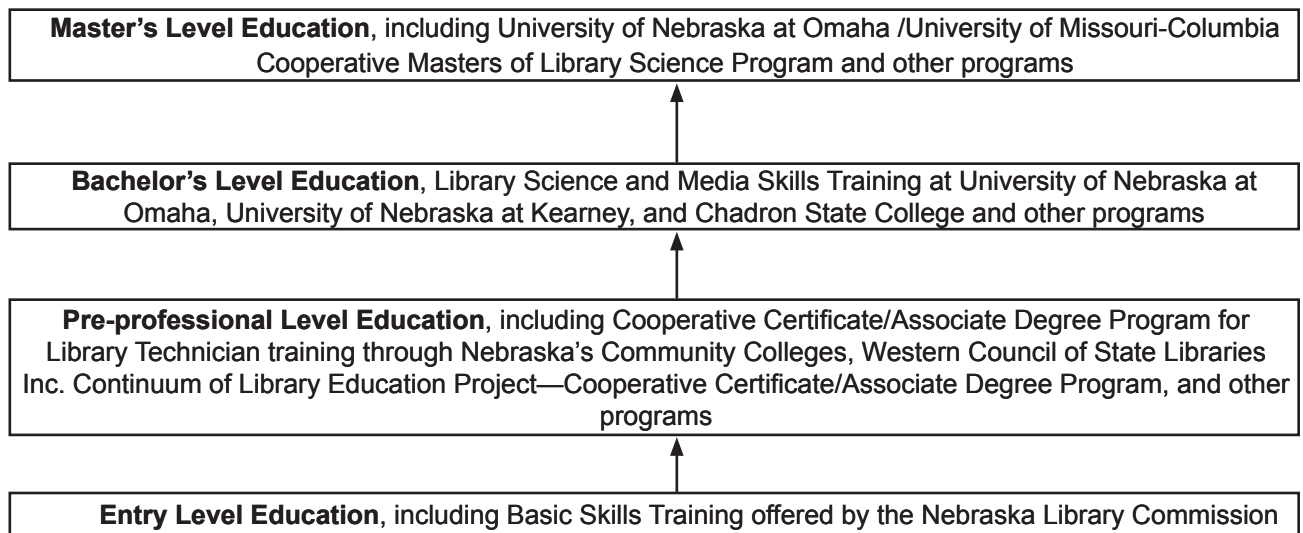
2 National Center for Education Statistics, E.D. Tabs, *Public Libraries in the United States, Fiscal Year 2000, July 2002*, p. 126.

3 Based on 2001 Nebraska Public Library Statistical Data.

The following hourly average wage figures were compiled from Public Library Statistical Reports for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001. Libraries use a variety of job titles, and similar titles have been grouped together. For salary and benefit data, many libraries do not separate benefit expenditures from salary expenditures.

Year	Director	Years in Job	Ass't. Director	Child. Librarian	Tech. Librarian	Support Staff	Statewide Avg. Annual Total Salary Exp.	Statewide Avg. Annual Total Benefit Exp.	% Total Exp.
1999/2000	\$ 9.35	10.41	\$ 8.12	\$ 10.19	\$ 13.14	\$ 6.30	\$ 77,242	\$ 26,171	55.6%
2000/2001	\$ 10.07	9.84	\$ 10.12	\$ 10.37	\$ 11.74	\$ 7.55	\$ 88,208	\$ 25,853	64.0%

To change this situation, we must find ways to draw promising high school and college students to library service careers and enable creative, dedicated pre-professionals to grow and learn, and to remain in or return to their communities to provide enhanced library service in these underserved communities and to demonstrate their value to their communities. To this end, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Nebraska Library Association, Nebraska Educational Media Association, and Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska’s state library agency, are instrumental in bringing off-campus MLS educational opportunities to Nebraska through the Emporia State University and the University of Missouri-Columbia. **Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies** focuses on raising awareness, stereotype busting, and enticing young adults (high school, college) and pre-professional library workers into library skills training at whatever rung of the career/education ladder they can enter:



The above programs are listed as examples. Students may seek education through a variety of other venues, including online educational opportunities.



Nebraska Library Commission Wins Grant to Recruit Future Librarians

With a \$343,682 grant received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in FY 2005, the Nebraska Library Commission began developing a campaign to recruit the next generation of Nebraska librarians, and to train and support current library workers. The project grew out of a recommendation from the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries, and was prompted by the need to fill current and expected job vacancies, as identified by the Library Commission's Recruitment and Retention Task Force.

The goal is to increase the number of professionally trained librarians in Nebraska. The Library Commission's grant is part of the \$19 million "Recruitment and Education of Librarians for the 21st Century" national initiative, which was first included in the U.S. national budget in 2003. Through this project, high school and college students are recruited, matched with mentors and educational opportunities, and provided with stipends, grants, or scholarships to support the pursuit of pre-professional and professional education.

For its campaign, "**Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies,**" the Nebraska Library Commission developed a marketing plan to create awareness and identify prospects for library service careers.

Marketing Campaign

- After a year of planning, production, testing, and revision, a one-minute recruitment public service announcement (PSA) has been developed and is now available. The PSA is designed for screening in movie theaters across Nebraska as part of the marketing campaign to recruit young people to the library profession.
- The recruitment public service announcement (PSA) was screened in informational showings at professional meetings of librarians throughout Nebraska.
- The "kick-off" event for the recruiting project was held on October 25, 2006 at the Nebraska Library Association (NLA)/ Nebraska Educational Media Association (NEMA) preconference, "Blockbuster Marketing with *The Hollywood Librarian*". The event introduced potential recruiters to marketing materials under development.
- Print materials along with at DVD of the recruitment PSA are being distributed to a limited number of recruiters to get their feedback on a "beta version" of the marketing kit.
 - One library director tested the recruitment packet at a high school career fair and was pleasantly surprised by the attention that she got from the students. They were very responsive to the PSA, crowding around her table and giving her positive feedback on the PSA and the message.

- The Recruitment PSA is available on the Now hiring @ your library® Website and on YouTube at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=8vHUE6qfP8> (http://youtube.com/results?search_query=nebraska+library).



Comments about the PSA on YouTube:

- “the library is cool because the music is louder there!”
 - “great PSA!”
 - “Nice attempt at retiring the ‘bun/half-glasses/sensible shoes’ stereotype. ‘Really cool!’ as your librarian might say.”
- The Nebraska Library Commission contracted with the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) to develop and distribute communication materials about Nebraska library science educational options.
 - The Website for the project launched in October 2006. “Now hiring @ your library®” <http://www.NowHiringAtYourLibrary.com> and <http://www.NowHiringAtYourLibrary.org> features resources for people interested in library careers. The Website <http://www.NowHiringAtYourLibrary.com> offers marketing materials that can be downloaded from the recruitment section. The website includes a public blog, a log for mentors to track interactions with mentees, and a robust job bank database that can be used to gather information and data to analyze the library job market for Nebraska and the surrounding region. Employers can post jobs, and for job seekers, the job bank is searchable on several categories.

A comment about the Website:

- “We showed the site to some mentors today and they were quite positive about the look and functionality of the site.”

Comments about the Website job bank:

- From an employer who posted a job: “I have been meaning to drop you a note to compliment you on the redesigned Jobs and Careers website for the NLC.”
- From a scholarship recipient/job seeker: “I found out about [my current] job on the Library Commission website. I then looked at more detailed information on Lexington Public Libraries website.”

Scholarships

Four 21st Century Librarian scholarships are available. Since November 2005 state and federal

scholarship funds awarded total \$158,000. The Nebraska Library Commission also provides tuition assistance (tuition reimbursement at the rate of 50% per class) for undergraduate education.

Master's Scholarship Programs (state funds)

- 1) Master of Library and/or Information Science (MLS) Scholarship
 - One scholarship recipient felt that the scholarship made it possible for her to finish her master's degree program sooner.
 - One scholarship recipient reported, "I am the Director of Library Services at Hamilton College- Lincoln Campus. I got the application contact information from the NLC website. Without my MLS program involvement, the class assignment where I interviewed a librarian from Walt branch, and recommendations from a professor in library studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, getting an entry level librarian position would have been impossible."
- 2) Master of Education School Library Media (M.Ed.) Scholarship

Undergraduate Scholarship Programs (federal funds)

- 3) Bachelor's Degree in Library Studies (BLS) Scholarship
- 4) Library Technical Assistant (LTA) Scholarship
 - One LTA graduate reported that her future plans include returning to school (University of Nebraska at Omaha) in fall 2007 to complete her bachelor's degree in library studies, and then continuing into an MLS program. "I hope to some day become the director of a library."
 - Another LTA graduate said "I would probably not have gotten the [library] job [I have now] without the things I learned in my classes."
 - Another LTA graduate said, "The scholarship helped me quite a bit. If I had not gotten it I would have had to take out more loans, or take fewer classes in order to pay for [school]."

Undergraduate Tuition Assistance (state funds)

- Library Technical Assistance Tuition Reimbursement

Table 1. 21st Century Librarian Scholarship Awards,
Grant Year II, November 1, 2005 – October 31, 2006

	Nov 1, 2005		February 1, 2006		March 15, 2006		July 1, 2006		Totals
	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	
MLS	10	\$23,500			4	\$10,000	9	\$22,500	\$56,000
MEd					3	\$7,500	2	\$5,000	12,500
BLS					2	\$2,000	1	\$1,000	\$3,000
LTA			2	\$1,000	11	\$11,000	1	\$1,000	\$14,000
TOTAL		\$23,000		\$1,000		\$30,500		\$29,500	\$85,500

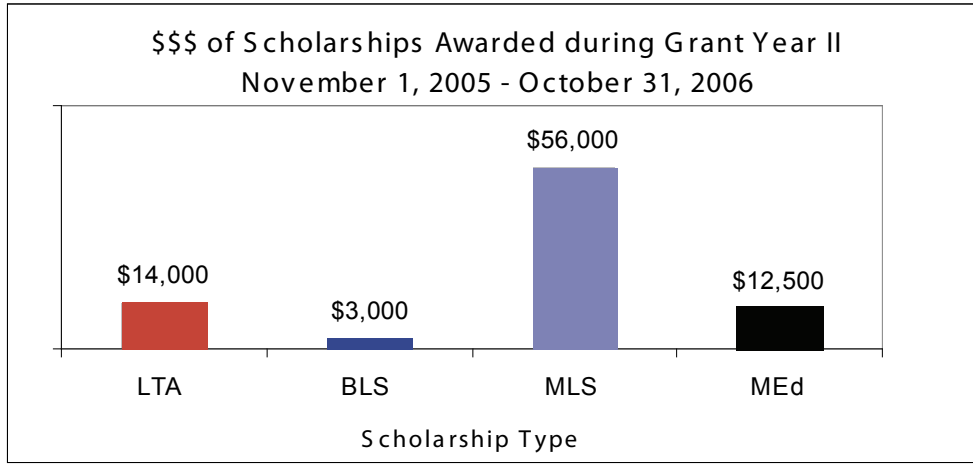


Figure 1. Dollar amount of scholarships awarded by scholarship type, in Grant Year II, November 1, 2005 – October 31, 2006. Table 2. 21st Century Librarian Scholarship Awards, Grant Year III, November 1, 2006 – October 31, 2007

	Dec. 6, 2006		Feb. 1, 2007		March 15, 2007		July 1, 2007		Oct. 31, 2007		Totals
	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	#	\$\$\$	
MLS	12	\$30,000	-	\$15,000	-		-		-		\$45,000
MEd	7	\$17,500	-	\$0	-		-		-		\$17,500
BLS	3	\$3,000	-	\$1,000	-		-		-		\$4,000
LTA	4	\$4,000	-	\$2,000	-		-		-		\$6,000
TOTAL	26	\$54,500	-	\$18,000	-		-		-		\$72,500

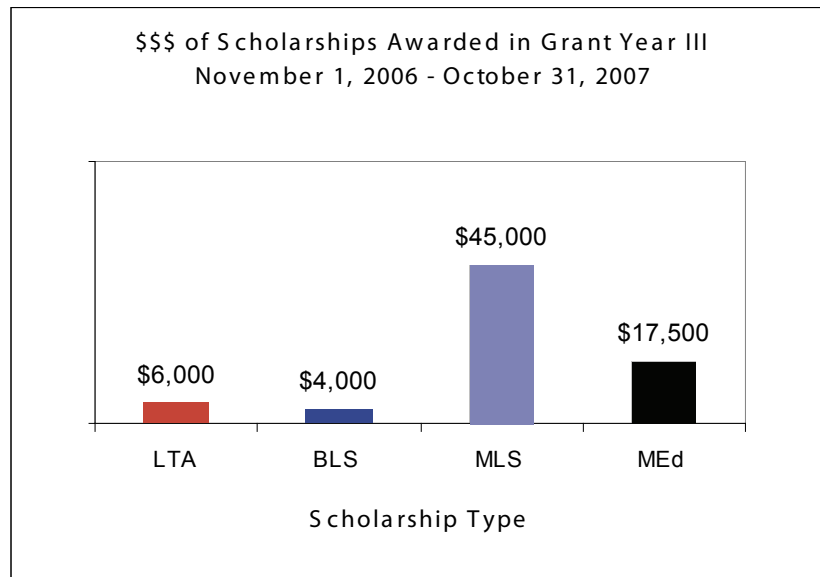


Figure 2. Dollar amount of scholarships awarded by scholarship type, in Grant Year III, November 1, 2006 – October 31, 2007.

Reaching Nebraska's Hispanic population

To reach Nebraska's growing Hispanic community, the Nebraska Library Commission funded Spanish-speaking interns through a partnership with the Nebraska Humanities Council's "Prime Time Family Reading Time" program. The interns have assisted with the "Prime Time" program at nine public libraries throughout Nebraska. Interns have said:

- "The fact that librarians shelve books, work at the desk, etc., is true, but I realized that it is not even ¼ of their job. Librarians do amazing work for the community by providing information to those who need it and for helping thousands of people on a daily basis. I would have liked if this program was a little longer because every week that we have this program, the families get more and more into reading and more involved with the library. I hope that they don't stop this after the program is over."
- "I helped out with the reading program. There I help out with the kids . . . I attended all the meetings. I was kind of like the director and I tried to keep everyone on task."
- "I thought a librarian had a laid back easy job, but once I worked here I learned that they are very busy, hard working people."

In addition, at a multi-state Prime Time® conference held in Lincoln, Nebraska in 2006, Jane Hood, the director of the Nebraska Humanities Council, encouraged people in other states to add this "innovative element" of library internships to their Prime Time® programs.

Mentoring

Mentoring is an important component of the recruitment activities. The primary strategy is a one-on-one, each-one-recruit-one, mentoring approach. Planning is underway for mentors and recruiters to be trained to use a multimedia package (including a movie trailer, print and broadcast communication, Web resources, and exhibits and displays) to identify prospects and inform them about the opportunities for rewarding careers in library service. The resources will be made available to K-12, postsecondary, and public library staff, as well as library supporters and advocates, helping them to form a statewide network of mentors and recruiters.

The Nebraska Library Commission contracted with Cindi Hickey, a library consultant, to deliver the mentor training sessions. She presented the first session on March 15, 2006. This session "Encouraging through Mentoring" was part of the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association Paraprofessional Section Spring Conference, "Encourage Someone @ your library®". In April 2006, we identified and invited a group of nineteen Nebraska library professionals to assist in the development of the 21st Century Librarian Mentoring Program. In April and July 2006, and in January 2007, Cindi Hickey and the Nebraska Library Commission conducted informational and training sessions with the pilot mentors using OPAL (Online Programming for All Libraries at <http://www.opal-online.org>), a Web conference consortium operating on a Voice-over Internet platform that will run in an Internet browser. Participation in an OPAL session is free to the mentors and they can participate from any location once the OPAL software is installed on their computer. The Nebraska Library Commission purchased an OPAL site license for this project, and OPAL can be used for the mentor sessions, for mentor-mentee interactions, as well as for other conferencing purposes associated with the project. Additional face-to-face mentor training sessions are being planned for April 2007 in three locations in Nebraska.

Continuing Education

Basic Skills Training – 2006

Continuing education associated with this grant is geared toward entry level and pre-professional level education in library skills and will help pre-professionals grow, learn, and remain in or return to their communities to provide enhanced library service in underserved communities and demonstrate the value of libraries.

In Spring 2006, the Nebraska Library Commission provided an on-line basic skills training course, “Organization of Library Materials”, in Elkhorn, Kearney, Lincoln, Norfolk, North Platte, and Scottsbluff, a state funded match for this grant, supported by state aid funding appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature, granted and administered by the Nebraska Library Commission and co-sponsored by Nebraska’s Regional Library Systems. Courses are available via on-site or online instruction. Four Basic Skills courses are required for certification of librarians. The sessions offered in this Basic Skills course included:

- Cataloging Process
- Sears and Dewey
- Cataloging with Card Format
- Automated Library
- Organizing Electronic Information
- Sources of Cataloging and Classification

Spring Colloquium with Joseph Janes – 2006

This continuing education event featured a presentation by Joseph Janes, American Libraries Internet Librarian, on April 8 at The Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska. His talk encouraged libraries to become technologically proactive rather than reactive. He addressed the importance of retaining the friendly, human aspects of the library while installing and utilizing new technologies. Janes is the associate dean in the Information School of the University of Washington in Seattle and is glad to be “part of a profession that embraces and fosters change and complexity.”

As a match for this grant, this project was supported in part by state aid funding appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature, granted and administered by the Nebraska Library Commission. The event was sponsored by the Eastern and Southeast Library Systems, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the Omaha Public Library, and the Lincoln City Libraries. Fifty-six people attended this event and thirty received continuing education credit.

Teleconference Series – 2005-2006

Nebraska Library Commission contracted with the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois to provide continuing education satellite teleconference programs for Nebraska librarians. The Commission negotiated a statewide license to offer Nebraska libraries free unlimited access to download each program and make a videotape for use by the participating institution. These programs support the continuing education goals of the grant. Programs include:

- Libraries, the Universe, and Everything: Google and Your Patrons
- Always a River, Sometimes a Library: Library Practice and Patron Service
- Library Management Hot Topics
- Serving Immigrant Populations: A Library Prototype for Diversity
- Google Print: Its Impact on Scholarship and Libraries
- Making Copyright Work for Your Libraries

- The Role of Teaching in Modern Libraries
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Library Marketing
- Reference Tools for the Information Age
- Library Transformation: Library as Place

Partnered with the Nebraska Regional Library Systems to Offer Library Leadership Retreat, the Nebraska Leadership Institute – 2005

As part of the state match for this grant (listed as Continuing Education Grants in the Schedule of Completion), we contracted with the Regional Library Systems to provide future Nebraska library leaders a structured professional development opportunity to learn about leadership styles, skills, and networking at the Nebraska Leadership Institute. In addition to exploring leadership skills and developing professional goals and plans, the thirty participants worked with ten mentors who are recognized leaders in the library profession in Nebraska. Through a survey of the participants, we found that 83% of those responding felt that they learned about leadership and leadership styles, to be proactive, and to become leaders in the library profession. Most learned skills to be more effective in their work, developed goals and action plans, and felt that participation in the Leadership Institute contributed to their professional development.

Facilitated Database Training – 2005

Nebraska Library Commission provided statewide training to fifty-one librarians and media specialists in the use of databases made available by the Nebraska Library Commission. This meets an identified need for improved searching and researching skills, a key factor in professional librarian skills development.

“I had used all of these databases – some more than others, but wasn’t aware of many of the features. I tended to get stuck doing things the same way.” [Database Roadshow participant, July 27, 2005]

Provided Basic Skills Classes – 2005

Ninety (90) people completed the Basic Skills Collection Development class, which is one of the four Basic Skills courses required for Nebraska Certification of Public Librarians. The course addresses the following topics:

- Basic understanding of collection development
- Community needs assessment
- Selection of library materials
- Acquisitions
- Weeding
- Intellectual Freedom
- Collection assessment
- Preservation

Supported Training for Directors of Metropolitan Public Libraries – 2005

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded a Continuing Education grant in the amount of \$5,000 to the directors of Lincoln City Libraries and Omaha Public Library, to attend the Pop!Tech 2005: Grand Challenges Conference, to facilitate the creation of a shared vision of library services and professional development. (<http://www.poptech.org/>).

Other Observations about the Recruitment Grant Activities

There are some notable examples that illustrate ways in which the grant activities are providing new opportunities for continuing education, changing attitudes, changing lives, and having an impact on individuals who are working or considering working in libraries. Some of the outputs, like the number of scholarships that we have awarded, are tangible and quantifiable. In addition, we are learning about processes that need to be refined and then revising our procedures. One example is the communication with educational institutions about scholarships. Other outcomes are less tangible and more difficult to quantify, but little-by-little, we are finding out what people think about library work, sparking interest in potential library students, and helping to change perceptions of the role and work of librarians.

Potential students are learning about the recruitment activities because of the recruitment PSA and the handouts that we've distributed to library workers, high school students, college students, and post-college students who might be interested in continuing education, and undergraduate or graduate level education and training in library studies. Through information that we have made available on the Nebraska Library Commission Now hiring @ your library® Website, interested students are able to find out more about the scholarships and access the scholarship applications. People are responding to this information by applying for scholarships and enrolling in degree programs to pursue library education. Some library workers who previously applied for the tuition reimbursement (they are reimbursed for half the cost of tuition) for courses in the LTA courses at the Nebraska Community Colleges have applied for and received \$1,000 LTA scholarships so that they can take more courses in a short time frame.

Mentors are learning more about mentoring and about how to identify and recruit potential, future librarians. The group of "pilot" mentors is helping in the initial development of the mentoring program. We expect the number of mentors to grow during the grant period.

Initial efforts to connect with people in the Hispanic community through the internship stipends for the Prime Time Family Reading Time® program seem successful and provide a model for people in other states to encourage young Hispanic people to consider working in a library.

1C. Participate in the Western Council of State Libraries Education initiative to provide alternative methods for delivery of library and information science education.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. A grant funding request to finance implementation of a multi-state collaborative educational initiative will be developed by the member states of the Western Council of State Libraries and library schools within the Western Council multi-state region.
2. Educational programs will be collaboratively developed among the Western state library agencies and library schools to address educational needs for library personnel, ranging from

- basic competencies through professional degree programs.
3. Educational programs designed to meet a range of identified competencies for all levels of library operations will be provided to reach library personnel throughout Nebraska.
 4. Library personnel will have the necessary competencies to provide effective library and information services.

The Western Council of State Libraries was successful in securing a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a three-year project to address the educational needs for library personnel in the western states region. Nebraska has participated in this project and is aligning its training to address the competencies identified for library workers, adjusting its public librarian certification program to be in line with the Western Council's certification program and plans to be a registered provider of certified training programs.

1D. Promote and improve the Public Librarian and Public Library Board Certification programs.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. A redesigned continuing education database will track participation in the Certification programs and facilitate participant access to CE records.
2. The number of library boards participating in the Public Library Board Certification program will increase.
3. The quality and relevance of content delivered through the Public Librarian Certification program will meet the ongoing needs of library personnel.

A re-designed Omnibase (an internally created and managed multi-faceted online database) has resulted in improved data entry, more complete and useful records and numerous efficiencies for program management. Initially, the database was accessible internally for staff use. Portions of the database are now accessible to external users who participate in the public librarian certification program to access their continuing education records and track their education activities.

A significant step in increasing public library board certification, and resulting board member continuing education, was the inclusion of a board certification requirement in the revised *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* (adopted in 2004). The revised *Guidelines* are now fully implemented following a three-year phase in period. One outcome was that boards of larger libraries (Omaha Public Library, Lincoln City Libraries, North Platte Public Library, etc.) are now participating in the certification program.

The Nebraska Library Commission, with contributions from the regional library systems, has continued to update and improve the Basic Skills courses offered as part of the public librarian certification program and has expanded the number and variety of training offerings. The proliferation of online courses has added to the available training resources. The Nebraska Library Commission has created and offered online training in addition to on-site delivery. The use of new technologies for online training

has increased the Commission's capabilities. Commission staff has developed competency and skill in creating and conducting training programs. Staff continually assesses training needs and interests.

1E. Provide education and consultation on strategic planning and outcome based evaluation.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Library personnel will have the skills to write successful grant applications that employ the techniques of strategic planning and outcome based evaluation.
2. Library personnel and trustees will be better able to assess community needs, and to conduct strategic planning and evaluation.
3. Libraries will have access to increased funding through both traditional and alternate sources.

Need:

The majority of public libraries in Nebraska serve communities of less than 5,000, and in most cases, library personnel are employed part-time, do not receive benefits, and are poorly paid. These conditions contribute to a high turnover rate in library personnel. Recruitment and retention of qualified library personnel are issues throughout Nebraska, due to demographic conditions and inadequate local funding. The Library Commission assumes responsibility for the full range of training and education needs for library personnel since there are no resident ALA-accredited library programs in the state.

Methodology:

To prepare for the implementation of outcome-based evaluation in both Commission activities as well as in reports and grant evaluations received from libraries, the Commission a two-day workshop on the techniques of outcome-based evaluation (OBE). [Workshop flyer, see Appendix F] This was presented by Claudia Horn of Performance Results, Inc., and underwritten by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). [See Appendix B] Twenty-nine people attended this workshop and each developed a plan to evaluate a specific project at their workplace. One participant at this training session, Theresa Jehlik, is the Training and Development Coordinator for Omaha Public Library, and she has offered several training sessions throughout the state that include some of the planning and evaluation skills learned at this workshop. Additionally, five Commission staff members traveled to Washington DC to participate in in-depth OBE training activities. These staff members have applied the knowledge and skills learned to their work in developing and evaluating both Library Commission projects, as well as in consultation activities with library personnel throughout the state.

Commission staff members have presented class sessions on outcome-based evaluation to students in both undergraduate and graduate library science classes held at the University of Nebraska – Omaha. In addition, between 2003 and January 2007, the Commission sponsored twenty-eight workshops related to a variety of planning activities. These were attended by 649 participants, and constituted a total of 140 contact hours for continuing education credits. [See Appendix C] These workshops were offered by a variety of library personnel, and were available at locations throughout the state. Topics covered include technology, budgeting, building activities, advocacy, and sustainability. The participants include librarians from public, school, and academic libraries, as well as trustees and other library supporters.

During this same timeframe, the Commission sponsored twenty-one workshops throughout the state

on grant writing in an effort to improve the skills and understanding of library personnel. These were attended by 367 participants, and offered a total of 107 contact hours for continuing education credits. [See Appendix D]

Bibliostat Connect™ is a Web-based tool (<http://connect.informata.com>) that allows for simple, powerful analysis of library data, without proficiency in using spreadsheets or databases. The Commission contracts for a statewide license to this product, so that library directors can use this program to create tables and graphs and conduct analysis of their programs and services for use in planning and evaluation. Many directors utilized this to conduct peer comparisons, and to consider appropriate data elements for building and program planning. This tool is frequently used to respond to questions about funding, facilities, programming, and other topics. A sample data analysis file is included. [See Appendix E]

The Library Commission has several grant programs made available to libraries throughout the state. These include competitive LSTA grants, Continuing Education grants, and Youth Grants for Excellence. During this five year period, each of these grant programs was available once each year. One requirement for every grant offered by the Library Commission is that grantees provide outcomes resulting from the grant activities.

Example:

Below is part of the application for a Youth Grant for Excellence:

Indicate the target group that the training/continuing education grant will serve. Be specific about both the potential library customers that will benefit from improved library services and the library staff that will gain skills from the training/continuing education project. If library board members, volunteers, advocates, and other supporters will be included in the training/continuing education, specify how and why they were identified as a target group. What will the target group gain as a result of this process? (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/conedgrants/cetapplication.html>)

The annual competitive grant application for federal LSTA funds has a similar requirement:

Project Audience Needs and Outcomes

Describe the audience for the project. Describe how the customer needs were determined.

Explain how the project is designed to meet the need. Describe how the customer outcomes of the project will be measured to demonstrate that the need has been met. (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/statistics/lsta/2007LibraryImprovementGrantapp.html>)

The continued requirement of outcome information in our reporting documents, combined with the workshops and training materials available about identifying and reporting outcomes, has resulted in improved capacity on the part of library personnel to accomplish this.

Summary

The Commission made progress towards this goal through these continuing education activities and the programs and services described. Great strides have been made in the quality of grant-writing skills in Nebraska, and as a result, in the successful grant applications written. Grant applications often include community assessments, as well as peer-comparison data based on FSCS and local Nebraska public library data.

In August of 2003, Deputy Director Nancy J. Busch resigned her position at the Library Commission. A large part of that job involved planning and evaluation consultation activities. As of March 2007 this position is still vacant. This is one reason that less OBE activities have been accomplished during these years. Other staff members assumed the day-to-day tasks affiliated with the Deputy Director position, as

well as responsibility for planning outreach and consultation, but the extent and scope has been narrower than anticipated at the time the Commission's *Long Range Plan* was written.

The purpose and intent of this goal and the three outcomes described above have been realized.

Library Commission Planning-related Continuing Education Events

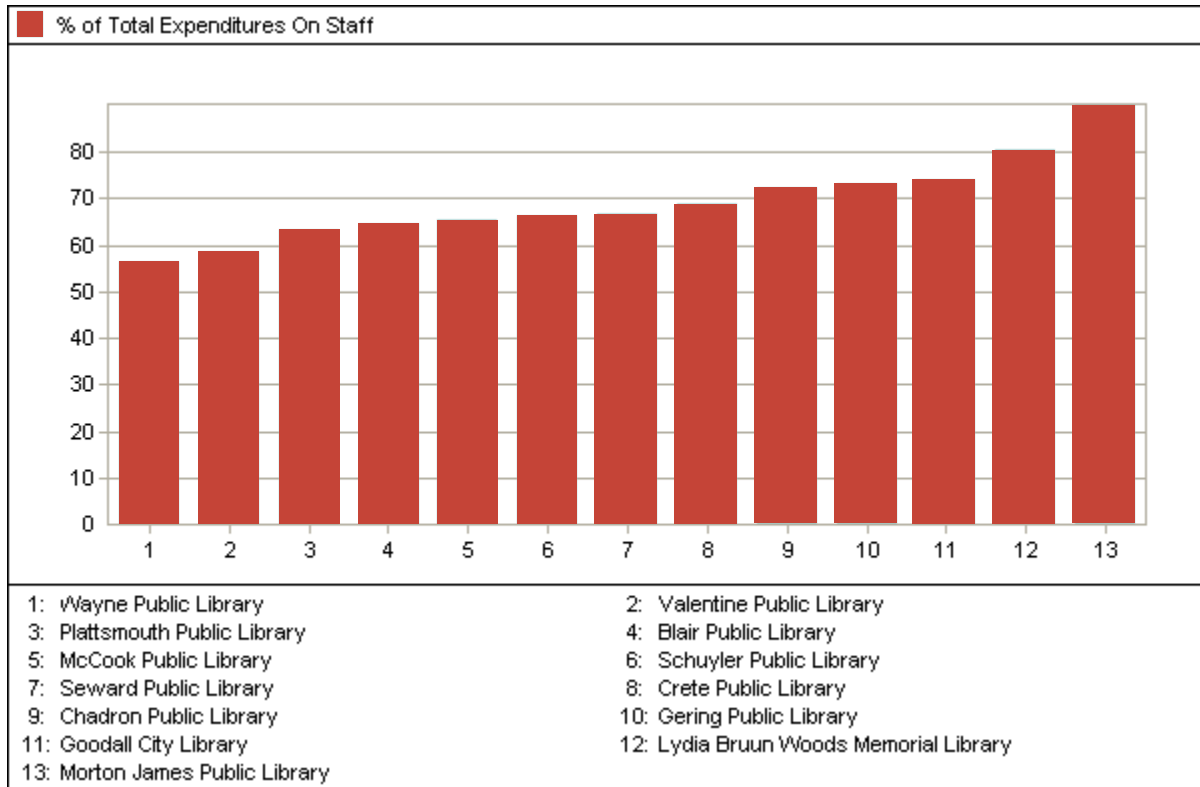
Prog ID	Event Title	Targets	Topics	Event City	Start Date	Total Attendance	Contact Hours
7694	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Fremont	3/31/2006	33	8
7319	Public Library Planning Using the New Planning for Results process	Public library directors; Trustees		Fremont	4/11/2005	26	11
7085	Reverse Strategic Planning	Library advocates; Public librarians		Omaha	3/24/2004	14	1
7445	SCLC Board Meeting			Ceresco	7/25/2005	1	1
7463	SCLC Board Meeting			Wahoo	9/26/2005	1	1
7587	SCLC Board Meeting			Ashland	3/27/2006		1
7389	SCLC Board Meeting	Trustees		Ashland	5/23/2005	2	1
7142	The Place Game	Librarians		Omaha	6/19/2004	21	2
7698	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Ord	4/11/2006	21	8
7393	Public Library Planning Workshop	Trustees; Librarians; Public librarians; Public library directors		Gothenburg	8/19/2005	30	5.5
4097	E-rate Form 470: Time to Start			Pierce	10/7/2003	25	2
7700	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Columbus	4/13/2006	43	8
7699	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Wayne	4/12/2006	32	8
7408	Sailing into the Future: Library Planning for Results!	Friends groups; Librarians; Paraprofessionals; Trustees		Norfolk	8/18/2005	29	5
4096	E-rate Form 470: Time to Start			Alliance	10/14/2003	8	2
7695	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Scottsbluff	4/4/2006	30	8
7212	PLS Planning Workshop for Public Library Director	Public library directors		Alliance	1/27/2005	14	4
7211	PLS Planning Workshop for Public Library Director	Public library directors		Chappell	1/13/2005	5	4
7697	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Hastings	4/10/2006	38	8
7696	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		North Platte	4/6/2006	37	8
7433	Public Library Planning Workshop	Trustees; Librarians; Public Librarians; Public library directors		Sutton	8/18/2005	15	5.5
7401	Bricks and Boards 2005	Librarians; Library advocates; Paraprofessionals; Public librarians; Public library directors; Tech Services Staff; Trustees		Seward	6/13/2005	60	6
7552	CASTL	Public librarians		Seward	1/16/2006	16	5
4249	CASTL Meeting			Seward	11/13/2003	23	4
7693	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Lincoln	3/30/2006	27	8
7410	Intro to Digitization	Librarians; Media specialists; Public librarians; Digitization Project Directors; Tech Services Staff; Museum staff respons. for digitization		Walton	7/14/2005	33	6
7411	Intro to Scanning Principles & Best Practices	Librarians; Media specialists; Public librarians; Digitization Project Directors; Tech Services Staff; Museum staff respons. for digitization		Walton	7/14/2005	35	4
7125	Southeast Library System Training Extravaganza	Library Staff		Lincoln	5/7/2004	30	5
28						649	140

Library Commission Grant-writing Continuing Education Events

ProgID	Event Title	Targets	Topics	Event City	Start Date	Total Attendance	Contact Hours
7257	CLICK	Childrens librarians		Elkhorn	1/31/2005	15	2
7694	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Fremont	3/31/2006	33	8
4184	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop			Gretna	10/22/2003	4	3
6992	NLC Grants Workshop	Librarians; Library advocates; Public librarians; Public library directors		Gretna	10/22/2003	1	3
7698	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Ord	4/11/2006	21	8
7270	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop	Librarians; Public librarians; Public library directors		Ord	10/20/2003	5	3
4177	NLC Grants Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors		Ord	10/20/2003	0	3
7699	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Wayne	4/12/2006	32	8
7700	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Columbus	4/13/2006	43	8
6946	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop			Plainview	10/24/2003	12	3
4182	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop			Plainview	10/24/2003	0	3
7695	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Scottsbluff	4/4/2006	30	8
4176	NLC Grants Workshop			Oshkosh	10/15/2003	6	3
7697	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Hastings	4/10/2006	38	8
7696	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		North Platte	4/6/2006	37	8
7477	Grant Writing/Tax Info Workshop	Librarians; Public librarians; Public library directors		Hastings	1/26/2005	6	6
7476	Grant Writing/Tax Info Workshop	Librarians; Public librarians; Public library directors		North Platte	1/24/2005	9	6
7693	Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors; Trustees		Lincoln	3/30/2006	27	8
4183	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop			Seward	10/23/2003	9	3
6947	Nebraska Library Commission Grants Workshop	Public Librarians; Public library directors		Syracuse	12/10/2003	4	2
7236	Writing Grants for Youth Videoconference	Childrens librarians; Librarians; Public library directors		Lincoln	9/28/2004	35	3
21						367	107

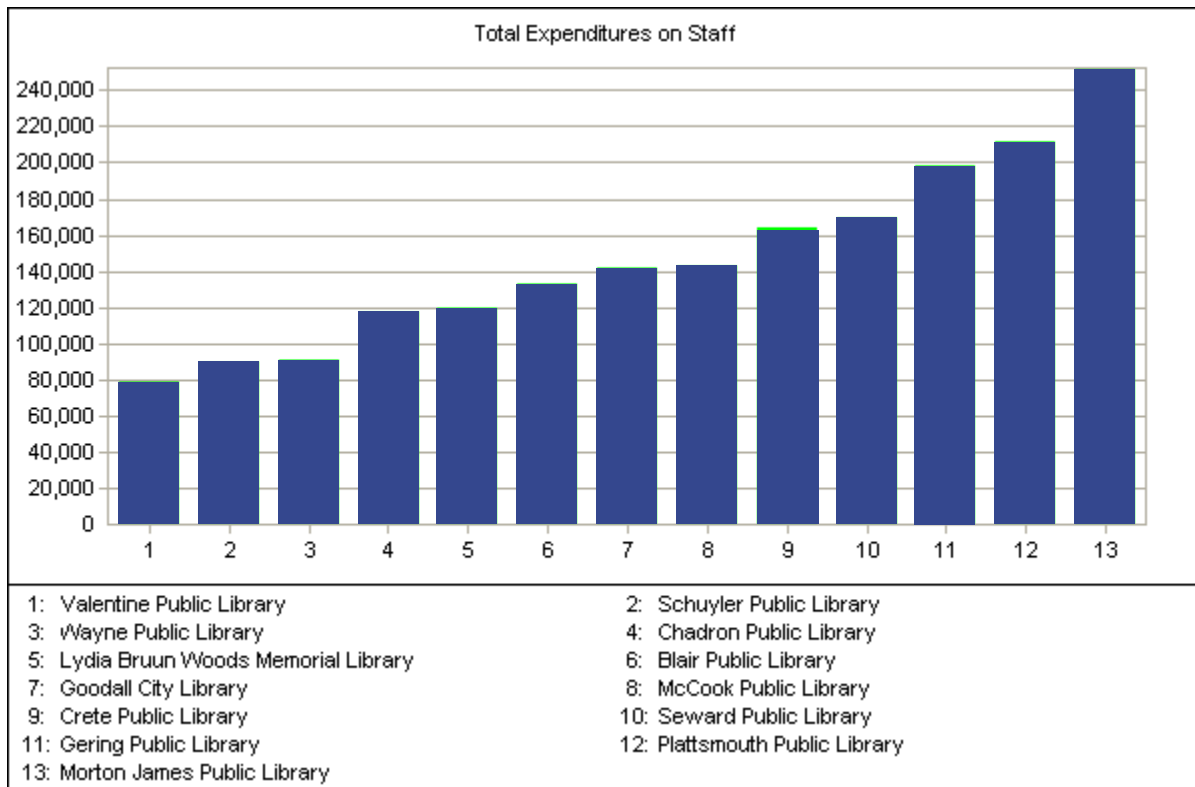
Sample Data Analysis

This chart and table compare the percent of total expenditures spent on salaries and benefits (Staff Expenditures). Valentine Public Library is second from the bottom, with 58.67% of total expenditures spent on personnel, well below the average of 68.51% for the peer group.



Wayne Public Library	56.57%
Valentine Public Library	58.67%
Gering Public Library	63.24%
Plattsmouth Public Library	63.38%
Blair Public Library	64.65%
McCook Public Library	65.31%
Schuyler Public Library	66.19%
Seward Public Library	66.92%
Crete Public Library	69.03%
Chadron Public Library	72.13%
Goodall City Library	73.91%
Lydia Bruun Woods Memorial Library	80.61%
Morton James Public Library	89.98%
Average for peers	68.51%

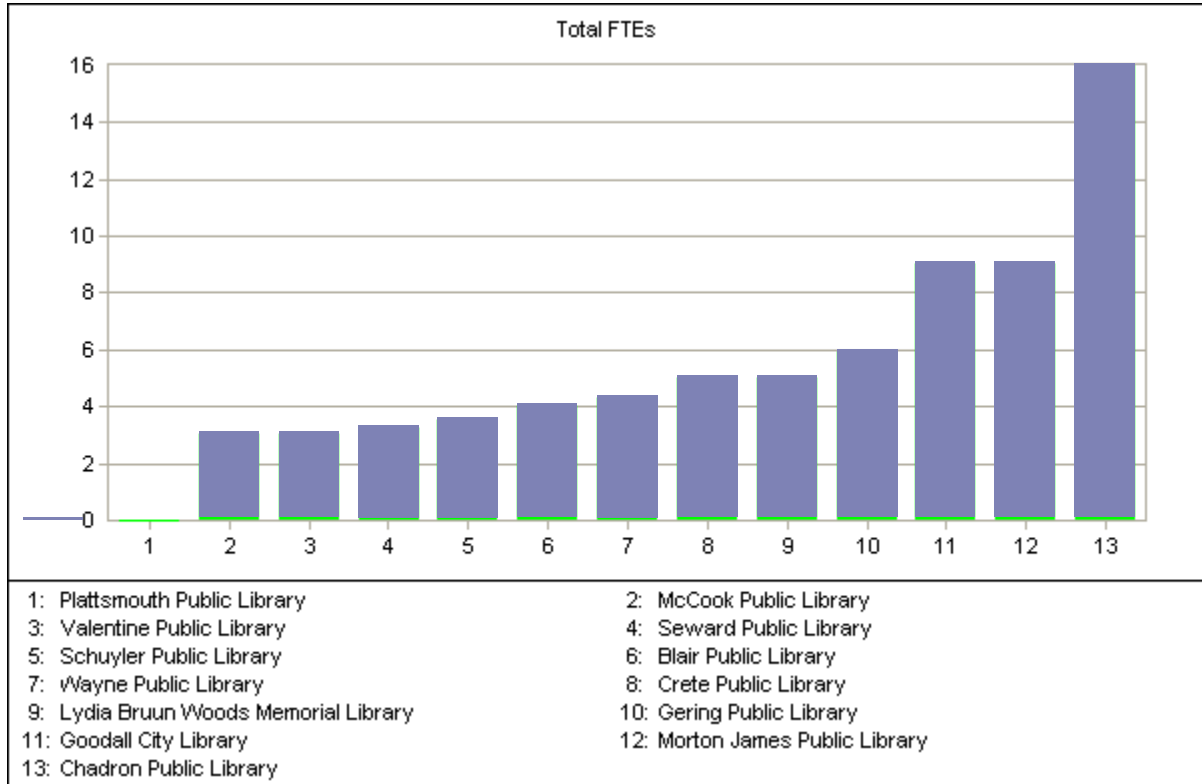
Valentine Public Library ranks last among the peer group in Staff Operating Expenditures:



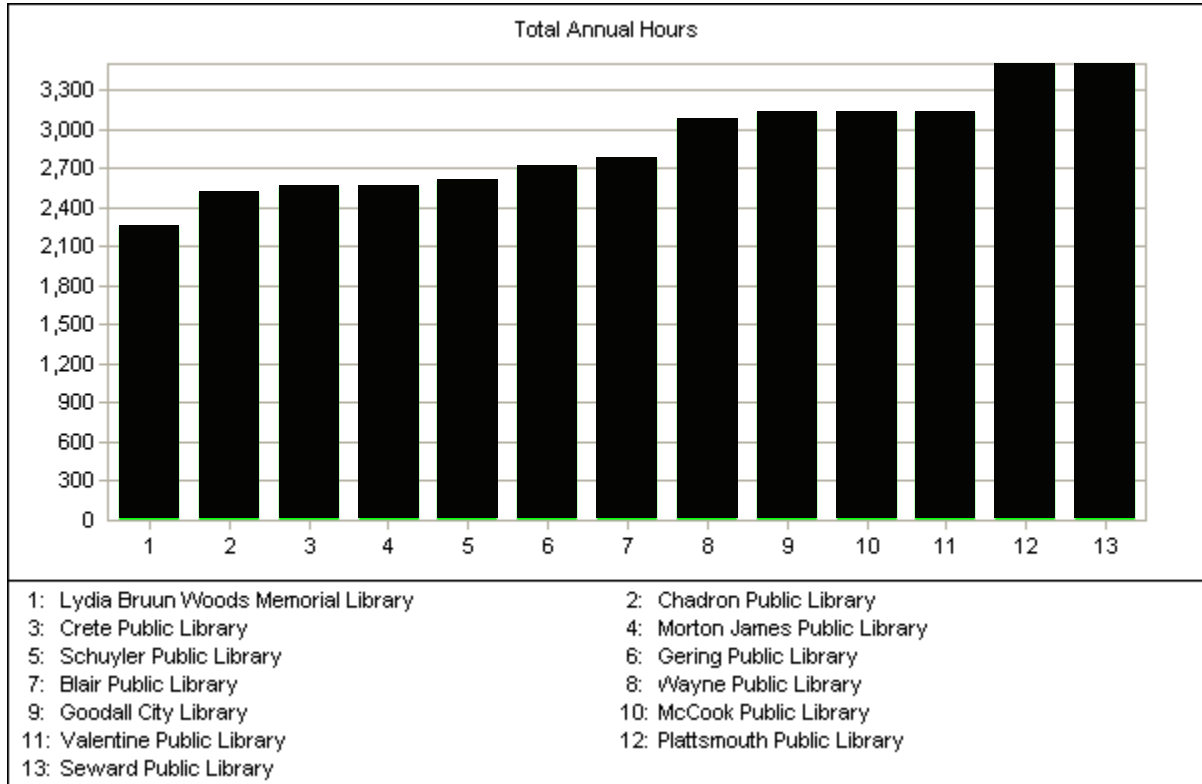
In fact, the total expenditures on staff by Valentine Public Library is less than a third of the highest expenditure, and nearly half the average for the peer group.

Libraries	Operating Expenditures On Total Staff
Valentine Public Library	\$78,121
Schuyler Public Library	\$89,967
Wayne Public Library	\$91,371
Chadron Public Library	\$117,038
Lydia Bruun Woods Memorial Library	\$120,172
Blair Public Library	\$133,068
Goodall City Library	\$141,548
McCook Public Library	\$142,497
Crete Public Library	\$164,425
Seward Public Library	\$169,341
Gering Public Library	\$198,015
Plattsmouth Public Library	\$212,141
Morton James Public Library	\$251,511
Average	\$146,863

And in terms of staffing, Valentine Public Library ranks near the bottom of the peer group in terms of Total FTEs (Plattsmouth Public Library failed to report this data element):



Despite these figures, Valentine Public Library ranks near the top of its peer group for Total Annual Hours:



OBE Training Workshop Application



Nebraska Library Commission **Training on Outcome-Based Evaluation: Are We Making a Difference?** **September 30—October 1, 2003**

Outcome-based evaluation is a systemic way to determine if a program has achieved its goals. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is committed to helping libraries strengthen their programs and their capacity to evaluate the impact of their work through systematic evaluation of results—outcomes. Outcomes are the benefits that accrue to participants of a project—the impact that the project has on participants. Typically, outcomes represent changes in behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, status, or life condition of participants that occur as a result of the project. There is a broad and growing trend for accountability in the form of outcome-based reporting to government at all levels, to foundations, and to other funding sources.

All grants awarded by the Nebraska Library Commission will require the implementation of outcome-based evaluation techniques for reports to be submitted by grantees.

The Nebraska Library Commission will host a two-day workshop on the techniques of outcome-based evaluation on September 30 and October 1, 2003. The workshop will be held at the Library Commission and will be conducted by representatives of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Participants will be reimbursed for travel, food, and lodging expenses. The goal of the workshop is to develop knowledge and skills in outcome-based evaluation.

The Library Commission is inviting fifteen participants from public libraries in Nebraska. The workshop is open to employees of any public library in Nebraska. Participants will be asked to implement the skills learned in the workshop to evaluate a program using outcome-based techniques and to submit a report describing how the outcomes were defined and measured.

**Training on Outcome-Based Evaluation: Are We Making a Difference?
September 30—October 1, 2003**

If you are interested in attending this workshop, submit the application form below by August 1, 2003.

Name: _____

Public Library: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Briefly describe the program you would like to evaluate using outcome based evaluation techniques and why you are interested in participating in this workshop:

Send completed application to:

Nancy J. Busch, Deputy Director
Nebraska Library Commission
1200 N Street, Suite 120
Lincoln, NE 68508-2023

Application deadline: August 1, 2003

For further information, contact Nancy Busch, Deputy Director, Nebraska Library Commission, 402-471-4002, 800-307-2665, or e-mail: <nbusch@nlc.state.ne.us>

1F. Provide support and scholarships for Nebraskans pursuing graduate library degree programs.

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Nebraska citizens will have increased awareness of available graduate library programs.
2. Nebraska citizens will have greater awareness of financial aid for graduate library programs.
3. Enrollment of Nebraskans in graduate library programs will increase.
4. Graduate library course offerings throughout Nebraska will be more accessible.
5. An increased number of library personnel with graduate library degrees will be employed in Nebraska libraries.

The intended outcomes for this goal/activity have been achieved and exceeded in significant part due to a Librarians for the 21st Century three-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. State and LSTA funds have contributed to a significant increase in financial aid for graduate and undergraduate library science education. Over sixty scholarships have been awarded for library science education. Financial aid has been extended for library science courses offered by Nebraska community colleges, bachelor's level library science education, and master's degree programs. The number of students enrolled and participating in library science education has steadily increased in recent years.

The Librarians for the 21st Century grant project, Now hiring @ your library™, supported creation of resources for library worker recruitment and retention and dissemination of information about library careers and financial aid.

Additional commentary for this goal/activity is included in the in-depth report for goal 1A.

Goal 2: All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services.

Library Services and Technology Act funds have contributed to the capabilities and services of Nebraska libraries for direct public benefit. The Nebraska Library Commission has awarded sub-grants to libraries for service and technology projects. The Commission allocates LSTA funds to support statewide services including support for library resource sharing and access to licensed online database services.

2A. Provide access to and promote use of subscription databases, NEBASE services and cooperative purchasing agreements.

Progress towards goal:

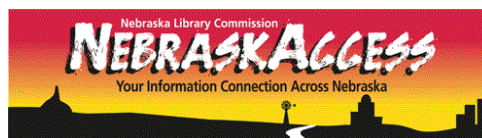
- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Use of statewide subscription databases will increase.
2. Library membership in NEBASE will increase.
3. The number of statewide subscription databases will increase.
4. The number of Nebraska libraries participating in cooperative purchasing programs will increase.
5. Participation in consortia database purchasing will increase.
6. Ninety percent of Nebraska libraries with Internet access will be registered for statewide subscription databases.

Strategies and Activities:

Marketing and training activities have increased to bring more public and library staff awareness to the NebraskAccess statewide database program. Library Commission staff have completed training activities both in-person and online to ensure library staff and media specialists throughout the state have instruction on making the best use of the database resources purchased with Commission funding. A new interface was debuted in 2005 to enhance and improve access to the resources. In addition to the new Web presence a driver's license login was implemented in 2005 to make it easier for Nebraska residents to access the subscription databases. Nebraska was the second state to implement a driver's license authentication method for its statewide database program. Commission staff also exhibited at conferences, both library and non-library related, to increase public knowledge of the resources. Additional funds were spent in 2005 to add the HeritageQuest Online database to NebraskAccess. A resource of this type was of high interest to public libraries and also was a good choice to help garner more interest from the public in general.



www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraskaaccess/

The Library Commission's NEBASE training offerings have increased over time with the addition of web conferencing software. Training sessions are now easier to schedule and broadcast to a larger geographic audience. NEBASE has also instituted a Web Dewey group purchase to provide additional savings for libraries. NEBASE membership has dropped from 153 to 143 libraries in the past five years due primarily to financial considerations for small libraries. Some small libraries are still using OCLC services to obtain records through individual book jobbers but membership in NEBASE is not a requirement to participate in this program.

The discount purchasing program has increased since 2002 with a total of 190 resources available through the program to Nebraska libraries. Marketing and promotion have continued through presentations at small library group meetings such as CASTL and exhibits and library science course presentations at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The Library Commission collaborates with other library networks throughout the region and country to provide more and larger discounts than Nebraska libraries could realize on their own. Partnering with other networks has allowed Nebraska libraries to enjoy the benefits of large group and multi-organizational and multi-state consortia.

Outputs and Outcomes:

Use of Statewide Subscription Databases will Increase – Since 2002, Nebraskans have increased their use of the database resources provided to them through the Nebraska Library Commission's NebraskAccess program. Search statistics for 2002 were 1,231,574 for the NebraskAccess databases combined and statistics for the latest year are 1,726,789.

NEBASE, the OCLC membership cooperative for Nebraska libraries, has continued to increase its offerings to Nebraska libraries. Total membership for NEBASE in 2002 was 153 and membership totals today number 143.

The Nebraska Library Commission increased its database offerings through the NebraskAccess program in 2005 with the addition of the HeritageQuest Online. By January 2005 the total number of NebraskAccess subscription databases increased to eight.

Nebraska libraries have access to a number of database subscription offerings with discounted pricing from the Nebraska Library Commission's discount purchasing program. The number of libraries participating in the discount offerings declined from 210 libraries to 173. The decrease is due to Grolier pulling out of network consortial agreements in 2005.

As of March, 2007, 1,022 libraries are registered for the NebraskAccess program, an increase of 280 from 740 libraries in 2003.

Comments from librarians:

A patron asked tonight about BIP, wanting to get info for an ILL, but it wasn't working so I tried Wilson and eLibrary and they worked. He found the magazine, /Weekly Standard/, in eLibrary and the October 2 issue! He was very pleased to learn this information. I gave him a NebraskAccess brochure with our current password on the business card and he was like a kid in a candy store, realizing all the information that was at his fingertips! Pat Coshow, Reference Librarian, Sump Memorial Library, Papillion, NE

Last night I realized I needed an article for an assignment that was due today. I was able to get one from

the full text databases in just a few minutes. Having those databases allowed me to get the assignment done without having to stay up to all hours. I love the full text databases - have used them for several assignments. I was able to get all the articles I needed for my summer class from there. Belinda ,
Lincoln, NE

A patron came in looking for information on Dr. Kevorkian. We went to Wilson Biographies and found just what he as looking for. What a great deal!!!!

The more I learn...the more I like. Sue Gosnell, Information Services Coordinator, Western Nebraska Community College

We are so appreciative for Nebraska Access at Oakland-Craig Schools. Due to severe state aide cuts, we no longer are able to subscribe to e-library. If we did not have Wilson Select, our students would be back in the 80's in regard to periodical research. The additional databases are also lifesavers. Due to budget cuts, we no longer receive Books in Print or our cumulative biographies. Thank goodness for Nebraska Access! We do wish the public schools could receive e-library as well, since it was cut in our school. I have visited with other schools, which have also had to cut e-library. Joan Magnusson Media Specialist
Oakland-Craig School

Personally, I think NebraskAccess is invaluable! I have returned to school to get my MLS, and am attending online courses through Clarion University in Pennsylvania. As you might imagine, there are copious numbers of articles we need to read, and others we need to access for research, etc. If it weren't for NebraskAccess, I'd be driving 3 hours to Denver to go to a larger public library to get these materials!

It is imperative, especially for those of us in the more remote, rural areas, to have access to this wonderful resource. The availability of these resources means that any of our libraries can compete with the larger, urban libraries in providing our patrons with the materials they need to read, study, learn, and enrich their lives. Thank you! Mary Beth Sancomb-Moran

2B. Implement a common user interface to improve access, searching, and use of electronic resources through the Nebraska Library Commission's Web site.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Public awareness and use of online information resources will increase.
2. Use of statewide online resources, including subscription databases, library catalogs, selected Internet sites, and library catalogs..
3. Efficiency in locating desired information will improve.

This goal has been modified or superseded as the result of the creation of NebraskAccess as a gateway to the licensed online databases made available for use in Nebraska. NebraskAccess was created with a purpose of offering an easy to use online resource for finding information through the informational and educational resources licenses. Commission staff provides training (including the annual Database

Roadshow), creates and maintains online tutorials, and issues periodic tips and information updates to enhance the use of these online resources. Exhibits, class and workshop presentations, and promotional materials are used to improve awareness and use of NebraskAccess resources. All of these efforts address the intended outcomes for this goal.



2006 Database Roadshow in Auburn.

Commission staff maintains and updates the “Best of the Web” <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/bestofweb/bestofweb.aspx>

2C. Promote and monitor NebrasKard, Nebraska’s reciprocal borrowing program.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Information for program decisions and management will be gathered and analyzed.
2. Participation by accredited public libraries will increase.
3. Promotional material will be available in communities with participating libraries.
4. Public awareness of the program will increase.
5. Use of libraries and library resources will increase.

Nebraska libraries have a long history of interlibrary cooperation. Libraries share resources for mutual benefit and to meet the needs and interests of their users. The NebrasKard program is an extension of the cooperative efforts of Nebraska libraries. It encourages Nebraska libraries to participate in a reciprocal borrowing arrangement with other libraries. The underlying intent is to permit registered borrowers in good standing to borrow materials from multiple libraries, in addition to the borrower’s home library.

There are 59 libraries participating in the NebrasKard program. This number has not changed significantly since the program was initiated in 2001 and the lack of a significant number of participating libraries reduces its value. Some of Nebraska’s larger public libraries have declined to participate. Differences and disparities in funding and fee policies among libraries are a significant issue. Public libraries are largely locally financed by a village, town or city. Practices vary among libraries in serving non-residents and charging a fee for non-resident use. It was also noted by a former participating library

that the NebrasKard posed a problem with non-resident borrowers in shopping around for a lower non-resident fee and then using the NebrasKard to get free service from another library. These policies and practices are a reason, for some, to not participate in NebrasKard. And this is an issue that has been difficult to remedy in order to encourage participation.

NebrasKard has been an inexpensive program to administer. The Nebraska Library Commission has provided stickers and tags for library use. Beyond those items, most information is maintained online. Libraries receive no compensation from the Library Commission for their participation. Other expenses are local.

A survey of the NebrasKard participating libraries resulted in useful information for determining the future of the NebrasKard program. Nearly half of the participating libraries responded to the online survey. Phone calls were made to some of the libraries that did not respond to the online survey.

Observations from the NebrasKard library survey:

- Most libraries that participate and that responded to the survey or to whom responded to a follow-up telephone inquiry indicated either a neutral or very positive response to the program.
- Among the reasons for participation was a comment from one library director was the desire to provide library access to people in rural Nebraska who might not have good access to library resources.
- The process that people might go through to get a NebrasKard seems, though workable, a bit convoluted and cumbersome.
- Another point that comes to light is that every library's situation and experience with NebrasKard is unique. This makes it somewhat confusing to figure out general trends in how it works and how similar or different the "rules" are between libraries. At the same time, librarians appreciated being able to tailor the program to make it work well for their library and users.
- In addition, how the program works (how many and how people use it and who they are) seems to depend on many factors such as how it is promoted or encouraged as well as the geographic location of the library in relation to regional economic activity, proximity to other libraries, location on I-80 or in further out into the "hinterlands". Cynthia Taylor, the Library Commission's research assistant observed there is a lot of movement around the state, and probably out of the state, of the materials that are checked out using the NebrasKard.

2D. Evaluate the Public Library Accreditation program to address changing library and information needs. (Note: This Goal/Activity was selected for in-depth reporting)

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Basic and Advanced *Public Library Accreditation Guidelines* will be revised with input from appropriate stakeholders.
2. The number of public libraries that meet or exceed Basic and Advanced Public Library Accreditation Guidelines will increase.

Need:

There were a variety of reasons for making this activity an integral part of the Library Commission's Long Range Plan. Between 1997 and 2002, there was little or no growth in the number of accredited libraries in communities that serve populations of less than 1,000. The percentage hovered around fifty percent, with little indication that the numbers will grow significantly. For libraries that serve larger populations (over 5,000) the percentage was at or close to 100% over the same five-year period. There has likewise been little change in the total number of accredited libraries over that same time frame. It is possible that some of these libraries provide quality library services and programs, despite the fact that they either cannot or choose not to meet the accreditation guidelines. As a result, the *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* were identified for review and revision, with the goal of developing more meaningful guidelines that will foster growth and development of library programs and services by serving as a planning tool for community analysis and library responsiveness.

Demographics:

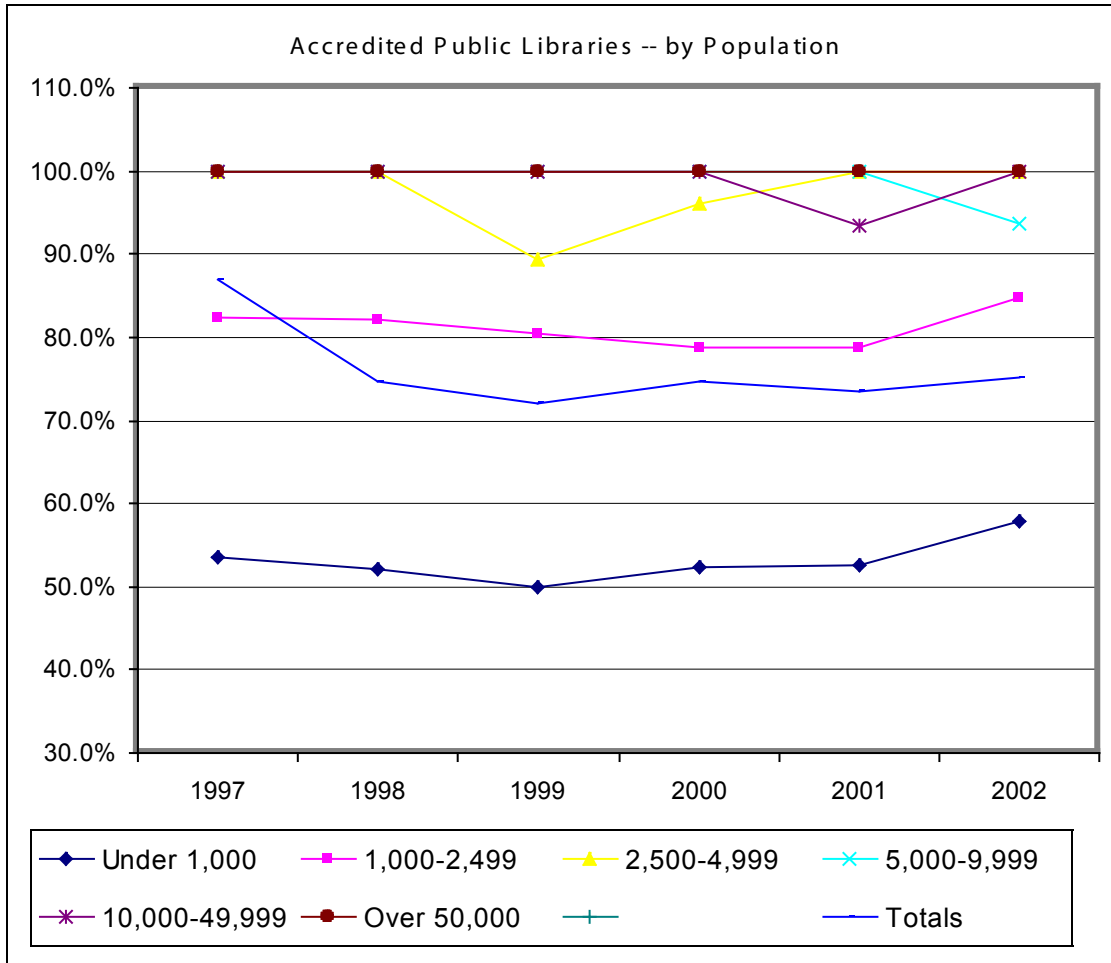
Nebraska's library and information resources are aggregated in seventeen of the state's largest communities, ranging in population from 10,000 to 470,000. Ninety-four percent of Nebraska's 275 public libraries are located in communities with a Legal Service Area less than 10,000. Most of Nebraska's rural communities simply do not have the tax base to support the variety and depth of information resources that today's citizens need to flourish in a global environment. The resource sharing infrastructure, developed and maintained by the Library Commission, exists to facilitate customer access statewide to print and electronic resources. The trend is for more library and information services to be delivered electronically, making access and use of those resources increasingly challenging.

Methodology:

A strategic action plan was developed to start this process. The first step is to identify the stakeholders. These include:

- Representatives from the public library community, including library personnel and board members; this can be accomplished in several ways, including posting information on the Library Commission Web site, making presentations to various representative groups, like the State Advisory Council and system sessions for library directors.
- System Administrators for the six regional library systems.
- Representatives from the Library Commission staff.
- Representatives from the Public Resource Library Group (PRLG).
- Representative(s) from the Public Library Section of the Nebraska Library Association.
- Library Commissioners.
- Customers.

The next step involved the compilation and analysis of baseline data. Baseline information has been compiled that provides some historical information about the implementation of the guidelines over the past five years. The chart below shows the accreditation levels for the five year period from 1997 to 2002.



This chart reflects the actual numbers of accredited public libraries during this same timeframe.

Population Served	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Under 1,000	46	49	47	45	49	62
1,000-2,499	61	60	58	56	56	56
2,500-4,999	26	27	25	25	27	19
5,000-9,999	22	19	18	25	19	15
10,000-49,999	15	15	15	15	14	15
Over 50,000	2	2	2	2	2	2
Totals	172	172	165	168	167	169

An initial internal discussion was held at the Library Commission to plan how to proceed with a review and reconsideration of the accreditation process and information was compiled about the perceived effectiveness of the public library accreditation process. The following purpose statement was developed for the Accreditation Guidelines:

Guidelines for service were developed for Nebraska public libraries in order to “assist and support improvements in Nebraska public library services.” The purpose of the accreditation process is to establish expectations for governance, services, and resources for public libraries. The anticipated outcome is that Nebraska citizens will have access to accurate, quality library and information services from public libraries that meet statewide independent guidelines.

This draft purpose statement, together with some open-ended questions about the process that get at outcomes based indicators, were presented to the stakeholders at a number of meetings held during a 24-month period.

We developed a list of the primary issues related to accreditation. These are listed below:

- Variation in local incomes/sources/per capita amounts: Traditionally the total local income reported by a library has been the figure reviewed each year for determination of per capita amounts. For example, some libraries receive funding from their county that varies from year-to-year. This variation was affecting a library’s ability to meet the maintenance-of-effort requirement until it was decided to separate local income sources and consider MOE solely on the majority funding source.
- Property tax lids/maintenance of effort & impact on MOE: Library budgets affected by local property tax lids. This might affect ability to maintain maintenance of effort.
- Outdated guidelines have not kept current with changing technologies and other services such as OCLC products.
- School/public combinations – certification of director? Service population? Board certification? The guidelines have not proved to be flexible enough to allow for alternative methods of delivering quality library programs and services and cooperative arrangements.
- Grant eligibility – Should grant applications be accepted from any library, and the grant application be considered on its own merit? This would necessitate a more rigorous grant application and review process.
- Guidelines have functioned in some communities as a tool to leverage for more hours, more money, more staff, and other enhancements to services.
- Achievement of advanced guidelines has been used in some communities as an incentive to lobby for new businesses.
- What process or changes in the existing program will foster and measure growth and development in a more meaningful way? Current Guidelines are not effectively measuring

change/growth for many libraries. For example, most of the larger libraries were able to meet the guidelines in 1996 and the guidelines have not functioned to demonstrate growth or change over time.

These issues formed the basis for the discussions held in meetings scheduled throughout the state. Feedback was collected, compiled, and analyzed, and used in the drafting of the revisions to the Guidelines.

The next step in the process involved researching standards and guidelines as they exist in other states. [See Appendix A] Several common elements comprise the standards documents reviewed. These are as follows:

- Governance
- Funding
- Staff size and educational level
- Hours
- Collection size and currency
- Equality of access (age, disability, location)
- Policy requirements
- Board of trustees' requirements (by-laws, meeting frequency, orientation)
- Program and service requirements
- Outreach and public relations
- Minimum space requirements

Meetings were scheduled to gather statewide input on the guidelines and the accreditation process. Below is a partial listing of the meetings at which the guidelines were either discussed or were the main topic of the meeting:

Initial in-house planning meeting held 12.16.02 at 1:00

Meetings to present data & invite input:

- 01.17.03 – Public Resource Library Group
- 02.05.03 – Eastern Library System Directors
- February '03 – Library Development meeting
- 02.20.03 – Northeast Library System Directors
- 03.21.03 – Public Resource Library Group
- 03.27.03 – Southeast Library System Directors
- May 2003 – Spring meetings of Public Library Section of the Nebraska Library Association (held in three cities in Nebraska)
- 06.13.03 – Panhandle Library System Directors
- 10.31.03 – Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association Conference Session
- October 2003 – Draft Guidelines posted on Commission Web site, inviting comments
- November 2003 – Draft Guidelines and review process presented to Library Commissioners, and to the State Advisory Council on Libraries
- 03.05.04 – Attend SELS meeting in Deshler to discuss Guideline revision process
- 03.12.04 – Attend SACL Meeting in Omaha to discuss Guideline revision process
- 03.17.04 – Northeast Library System Board meeting
- 03.19.04 – Attend PRLG meeting at Lincoln City Libraries to discuss Guideline revision process
- 04.05.04 – Nebraska Library Commission Staff meeting, in-house discussion of Guidelines
- 04.20.04 – Host videoconference to discuss Guideline revision process

- 04.22.04 – Post 3rd annotated Revised Guideline draft to Web
- 05.14.04 – Action item on agenda for meeting of Library Commissioners (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/commis/agendas/comag52004.html>). Commissioners’ approved Guideline draft, based on recommendations proposed by Commission staff.
- 06.03.04 – Present session at Library/Media Training Institute, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, re: revision of Accreditation Guidelines
- 06.11.04 – Present session at Panhandle Library System Annual Meeting in Sidney, NE, on the revision of Accreditation Guidelines
- 06.24.04 – Revised Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation available on Commission’s Web site (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/Statistics/accred.html>)

Accreditation is a three-year process for Nebraska public libraries. Each year about one-third of public libraries are scheduled to renew accreditation, so it was decided that these revised guidelines would be gradually implemented over a three year period. In 2007, all accredited libraries are now accredited under these guidelines, with 62% of public libraries currently accredited. http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/statistics/Accreditation/Accred_Dates.ASP#download Of these, 101 have Essential Accreditation, 57 Enhanced Accreditation, and 12 Excellent Accreditation.

During this timeframe, it was decided that the number of accredited libraries might be increased if it were possible to obtain statistical reports for the 50 or so libraries that routinely declined to submitted annual statistical data. The previous evaluation project conducted by the Library Commission, *Making a Difference @ your library*TM, indicated that there may be more libraries able to meet the guidelines, if sufficient information could be obtained about the funding and services of those libraries. In 2005, a “Dollars for Data” program was implemented, with the goal of encouraging non-reporting libraries to do so in order to qualify for a small stipend of state aid.

In 2005, the Library Commission awarded Dollars for Data payments of \$250 to twenty-seven unaccredited public libraries that used BibliostatTM Collect to complete the annual Public Library Statistical Survey for the 2004 data collection year. Data submission ensures that the Nebraska Library Commission and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) have a clear picture of public library service throughout Nebraska. Since data submission is necessary for meeting the standards of service outlined in the *Public Library Accreditation Guidelines*, these libraries were then one step closer to achieving accredited status. And in fact, the following year, six of those libraries went on to become accredited. In 2006, twenty-seven unaccredited libraries again qualified for the Dollars for Data payment, and one of these libraries became accredited in 2007.

One issue raised by representatives of the Public Resource Library Group (PRLG), which is comprised of library directors from Nebraska’s largest public libraries, tied accreditation to increased funding:

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS = FUNDING

It was repeated several times and we reminded ourselves that “Accreditation is about funding. It is about Standards.” We preferred the term “standards” to “guidelines”. The standards should be descriptive in nature, not prescriptive. Someone said “Financial resources need to be harnessed to provide funding for public libraries to grow.”

With this input in mind, the Library Commission implemented incentive state aid payments for libraries that achieved one of the advanced levels of accreditation. In 2007, a proposal was developed to acknowledge the advanced accreditation levels achieved by 69 libraries. At their January 12 meeting, the Library Commissioners approved an incentive payment to acknowledge the achievement of enhanced

and excellent accreditation status by some of Nebraska's public libraries. The Commissioners have approved incentive State Aid payments for Enhanced and Excellent accredited libraries as follows:

- Libraries with Excellent Accreditation status will receive an additional direct state aid payment of \$800.00.
- Libraries with Enhanced Accreditation status will receive an additional direct state aid payment of \$350.00.

Summary:

In 2007, the number of accredited libraries is slightly higher than it was in 2002. One reason for this is that funding issues have impacted libraries to a larger extent than anticipated, and the funding requirements for achieving accreditation continued to be out of reach for some communities. One of Nebraska's larger libraries continues to charge for public access to the Internet, which is in violation of the guidelines, so that library has decided to forego accredited status. We anticipate continued increased participation in the accreditation process, and as a result, continued growth and development of the programs and services available in Nebraska public libraries.

Another change resulting from the revised Guidelines is that some libraries are now accredited that in the past had never met the basic guidelines. One reason for this is that the revised guidelines include data-related information, with the population size of service areas under 500 as an additional category. The requirements for various guidelines are based on the reported data for libraries of that size, making them more realistic and more achievable.

The implementation of the revised guidelines, the Dollars for Data state aid program, and the incentive aid programs for Enhanced and Excellent. Each year, we receive annual statistical data from a larger percentage of public libraries, providing a more complete picture of the quality and extent of public library service available in Nebraska. This increased data allows for the planning and implementation of more effective and appropriate workshops, grants, and other activities for Library Commission staff.

Guidelines and Standards in Other states

Indiana (<http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/isl/ldo/pubstan.html>)

Purpose: Standards for public libraries are established to encourage local libraries to maintain a minimum level of service and to establish criteria for eligibility to receive state and federal appropriations.

Standard 1: The library must operate in compliance with Indiana laws, including the Public Library Law (IC 20-14-2; IC 20-14-6; IC 20-14-7-6), the Indiana Library and Historical Department Law (IC 4-23-7), and other Indiana laws that affect municipal units.

Standard 2: The library must comply with federal laws affecting employment practice and facilities management.

Standard 3: The library board shall be governed by written by-laws that outline its purpose and operational procedures. The library is encouraged to file a current copy with the Indiana State Library.

Standard 4: The library shall have a written long-range plan of service for two (2) to five (5) years, including the following:

- (1) A statement of community needs, goals, and measurable objectives.
- (2) A method for periodic review and evaluation.

Such plans should include participation by the community, library board and staff. The library is encouraged to file a current copy with the Indiana State Library.

Standard 5: The library shall have a written automation plan that conforms with the automation standards in 590 IAC 2 adopted by the Indiana Library and Historical Board. The library is encouraged to file a current copy of its automation/technology plan with the Indiana State Library.

Standard 6: The library board shall adopt the following:

- (1) A written collection development policy.
- (2) Principles of access to all library materials and services.

The library is encouraged to file a current copy with the Indiana State Library.

Standard 7: The library board and director shall maintain their separate functions as follows:

- (1) The board is responsible for governance.
- (2) The director is responsible for administration.

Standard 8: All library trustees shall follow the principles discussed in current state publications for trustees that are approved by the Indiana State Library.

Indiana also includes guidelines for enhanced services and programs. Meeting these guidelines is not a requirement for eligibility for receipt of state funds.

Iowa (<http://www.silo.lib.ia.us/for-ia-libraries/accr-and-standards/index.html>)

“The voluntary Standards and Accreditation Program encourages the ongoing development of quality library services in Iowa. As of 5/21/02, 65 libraries have been accredited through June 30, 2005. An additional 7 have met accreditation requirements. There are currently 240 accredited public libraries.

To recognize this achievement, the library receives a certificate and a higher rate of compensation through Enrich Iowa. News releases are also sent to local media outlets.

The accreditation process is extensive and requires a strong, ongoing local commitment to excellence in library services. To be accredited, a library must meet 29 required measures and an additional 43 locally selected standards in the areas of library governance, administration & funding, staffing, collections, services, public relations, and access & facilities. To remain accredited, a library must reaffirm eligibility every three years.

Iowa's public library accreditation has been in place 18 years. The library community has revised the PUBLIC LIBRARY MEASURES OF QUALITY three times to keep pace with the changes in the delivery of services. Iowa's measures of quality have been used as the basis of similar programs developed by other states.

There has always been grassroots support of the Public Library Accreditation Program. However, because of Enrich Iowa and its purpose to improve library services, the number of Iowa libraries striving and meeting accreditation requirements is growing rapidly.”

Iowa's program includes three tiers of implementation. The standards are taken from the publication, *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measurements of Quality*, which includes 88 performance measures that outline quality library service in six major areas: Governance/Administration/Funding, Staffing, Collections, Services, Public Relations, and Access/Facilities. To achieve accreditation, a library must meet all 29 required measures at a level C (described as “adequate”) or better, as well as 43 of the remaining 59 measures. Libraries at Tier 1 or Tier 2 levels are eligible for some state funds, but not as much as a fully accredited library is eligible to receive. Iowa reports that they “have seen a substantial increase in the # of libraries that meet the various measures as well as in the number of accredited libraries over the past several years” but also that it is a very time-consuming program to administer.

Ten specific standards must be met by Tier 1 of the standards:

Standard 2: The library is established and maintained according to the provisions of local ordinance.

Standard 4: The library board has complete authority, within legal limits, over the library's budget and over all gifts, bequests, and donations.

Standard 7: The library board follows statutory requirements as to fiscal year, audits, and budgeting, and makes annual and other reports to its finding authority(ies), the Regional Library System, and to the State Library of Iowa.

Standard 8: The library board has written by-laws which outline its purpose and operational procedures. These by-laws are reviewed at least every three years.

Standard 10: The board meets regularly (no fewer than 10 meetings per year) with the library director in attendance, at a time and place convenient for the board and community and in accordance with the state's open meetings law.

Standard 25: The library has a permanent, paid director who is, or will be within two years of hire, certified at a required level. A library with a director who was certified at ANY level prior

to 1992 fulfills this measure for as long as 1) the library employs that director and 2) the library director fulfills continuing education requirements to continue participating in the certification program.

Required Certification Levels for Library Directors by Population of City.

Population of City	Certification Levels
0 - 2,499	I, II, III, IV, V, VI
2,500 - 4,999	II, III, IV, V, VI
5,000 - 19,999	IV, V, VI
20,000 and above	VI

Standard 70: Library hours are fixed, posted, and include morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours based on users' and potential users' disposable time. An evening hour is defined as after 5:00 p.m. The library must be open until at least 5:30 p.m. one day a week to satisfy this measure.

Standard 74: The library has a telephone with the number listed in both the white and yellow pages of the telephone directory readily available to its customers and listed in the local phone book.

Standard 77: The library has a catalog of its holdings located in an area easily accessible to users, staff and materials. A catalog is defined as a listing of the library's holdings. Catalogs may take many forms, including books, card, microfiche and computer catalogs. [From In Service to Iowa. Public Library Measures of Quality, 3rd edition Appendix F.]

Standard 88: A book return is provided for returning library materials when the library is closed.

Fifteen additional standards must be met by Tier 2 of the standards.

Standard 9 (R5): The library board adopts written policies for operations, collection development, and personnel, and reviews them at least every three years. All these policies are available for public inspection.

Standard 14 (R9): Library Visits Per Capita. The library determines the number of people who come into the library during a specified time each year and then compares it with the jurisdiction population.

Standard 26 (R12): The library has adopted personnel policies outlining the conditions and requirements of employment of library staff; these policies are consistent with state and federal regulations, are reviewed at least every three years, and are made available to all staff members.

Standard 33: The library allocates funds for purchasing materials in all appropriate formats based on its collection development policy, the library's plan, current use and the role(s) the library has chosen.

Standard 35 (R13): The library maintains a current, thoroughly weeded collection of books appropriate to the roles(s) the library has chosen. (See Appendix C for holdings by population and Appendix F.)

Standard 36 (R14): The library maintains a collection of current periodicals appropriate to the role(s) the library has chosen (See Appendix C for holdings by population.)

Standard 37 (R15): The library maintains a collection of audio recordings (for example, compact discs, audio-cassettes), video and/or film materials, and other non-print materials (e.g., computer software, slides, toys, games, art reproductions) appropriate to the role(s) the library has chosen. (See Appendix C for holdings by population.)

Standard 38 (R16): The library maintains a current collection of core reference materials selected from recommended lists and additional sources selected to suit the role(s) the library has chosen.

Standard 40 (R17): Every item in the library's collection is evaluated for retention, replacement, or withdrawal at least every three years to determine its usefulness according to the library's collection development policy. Three percent or more of the collection is withdrawn each year.

Standard 41 (R18): The library's collection is up-to-date. Three percent or more of the collection is added each year.

Standard 42 (R19): Turnover rate is the average circulation per item owned. Turnover rate is computed by dividing total annual circulation by total holdings. Figures for holdings should reflect both cataloged and un-cataloged items except for periodical holdings.

Standard 43: Circulation per Capita. The library determines the number of items that circulate. Circulation per capita is computed by dividing total circulation by jurisdiction population.

Standard 62 (R22): The library uses at least four approaches to publicity. The approaches listed below are generally accepted as effective.

Standard 66 (R23): The library board adopts policies consistent with the principles set forth in the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights and all official ALA interpretations. (See Appendix G)

Standard 71 (R25)

Minimum days and hours of service are as follows, with consideration always given to weekend and evening hours:

Population	A/Not less than	B/Not less than	C/Not less than
Under 500	5 days/25 hrs	5 days/20 hrs.	4 days/20hrs
500-999	5 days/25 hrs	5 days/20 hrs	4 days/20 hrs
1,000-2,499	6 days/ 35 hrs	6 days/25 hrs	5 days/20 hrs
2,500-4,999	6 days/45 hrs	6 days/35 hrs	5 days/25 hrs
5,000-9,999	7 days/56 hrs	6 days/50 hrs	5 days/45 hrs
10,000-24,999	7 days/68 hrs	6 days/64 hrs	6 days/56 hrs
25,000-49,999	7 days/72 hrs	6 days/68 hrs	6 days/64 hrs
50,000-	7 days/72 hrs	6 days/68 hrs	6 days/64 hrs

A library that meets the Tier 1 or 2 level is not considered accredited. These are mileposts toward accreditation, which requires that all 29 required measures be met, as well as 43 of the remaining 59 measures.

Michigan (http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal_lm_State_Aid_Guidelines_140437_7.pdf)

Michigan has a publication entitled, *State Aid Guidelines for Michigan Libraries*. In addition to statutory information, this publication includes guidelines for public libraries and library cooperatives.

New Jersey (http://www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Library_Law/lwaid001.php)

New Jersey requires that public libraries meet certain requirements in order to be eligible for state aid grants. These are listed as part of the library laws of New Jersey. These requirements cover governance, staffing, level of education of library personnel, collection size, and service hours.

New York (<http://unix2.nysed.gov/libdev/ministan.htm>)

Standards for Registration of Public, Free Association and Indian Libraries

(a) A public, free association or Indian library will be registered if it meets the following standards satisfactory to the commissioner:

(1) is governed by written bylaws which outline the responsibilities and procedures of the library board of trustees;

(2) has a board-approved, written long-range plan of service;

(3) presents an annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its goals and objectives;

(4) has board-approved written policies for the operation of the library;

(5) presents annually to appropriate funding agencies a written budget which would enable the library to meet or exceed these standards and to carry out its long-range plan of service;

(6) periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the library's collection and services in meeting community needs;

(7) is open the following scheduled hours:

Population	Minimum Weekly Hours Open
Up to 500	12
500-2,499	20
2,500-4,999	25
5,000-14,999	35
15,000-24,999	40
25,000-99,999	55
100,000 and above	60

(8) maintains a facility to meet community needs, including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, and restroom;

(9) has a telephone, photocopier, microcomputer, printer, tele-facsimile machine and other equipment necessary to facilitate access to information;

(10) distributes printed information listing the library's hours open, borrowing rules, services, location and phone number.

(11) employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of Section 90.8 of this Part.

(b) Any public, free association or Indian library registered by the department at the time this section takes effect shall be required to meet the standards for registration in subdivision (a) of this section on the following schedule:

(1) meet the standards of paragraphs (1) through (5) and (10) of subdivision (a) of this section on or before January 1, 1995.

(2) meet the standards of paragraph (6) of subdivision (a) of this section on or before January 1, 1997.

(3) meet the standards of paragraphs (7), (8), (9) and (11) of subdivision (a) of this section on or before January 1, 1999.

(c) Variances. If circumstances over which any public, free association or Indian library has no control prevent it from meeting one or more of the standards of service set forward in subdivision (a) of this section, such library may apply for a variance for such standard(s). The application for such variance shall be submitted for such library by the public library system of which such library is a member, in a form prescribed by the commissioner. No variance granted pursuant to this subdivision shall be deemed to relieve a public, free association or Indian library of any obligation imposed by any other provision of federal or state law.

North Carolina (<http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc/ld/staid/staidrul.htm>)

Requirements for state aid eligibility for North Carolina public libraries are as follows:

1. Be legally established as required by North Carolina statutes.
2. Provide Library services easily available without discrimination to all residents of the political subdivision supporting the library.
3. Employ a director having a valid North Carolina public librarian certificate and experience as a public librarian or administrator.
4. Secure operational funds from local government sources at least equal to the amount budgeted the previous year. A grant to a local public library from the Aid to Public Libraries Fund shall not be terminated but shall be reduced proportionately by the Department of Cultural Resources if the local funding for a public library was reduced by the local governing body as part of an overall general budgetary reduction reflecting local economic conditions and local government fiscal constraints. State funds shall not replace local funds appropriated for public library operations.
5. Expend funds as authorized in the adopted budget. Any library having an unencumbered operational balance of more than seventeen percent (17%) of the previous year's operating receipts will have the difference deducted from its state allocation.
6. Obtain aggregate operational funds from local sources at least equaling state aid.
7. Pay salaries for professional positions funded from state aid that are no less than the scale required by the division of state library.
8. Obtain an annual audit of library accounts according to generally accepted accounting principles and submit a copy of this audit to the division of state library.
9. Submit a copy of bylaws and personnel policies to the division of state library.
10. Compile an assessment of the library needs of the community, prepare and annually revise a long-range plan of service, and submit copies of needs assessment and long-range plans of service to the division of state library.
11. Submit a copy of the agreement establishing the regional or county library, if composed of more than one local governmental unit.

12. Meet the following stipulations when establishing a new library or withdrawing from a larger system:

- a. meet all qualifications for the state aid to public libraries program on July 1 of the year prior to the fiscal year that the library plans to receive state aid,
- b. continue to meet all qualifications for the state aid to public libraries program from July 1 to June 30 of that year, which shall be known as the demonstration year,
- c. file a full application for state aid by the June 30 deadline at the close of the demonstration year in order to receive state aid in the next fiscal year.

Oklahoma (<http://www.odl.state.ok.us/servlibs/statute.htm>)

The only reference to guidelines and standards that appears on the Web site of the Oklahoma State Library Agency reads as follows:

Library Development staff assist the ODL Board with its duties to formulate standards for public and special libraries; utilize such standards as guidelines in the accreditation of libraries and the apportionment of state and federal funds to libraries; and, in the certification of public librarians. (65 O.S. 1991, §2-101)

Rhode Island (<http://www.lori.state.ri.us/publications/standards.php>)

In 1983, Rhode Island published *Minimum Standards for Rhode Island Public Libraries*, which were implemented in 1988. In 1998 work began on a revised version of these standards, with implementation expected by July 1, 2003.

“...libraries must comply with the standards or receive an approved waiver in order to receive state grant-in-aid....Through standards, the state assures each citizen access to a minimum level of library service which effectively meets his or her information needs.” (p. i)

The current document also specifies the time frame for the next revision (2008). The Rhode Island standards are based on a philosophical statement and a statement of principles. Each principle is supported by appropriate standards that are designed to ensure that the principle is maintained by individual libraries.

Texas <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/autostand>)

The following is the response received from a representative at the Texas State Library:

Texas administers a regional system membership program which relies on library service population. For more information please see:
<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/libsysact/index.html>

The Texas Library Association, our statewide membership organization, has worked on standards for public libraries but this process is ongoing and not yet a part of the State Library. Please see:
<http://www.txla.org/groups/plstand/faq.html>

Utah (<http://library.utah.gov/plstandards.html>)

Utah recognizes three types of public libraries: volunteer, which receives no local government support; transitional, which is recognized by the community and local authorities as a public entity, and is funded in whole or in part by local tax dollars; and a certified public library, which is one established according to Utah law and which meets all of the standards. Standards were first developed in 1982, implemented in 1987, and published in a document entitled, *The Upgrade Process: Planning, Evaluating, and*

Measuring for Excellence in Public Library Service. These were revised in 1997 and 2002.

Utah's standards include an appendix on *Planning Methodologies, and Planning Model I includes Outcome Based Evaluation*, which is defined as:

“an organized process of developing an outcome based program and an evaluation plan which helps libraries articulate and establish clear program benefits (outcomes), identify ways to measure those program benefits (indicators), clarify the specific individuals or groups for which the program's benefits are intended (target audience), and design program services to reach that audience and achieve the desired results.”

2E. Develop and promote library and information services for children and young adults.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Library personnel will have improved ability to meet the library and information service needs of children and young adults.
2. Use of library and information services by Nebraska children and young adults will increase.

Observations: The Library Commission provided a variety of workshops and continuing education events organized to educate, enlighten and/or share ideas. The events targeted different age ranges of service, different needs, and included opportunities to share ideas.

- Thirteen video conferences provided librarians with the opportunity to learn new ideas with a minimum of travel involved. As many as nine videoconference sites were possible for each session (although the average was 5 sites), and a copy of session was added to the Commission's collection for later viewing. The video conference topics covered included:
 1. Writing Grants for Youth Projects (multiple years)
 2. Terrific After-School Programs for K-Grade 5
 3. All These Teens are Coming into My Library: Now What Do I Do?
 4. Bienvenidos! – Welcome to the World of Services for Hispanic Youth
 5. Young Adult Services @your library – Part 1: Resources
 6. Young Adult Services @your library – Part 2: Teens Want Graphic Novels and So Do You
 7. Toddler Time
 8. Home Schooling
 9. Services to Spanish Speaking Children
 10. Computer and Information Literacy
- Patrick Jones presented two workshops in December of 2005, one in Seward and one in North Platte, for Young adult librarians, entitled, “You are, but IM: Best Practices and New Directions to Serving Young Adults in Schools and Public Libraries.” The workshop in Seward was taped for later viewing. Patrick Jones has been a proponent for excellent library services to teens for decades. He

brought his enthusiasm and useful suggestions to these two workshops.

- Kimberly Bolan (Taney), author of *Teen Spaces: The Step-By-Step Library Makeover*, presented a workshop based on her book in five locations in Nebraska, sharing ideas of ways to make the library more appealing to teen patrons. Venues were Alliance, McCook, Broken Bow, Seward and Norfolk. Her enthusiasm was infectious and extended to a number of public libraries sharing photos of their current teen area, with Kim sharing suggestions for changes. For three years following her presentations, the Youth Grants for Excellence have had “teen spaces” as a priority for grant funding. As a result, many of our libraries have now responded with new teen spaces, and new or renovated libraries have planned spaces specifically for this user group.



Kimberly Bolan Taney presents Teen Spaces workshops.

- Summer Reading Programs workshops based on the multi-state cooperative theme and materials, were held each year in six locations across the state. These sessions are offered in conjunction with Nebraska’s six regional library Systems. They provided librarians with ideas and approaches to enhance the library experience for children and young adults during the summer and throughout the year. Support offered by Commission staff and with Commission funding is tailored to the wishes of the presentation in each System. Some, for example, emphasize “make-and-take” workshops, while others wish to focus on programming. In either case, Commission staff offer reviews of books appropriate to that year’s theme. One interesting development is that the multi-state cooperative now has a children’s theme, and a young adult theme, with separate programming ideas, titles, etc. The latter helps libraries focus on an older library user by presenting relevant services to this group as well.



N.L. Sharp presents Summer Reading Program workshops.

Consistently, some librarians returning their Summer Reading Program evaluation report have noted that the number of children and teens has increased over the previous summers.

2F. Promote and support library and information services for Nebraskans for whom English is a learned language (ELL).

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Existing ELL library programs and services will be inventoried.
2. Library personnel will have access to existing models of library and information services to meet local ELL needs.
3. Grants will be provided to support library and information services to meet local ELL needs.

Observations

No action has taken place to inventory existing ELL library programs and services apart from self-reporting from libraries.

Youth Grants for Excellence were awarded to six public libraries to assist in meeting local needs for the provision of library and information services to Nebraskans for whom English is a learned language (ELL).

In 2004, projects for English Language Learners were identified as priority projects for LSTA grants awarded. Four of the grants funded that year targeted Hispanic population needs.

2002

Wayne Public Library purchased bilingual (Spanish/English) materials for the children's collection.

Central City Public Library, in part for their "Spanish for Kids" program. They asked high school students (members of the Spanish Club) to assist elementary age children in learning common phrases in Spanish. Spanish language books were added to the children's collection.

2003

Lincoln City Libraries' grant provided funding for family literacy support materials translated to Spanish for Spanish-speaking families.

Norfolk Public Library received two grants, one to allow their children's librarian to attend REFORMA/MPLA/NLA Tri-Conference in Nevada to learn more about services to Spanish-speaking families. The second grant was for the library to develop bilingual story times for Spanish language literature experiences.

The Commission provided grant funding to support the 2003 Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association preconference on Service to the Hispanic population. Two Hispanic authors, Roberto Rodriguez and Francisco Jiménez, came to Grand Island for the preconference.

2004

One LSTA grant was awarded in 2004 to Grand Island Public Library for the purpose of analyzing the needs of the city's growing Hispanic, and other, populations. As part of this grant entitled,

“‘As Long as it Takes’ English Language Learner/Lifelong Learner Library Services,” multicultural Consultant, Yolanda J. Cuesta was hired to assist the librarians and community in assessing these needs and providing services based on the needs. The county has seen a significant increase in Hispanic population, a figure which grew 9.6% while the total population grew at a rate of only .15%. This project includes a commendable cooperative effort with other community entities: local food producers, school district, Literacy Coalition, Family Focus Coalition, and others so that there would be a comprehensive approach to providing services to new users. This effort fit well with the library’s other efforts to develop the library’s services to children as, “The Family Place.”

2005-2006

The Prime Time family Reading Time[®] project in Nebraska, which brings Spanish-speaking families into the library for programs, was funded in part by the Nebraska Library Commission as part of the IMCS Recruitment Grant.

Commission Support:

Videoconferences: Two of the videoconferences listed under Goal 2E address this goal as well: “Services to Spanish Speaking Children (July 2002) and “Bienvenidos! Welcome to the World of Services to Hispanic Youth” (April 2004).

Commission Website: The Commission also maintains a list of “Hispanic Resources” kept up-to-date by its Reference team as part of its “Best of the Web” effort.

2G. Provide statewide reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Library personnel will have the ability to provide better reference, interlibrary loan and government information services locally.
2. Nebraskans will have enhanced print and electronic access to state and federal government information.

Strategies and Activities:

Electronic State Documents Program

Nebraska library personnel and citizen access to government publications in tangible formats (i.e. print, microform, CD/DVD) has often been limited to loans from the Library Commission collection or use of microfiche at libraries participating in the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse depository program. Inclusion of the microfiche in library online catalogs was limited to a handful of depositories. Nebraska government agencies are increasingly, and sometimes exclusively, using websites to publish key reports. Since 1996, the Library Commission has linked to publications on state agency websites via *Nebraska State Government Publications Online* <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/statepubsonline/>>. However, key

items were often added or removed without notice. Broadening user access to, and ensuring continued availability of, online publications was identified as an objective in the 2002-2007 LSTA plan.

In July 2005, new technology for writing images to microfilm provided a cost-effective way to broaden access to publications, archive electronic versions, and continue to preserve key publications in microform. Microfiche production and distribution was discontinued and the *Electronic State Documents Program* <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/epubs.html>> was launched. Key publications are scanned or downloaded from agency sites, linked from *Nebraska State Government Publications Online*, and the Library Commission online catalog, and image files used to produce archival microfilm. URLs of the archived versions are included in OCLC records and lists posted on the Program web site. Subscribers receive email alerts and can download catalog records into their own systems. URLs are included in the bimonthly What's Up Doc newsletter.

Ask a Librarian Service on Nebraska State Government Website

During the 2002-2007 period Library Commission reference staff has consulted with the host of *Nebraska.gov*, the official Nebraska web site <<http://www.nebraska.gov>>, about enhancing citizen access to state government information. The *Nebraska.gov* Citizen Portal was created in late 2002 with input from The Library Commission's reference staff. It links to many of the Commission's popular Frequently Asked Questions, most of which point users to online Nebraska government information.

The Commission also provides an "Ask a Librarian" <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/docs/needhelp.html>> service linked from *Nebraska.gov*. A live chat function was added in January 2007, which is proving to be a popular alternative to email.

Federal Documents

Increasing emphasis on electronic federal documents and declining usage of the tangible collection led to an evaluation of the Library Commission's participation in the GPO Depository program. The Library Commission consulted with the GPO and the Regional Depository at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Libraries. It was determined that Nebraska library personnel and citizen information needs would continue to be met if the Commission reduced its selection rate to about 2%, weeded the collection and added records for high-interest tangible and electronic federal publications to the Commission catalog. Documents staff has refocused efforts on the Electronic Nebraska state publications program, digitization of historical Library Commission documents, and digitization of older high-interest Nebraska government publications.

Classes, Tours, Presentations

Library Commission staff provide presentations about government information and information services to library science students, state agency personnel, attendees at library system training events, Nebraska Library Association meetings, and other venues. Special workshops such as one in November 2006 on using the American Community Survey are also offered.



Outputs and Outcomes:

Since July 2005, over 2800 e-docs have been downloaded from state agency sites or scanned from print. Staff in other libraries appreciate the ability to selectively download OCLC records for publications of high interest to their customers, and the assurance that links in the records will remain active. The e-publications subdirectory now ranks as the third most access subdirectory on the Library Commission web site. The *Ask a Librarian* site linked from *Nebraska.gov* ranks in our top 40 most –accessed web pages. Over 66864 federal documents have been weeded since July 2002 and the remaining documents are accessible via the online catalog.

Comments from librarians:

“I viewed with some skepticism the Nebraska Library Commission’s plan to convert the Nebraska government documents program from microfiche to electronic. Preservation issues for the titles concerned me as well as having a permanent copy on our library’s collection. Now that the program has been operating for several years, I am wholeheartedly in favor of it. Access has been broadened to anyone with Internet access, rather than to just the people who visit our library to use the microfiche titles. From a librarian’s point of view, creating what I call “collective pages” was an excellent idea. Rather than having to make changes to our cataloging records for each new edition individually for ongoing titles, we are able to create one link that goes to a page containing several editions/annual reports/etc. We know that, in the future, new ones will be added to this page without our having to do anything to our records. We can “touch” a record once and be done with it. I am converting individual links in as many of our records as possible to the “collective” page links. The fact that you are downloading the documents onto your own server addresses my concern with preservation. This is an essential safeguard. We won’t be dependent on state government agencies’ whims as to whether or not a title remains available on their web site in the future. The information won’t just disappear. From a skeptic to a believer - thanks for your efforts to make Nebraska government information more easily accessible to a much wider audience.”

“This time I added or updated 153 records. Melissa Cast (our Education librarian) sends her thanks for all the Dept. of Education documents included this time. I very much appreciated seeing the “Special Investigator’s” report to the Governor concerning the Kirk murder in 1984. Lots of somersaults were performed trying to locate a copy of that report, and it’s especially good to know that Internet access is now easily available. Our paper copy (thanks again) has been nicely bound and awaits the next interested person.”

“Would you mind sending me a copy of the “Clearinghouse Publications Form” that I fill out when I send legislative documents to you? If you are able to send it electronically that would be even better...”

.(URL of online form sent)... Wow! Life just keeps getting better and better. Thanks, Beth”

Comments from patrons:

“HI LISA, THANK YOU FOR THE SOLAR PLANS, TAKE CARE” (this publication had been scanned and posted on the State Publications Online site)

(from a walk-in customer’s comments) “He... gave high praise to the services that we offer. He said that prior to retiring, he audited state agencies and non-profits receiving state funds. He had a lot say about salaries for state employees vs. salaries received in non-profit agencies...he has kept watch on our budget over the years, and observed that we receive little increases compared to budget increases other agencies receive. He has always been very impressed with the service that we offer, and with how accessible our location is, especially given the amount of funding that we receive.”

(from an online chat about government forms) “Hi Beth, I did get some help from the Creighton Law Library! Thank You Very Much!

(from an email about government real estate forms) “Thanks Beth - you are great!

(from a request for a map of a voting district) “Thank you very much Beth. What a great service!”

“Hi Beth, Wow, that was fast! The pdf is perfect, I’m printing it off right now. Nothing like a pro librarian!”

” Wonderful! Thank you very much! We’ve been looking for this for a long time.”

Class and tour comments:

Thank you so much for taking the time to give our Special Libraries class a talk and tour, especially on a weekend. It was very much appreciated. The information you provided is incredibly useful for us to have, especially those of us who work in Nebraska libraries. “

“Thank you for your presentation on Saturday. As a new librarian, I was thrilled to see all the resources available for my students through the Commission. Thank you for working so hard to give us great resources.”

“Thank you for taking the time to give our class an interesting discussion and tour of the Nebraska Library Commission this past Saturday. You guys down there are a valuable resource to us!”

Overall Impact

The intended outcome that Nebraskans will have enhanced print and electronic access to state and federal government information is being met. The Library Commission’s government information services are changing in response to the changing publications environment and changing user expectations.

2H. Provide support for and promote the Nebraska Center for the Book (affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book).

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Public awareness of books written by Nebraska writers or books published in Nebraska will increase.
2. Public participation in author programs or book discussion groups will increase.
3. Public interest in reading and writing will increase, with particular focus on school age children and youth.
4. Reading skills by children and youth will improve.

Need: Activities in this goal area relate to an ongoing need for the Library Commission to support and improve the ability of local libraries to provide consistent library and information services and programs that meet community needs. Since its inception in 1990, the Nebraska Library Commission has served as one of the sponsoring agencies for the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB), a natural step in our work promoting the value of writing, books, and reading. The Library Commission's roles as the "host" agency for NCB includes development of a membership and contact database, publication of the newsletter, public relations assistance, limited staff support for the Center for the Book board, development of an archive, and funding for publications and program support expenses.

Outcomes:

1. Public awareness of books written by Nebraska writers or books published in Nebraska will increase.

Nebraska Center for the Book

The Articles of Incorporation of the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB) state that "the Center shall act as a catalyst, bringing together individuals and organizations to build the Nebraska community of the book. The Center shall serve as a partner and supporter of programs, events, and unique projects which celebrate the written word."

The Nebraska Center for the Book brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book. We are the people who know and love books, and who value the richness they bring to our lives. Our Nebraska Center supports programs to celebrate and stimulate public interest in books, reading, and the written word. We have been an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress since 1990. The Nebraska Book Festival grew out of the Nebraska Poetry Festival in 1985 and 1986, then the Nebraska Literature Festival after 1986, and became the Nebraska Book Festival in 2002 to reflect the broader focus of the gathering.

Annual programs, events, and unique projects of the Nebraska Center for the Book

- The annual Nebraska Book Festival
- Letters About Literature contest
- Nebraska Book Awards, which "recognizes and honors books that are written by Nebraska authors, published by Nebraska publishers, set in Nebraska, or relating to Nebraska"

- Jane Pope Geske Award, which “recognizes a Nebraska association, organization, business, library, school, academic institution, or other group that has made an exceptional, long-term contribution to one or more of these fields in Nebraska: Literacy, Reading, Bookselling, Books, Libraries, or Writing”
- Mildred Bennett Award, which “recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to fostering the literary tradition in Nebraska”
- *NCBNews*, A Publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book, is published each year, and contains news about the Nebraska Center for the Book, the Nebraska Book Festival, announces winners of NCB Awards, provides book reviews, and includes a calendar of events related to literacy and the humanities.
- Web site for the Nebraska Center for the Book
- Web site for the Nebraska Book Festival
- One Book One Nebraska Participant
- National Book Festival Participant in the Pavilion of the States
- National Idea Exchange Participant



Devra Dragos (right), of the Nebraska Library Commission, staffs the booth at the National Book Festival.

Nebraska Book Festival

The Nebraska Book Festival is hosted each year by a local organization, providing local arrangements and programming. The change of name from Nebraska Literature Festival to Nebraska Book Festival in 2001 broadens the scope of the event to include authors and books from other venues. While a portion of the Festival may be dedicated to Nebraska writers and books, the Festival celebrates the reading and writing life throughout the world. Activities typically have included a day focusing on middle and high school students, a reception and Nebraska-related film Friday evening, and a diverse selection of activities, presentations, workshops, and readings throughout the day and evening on Saturday. All activities are free to the public.

Attendance has been between 500 and 700 each year.

The Nebraska Book Festival director’s salary is supported through a grant from the Nebraska Library Commission, funded with state and federal LSTA funds.

Book Festival Themes and Locations, 2002-2006

2006 – October 6-7: “Beyond Borders: Nebraska & the World” held at Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln

Initiated a Saturday program for young children to involve them with storytelling, reading, and books, and to enhance the festival experience for parents.

2005 – October 7-8: *Local Wonders* held at Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln

Keynote address by Nebraska author Ted Kooser, author of *Local Wonders*, *Seasons in the Bohemian Alps* and U.S. Poet Laureate.

2004 – September 17-18: “Voices of a Different Plain” held at University of Nebraska at Kearney

Comments from participants expressed their appreciation of the great resources available through our Nebraska writers and scholars. After attending several of the sessions on the featured book, *A Different Plain*, one person wrote, “Lovely to hear voices of authors reading.” Another commented, “It’s enlightening to hear writers discuss their methods, reasons for writing, joys, and difficulties.” Reactions to other sessions included “It gave spiritual and new meaning to my life,” “Much practical information,” “Thanks for involving the audience—enjoyed having a chance to ‘think’,” and “Appreciated the Handouts.”

2003 – October 24-25: “Books Alive” held at Creighton University, Omaha

Reception featured National Book Award Finalist Ron Hansen.

2002 – September 13-14: “A Sense of Time, A Sense of Place” held at the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island

Banquet, attended by 197 and featuring Bob Greene, author of *Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen* as keynote speaker.

The Nebraska Book Awards



The Nebraska Book Awards program, sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB) and supported by the Nebraska Library Commission recognizes and honors books that are written by Nebraska authors, published by Nebraska publishers, set in Nebraska, or concerning Nebraska. These awards increased the visibility of Nebraska writers and focused attention on the Nebraska literary community. Award categories include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children’s books, and book design/covers. For a complete list of award winners, see <http://www.unl.edu/NCB/programs.html>.

Jane Pope Geske Award

The Jane Pope Geske Award is given for exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, bookselling, or writing in Nebraska. The award, established by the Nebraska Center for the Book and presented annually, commemorates Geske’s passion for books. It was established in recognition of her contribution to the well-being of the libraries of Nebraska. Jane Pope Geske, a former Nebraska Library Commission Director, was a founding member of the Nebraska Center for the Book and a long-time

leader in Nebraska library and literary activities. The Award is presented at the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Center for the Book. The purpose of the Jane Pope Geske Award is to recognize a Nebraska association, organization, business, library, school, academic institution, or other group that has made an exceptional, long-term contribution to one or more of these fields in Nebraska: Reading; Book Selling; Books; Libraries; Writing in Nebraska; Literacy

Recipients:

2006 – University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) Department of English.

2005 – The Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Education Foundation

2004 – Nebraska Writing Project, a network of teachers, elementary through college, who are devoted to the improvement of writing instruction in Nebraska.

2003 – Grand Island Public Library and the Grand Island Public Library Foundation, Inc.

2002 – Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center, Chadron State College.

The Mildred Bennett Award

The Mildred Bennett Award is given annually by the Nebraska Center for the Book to an individual who provides leadership and service in the promotion of Nebraska literature. The Award provides a way for the Nebraska Center for the Book to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the literary tradition in Nebraska. Its purpose is to remind us of the literary and intellectual traditions that enrich our lives and mold our world.

Recipients

2006 – Paul Olson

2005 – William Kloefkorn

2004 – Don Welch

2003 – Bryan F. LeBeau

2002 – George T. Ayoub II

Nebraska Book Festival Community Spirit Award

2002 – S. N. “Bud” Wolbach. Wolbach was president of the Stuhr Museum’s Board of Trustees from 1961 until his retirement in 2000. He was honored at the 2002 Nebraska Book Festival for his commitment to community service and to the arts and humanities.

Nebraska Center for the Book Web Site

In 2003, The Nebraska Center for the Book launched its Web site at <www.unl.edu/NCB>. The site consists of a home page with introductory information about the Nebraska Center for the Book; announcements of current events; a Calendar of upcoming events; information about programs, including the Nebraska Book Festival, the Reading and Writing Groups Project, The Nebraska Book Awards, the Jane Pope Geske Award, and the Mildred Bennett Award; current and archived issues of the *NCB News*; and a membership form.

Links found on the Web site include those for The Nebraska Center for Writers in the “Writing” section; online book reviews and booklists in the “Reading About Books” section; Usenet discussion groups and listservs in the “Talking About Books” section; “Terminology” related to books; and links to libraries and booksellers in the “Finding Books” section.

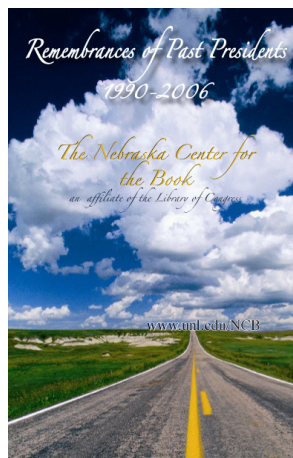
Other Activities

Statewide television program and educational DVD showcasing U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser and Nebraska State Poet William Kloefkorn

In 2004, the Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership with the Nebraska Center for the Book and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET), showcased U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser and Nebraska State Poet William Kloefkorn through a public poetry event that formed the basis for a statewide television program and an expanded, educational DVD. The project received a grant award from the Nebraska Arts Council. The Nebraska Library Commission worked with NET and organized the poetry reading/discussion in late March, which included audience participation in the discussion about the poetry-writing process and the readings by additional Nebraska poets. The program was broadcast on the statewide Nebraska ETV Network in 2005. Ted Kooser is one of Nebraska's most highly regarded poets and the thirteenth U.S. Poet Laureate (2004-2006). Kooser has been writing and publishing poetry for more than forty years. He has been called "a major poetic voice for rural and small-town America and the first poet laureate chosen from the Great Plains."

Booklet published with Nebraska Library Commission Support

Remembrances of Past Presidents, 1990-2006. Remembrances of past presidents of the Nebraska Center for the Book. The booklet is dedicated to Dr. John Y. Cole, director of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and serves as a tribute to past and future Nebraska Center for the Book presidents.



Fundraising

Lewis and Clark Expedition Books Raffle



Thanks to a generous contribution from The University of Nebraska Press, thirteen volumes of the *Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* were raffled by the Nebraska Center for the Book. Edited by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s (UN–L) distinguished Professor Gary Moulton, this highly acclaimed collection is considered by scholars to be the definitive edition of the Lewis and Clark journals. Funds earned from the raffle helped support the Nebraska Book Festival and the Nebraska Book Awards, sponsored annually by the Nebraska Center for the Book.

Photography Show and Raffle

Nebraska Center for the Book members conducted a fundraising raffle to benefit the Nebraska Book Festival in fall 2004. Photographs with Great Plains themes, generously donated by area photographers and framed by Lincoln galleries, were shown and raffled at the Nebraska Book Festival. Funds earned from the raffle helped support the Nebraska Book Festival.

2. Public participation in author programs or book discussion groups will increase.

NCBNews Calendar of Events

NCBNews, a publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book, is published three times each year and includes a calendar of events related to literacy and the humanities. Many events listed are author programs and literature festivals in many locations throughout Nebraska.

Annual Nebraska Book Festival Offers Author Programs

The Nebraska Book Festival offers many opportunities each year for people to participate in author programs, and these have been outlined in a previous section.

Book Group Activities Highlighted

2004 Nebraska Book Festival

Libraries and book clubs across Nebraska were urged to join the celebration by reading and discussing the featured book *A Different Plain: Contemporary Nebraska Fiction Writers*, an impressive collection

of twenty-four short stories by writers who have all published books of fiction and who have lived in Nebraska. The book groups were then encouraged to attend the Nebraska Book Festival “Books Alive!” to meet many of the authors. Twelve of the authors from across the United States attended the Festival. The collection, edited by Ladette Randolph with an Introduction by Mary Pipher, is published by the University of Nebraska Press.

2002 Nebraska Book Festival Historic “Gathering of the Groups”

The first statewide gathering of Book Discussion and Writing Groups assembled after participants responded to a Nebraska Center for the Book survey. The participants networked and shared. Print and online resource lists for readers and writers were made available, and the participants responded to the question, “What makes belonging to a book discussion or writing group meaningful to you?”

A highlight of the event was recognition of Billie Snyder Thornburg from North Platte, who at age ninety had just published her first book. An outcome of the meeting was a request that this be followed up with “an ultimate happening with related events.”

Nebraska Reading and Writing Groups Surveyed and Book Published

In 2002, the Nebraska Center for the Book conducted a book and writing group survey of Nebraska to gather information, data and insights about what gives these groups literary sustenance. In 2004, the Nebraska Center for the Book published a summary of the survey results in *Reading and Writing Nebraska*, researched and compiled by Mel Krutz.

In addition to compiling the data about the groups, the survey uncovered the long history of reading and writing groups in Nebraska. Seven of the groups have been in existence since Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland were presidents, and there are records to prove it. The oldest group is the George Eliot Club of Hastings, begun Dec. 15, 1889. Hastings historian Dorothy Weyer Creigh explained that the name came about because they chose as their first reading a book on the life of George Eliot, who was considered “an outstanding and most controversial authoress in the nineteenth century and these ladies had courage to have chosen her works and life to study.”

3. Public interest in reading and writing will increase, with particular focus on school age children and youth.
4. Reading skills by children and youth will improve.

Nebraska Book Festival Student Day Programs

2006 Nebraska Book Festival Friday Student Day Program

The 2006 Nebraska Book Festival included a Friday program for young writers focused on the graphic novel, a new genre of popular fiction.

- o Richard Graham and Scott Stewart led workshops on the nature and history of the graphic novel, and illustration.
- o Students engaged in workshops on writing and illustrating their own stories.

2006 Nebraska Book Festival Saturday Program for Young Children

The 2006 Nebraska Book Festival included a Saturday program for young children, “Outside the Lines: Creative Storytelling Activities for Children,” to get children involved with storytelling, reading, and books and enhance the value of the Festival for parents. The storytelling activities focused on:

- Stories drawn from experiences in Omaha’s Mexican-American barrio and Kiowa/Otoe-Missouria Storyteller Matthew Sitting Bear Jones, in native attire, shared the tales of his tribes
- Personal notebooks of material for future stories and theatrical adaptation of stories

2004 Nebraska Book Festival Friday Student Day Program

- Ron Block discussed his stories, the process of writing, and answered questions from students.
- Workshops included *Interpreting Movies*, *Writing Poetry*, *Writing Family History*, and *Writing Fantasy/Science Fiction*.

2003 Nebraska Book Festival Friday Student Day Program

- Activities on Lewis & Clark’s Omaha Journal;
- Storytelling and bookmaking workshops.

2002 Nebraska Book Festival Student Writing Competition

The 2002 Nebraska Book Festival Committee started the Festival’s Student Writing Competition. Nebraska middle school and high school students were asked to write about a time or place in history that is particularly inspiring to them.:

Letters about Literature Contest



Letters About Literature is a national reading promotion for children and young adults sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, the Weekly Reader Corporation, Target, and locally coordinated through the Nebraska Center for the Book with support from the Nebraska Library Commission. Contest winners are announced in April during National Library Week. Readers in grades four through twelve write personal letters to authors, living or dead, from any genre--fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic, explaining how that authors’ work changed their way of thinking about the world or themselves. Winners receive cash awards at the national and state levels. Nebraska winners have been honored by the governor at a ceremony at the State Capitol and receive cash awards and other prizes. State winners advance to national competition and receive cash prizes.

In 2004, a Nebraska student writer was selected as a national winner in the 2004 Letters about Literature contest. Jackson Fisher, Lincoln, a fourth grader at Morley Elementary School, was honored for his letter to Carl Hiaasen, author of *Hoot*. As a national winner, Jackson Fisher received a Target gift card and a trip to the nation’s capitol to read his letter to Carl Hiaasen, author of *Hoot*, during the National Book Festival October 9, 2004.

Ben Keele was a 2002 senior level runner-up in the national competition. Here is an excerpt from his

letter to Ayn Rand in response to her novel, *The Fountainhead*:

Another point I found intriguing was your conception of man's self-realization and his place in society. First, I agree with you that innovative ideas come from individual people. Therefore individual rights should be maximized to provide the optimal environment in which people can do what they wish, limited only by society's obligation to protect itself. But while self-realization and independence are important, I think you place them too high on the moral ladder. You advocate that people should only act if their actions directly advance their self-interest. Furthermore, you claim that no individual has an obligation to help anyone else. While I do not think the government should enforce altruism, I think people do have a moral obligation to help each other at times, and I think happiness and self-realization are achieved by altruism.

Elizabeth McKim wrote a letter to Elizabeth George Spear to discuss her book, *The Sign of the Beaver*. Below is an excerpt from her winning entry:

I never have read a book that made the Indians so friendly. It showed me how two, very different cultures can bind together and help each other out. It showed me that being generous could save someone's life.

I now realize how hard it is to live with only the simplest tools. Now I can't complain if I can't get something I want, but don't need. I don't know if I could live like the characters did, since I have been sheltered by technology my entire life.

Technology has changed the way I live, and other people in the world, and if taken away, it would completely change everyone's life.

2I. Promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods including print, electronic, video, audio and other technology as it emerges.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Nebraska Library Commission and library personnel will use a variety of technologies and formats to more efficiently and effectively communicate their programs and services.
2. A larger percentage of the Nebraska Library Commission's communication products will be disseminated electronically.
3. Statewide communication campaigns will be conducted to increase the use of Nebraska Library Commission programs and services, particularly the use of subscription databases.

Outcomes:

Communication efforts are integral to the accomplishment of the Library Commission mission, which is "statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library and information services. As the state library agency, the Commission is an advocate for the library and information service needs of all

Nebraska Library Commission and library personnel will use a variety of technologies and formats to more efficiently and effectively communicate their programs and services and a larger percentage of the Nebraska Library Commission’s communication products will be disseminated electronically.

New formats and technology were employed to ensure that a larger percentage of the Nebraska Library Commission’s communication was disseminated electronically. This included:

- Blog, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/nlc/index.html>
- E-mail dissemination of general information, announcements, newsletters and news releases, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/lists/index.html>
- Flickr photo sharing, see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/librarycommission/>
- Government Documents Online and E-docs Alerts, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/docs/pilot/> and <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/docs/shippinglists/edocsalerts.html>
- Instant Messagine/Online Chat, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/contactus.html>
- MySpace, see www.myspace.com/nebraskalibrary commission
- RSS Feed, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/feeds/feeds.asp>
- secondLife, see <http://slurl.com/secondlife/Cybrary%20City/226/219/24>
- Web-based Newsletters, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/n3/>
- YouTube, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZvHUE6qfP8>

Statewide communication campaigns will be conducted to increase the use of Nebraska Library Commission programs and services, particularly the use of subscription databases.

Communication efforts had a direct impact on the attitudes of Nebraska citizens regarding library in information services and on their information-seeking behavior. These efforts also encouraged librarians across Nebraska to use the following marketing and promotional campaigns to communicate with Nebraskans (major efforts are highlighted with information and examples):

- @ your library®
- Banned Books Week
- Big Read Project
- BookTalk— Live weekly Community Radio/Podcasts promote reading and Nebraska authors, aimed at “people who like to read,” this activity encourages reading by talking about the benefits of a broad spectrum of reading interests. BookTalkers include staff of the Library Commission and Lincoln City Libraries, along with other community members with an interest in books and reading. Sometimes local authors are interviewed. See www.nlc.state.ne.us/publications/RadioProgramming/radioprogramming.html



Fran Reinehr, Kit Keller, and Mary Jo Ryan (l to r) share their reactions to current literature on BookTalk.

- **Community Health Information Partnership**—The McGoogan Library of Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center, was nominated by the Nebraska Library Commission for the Blue Ribbon Consumer Health Information Recognition Award in FY 2005 for its Consumer Health Information Resource Service (CHIRS). The promotion surrounding this award resulted in the formation and training of Community Health Information Partnership groups. These local groups included local libraries and conducted health information promotional efforts in Nebraska communities, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/publications/healthinformationpartnership/healthinfopartnership.html>.
- **Community Information Technology Fairs**—Nebraska Library Commission staff used a mobile computer network purchased with a State Records Board grant to provide sessions (hosted by local libraries across the state) to demonstrate and train local citizens to use online information resources.



Minden's Jensen Memorial Library Director commented after the Library Information Technology Fair, "I received lots of positive feedback about the class and teachers! People attending were appreciative of the opportunity to learn to use the online databases."

- **CONTENTdm**—software for Nebraska library use was purchased by the Nebraska Library Commission and local librarians were trained to use it. This evolved into promoting the Nebraska Memories Project, see <http://www.nebraskamemories.org/>
- **Metromarketing**—A marketing partnership between the Nebraska Library Commission, Omaha Public Library, and Lincoln City Libraries resulted in training Omaha and Lincoln library staff members to market to specific audiences and build more responsive library services. Using the theme, "Quality of community matters—your public library," the library staff designed billboards, PSAs, and other marketing materials, see <http://www.lincolnlibraries.com>.



Billboards like the one above appeared at locations throughout Lincoln.

- National Library Week
- Nebraska Center for the Book—extensive marketing and promotional efforts conducted to

support the goals of this partnership effort, see report on Goal 2H for detail

- NebraskaAccess, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraskaaccess/> and report on Goal 2A and 2B
- NebrasKard, promotional activities were conducted to support Nebraska's reciprocal borrowing program, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraskard/nebraskard.html> and report on Goal 2C

"It is a great benefit for our library patrons. We have three counties next to each other that have only one public library in the county. Many of these citizens live in one county but work in another county. This card makes it possible for people to use the library where they live or work. It shows that libraries are working for everyone and not just local residents."

"It was a good idea, but with online catalogs and interlibrary loans--it might not be needed."

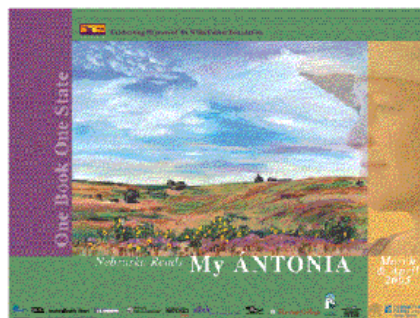
"We are considering strongly dropping out. We have 65 Bellevue residents stickered. Very few renew however. Most that renew are those who live close to Papillion. There are 29 people from other libraries registered through NebrasKard. Most, as I said above, use once and that's it. Since we get reimbursed for ILL, it may be better to exit NebrasKard and use ILL only."

"A very great asset this library - makes the larger libraries the shopping/working magnet community 20 miles away accessible to my resident patrons and the non-resident patrons unserved by any other library!!"

"I think it has been a great thing for us. I know I have used it at several libraries.

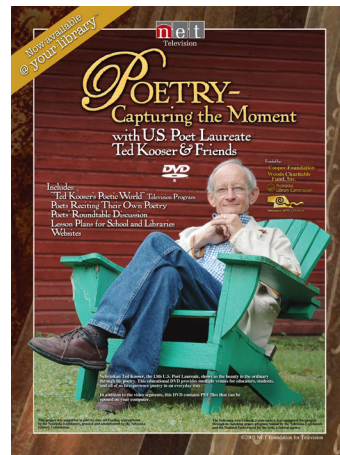
Otherwise if I wanted something that I didn't feel I could purchase I would have to use ILL. This has cut down on some of my Ill's. Great Service!!!!"

- One Book, One Nebraska: Nebraska Reads *My Antonia*—The Nebraska Library Commission organized "One Book/One State" as a collaboration of organizations and institutions to develop press releases and public relations materials, a student writing contest, events in the public libraries, public lectures, discussion kits for reading groups, billboards, and book donations and discussion kits for small libraries around the state. By the time "One Book/One State" wrapped up in Red Cloud NE, April 29-30, 2005, thousands of Nebraskans had read or reread Cather's great novel and had spent time discussing it.



"The people of Nebraska made "One Book/One State" an enormous success," commented Susan N. Maher, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

- *Poetry, Capturing the Moment with U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser & Friends*—In 2005 the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Center for the Book collaborated with NET Television to organize a poetry reading/discussion session with Pulitzer Prize-winning U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser, Nebraska State Poet Bill Kloefkorn, and other Nebraska poets and to develop a DVD, which was distributed to Nebraska school media centers and public and academic libraries (see attached).



Audience Reactions to *Plain Poetry*:

“I learned that writing poetry—the actual process of putting your thoughts down—was an excellent way to clarify your own beliefs and not accept the societal norm.”

“Although all of the poets lived in Nebraska, they all had different perspectives and entirely different styles of presentation.”

“Extraordinary words about ordinary things touch the heart.”

“Poetry is cool...soft...loud... quick... slow... sly.”

- READ® Posters across Nebraska—Nebraska libraries are promoting reading with celebrity READ® posters featuring local senior citizens, business leaders, young readers, and families. The Nebraska Library Commission uses ALA READ® software to convert photographs into files that can be printed as posters and other promotional items, encouraging Nebraska librarians and media specialists to create these unique local promotional materials.



- Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies—extensive marketing, promotional, and outreach activity, see <http://nowhiringatyourlibrary.org/> and report on Goal 1B for detail.
- Saving Nebraska’s Treasures—The Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) are partnering on a \$249,837 grant from Partnership for a Nation of Learners, a collaboration of the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to create resources that families, museums, and libraries can use to preserve the state’s cultural heritage, see <http://>

- www.nebraskahistory.org/oversite/whatsnew/save_treasures.htm.
- Smartest Card @ your library® for Library Card Signup Month— The Nebraska Library Commission arranged for Governor Mike Johanns to launch the campaign in September 2004 at Lincoln City Libraries. Nebraska librarians used this campaign to help promote the value of local library service during September each year.
 - Talking Book and Braille Service
 - Take a Talking Book, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/publications/Archives-ncom/fy2002/ncom7.html>
 - Reading is for Everyone, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/publications/Archives-ncom/Winter03/NComwinter5.html>
 - Volunteers make it happen @ your library®, see <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/publications/Archives-ncom/Summer03/NCom-6.html>
 - Kernels in a B.A.S.K.E.T. (Blind And Sighted Share Kernels of Experience Together) —The Nebraska Library Commission partnered with Lincoln City Libraries on a joint reading and discussion program for blind and sighted people.
 - Vendor Day— The Nebraska Library Commission arranged for vendors of electronic information resources to come together to share their information products with librarians.
 - Western Trails— The Nebraska Library Commission coordinated a partnership to make available a wide range of artifacts, books, documents, maps, postcards, original paintings, and photographs on a variety of topics relating to trails in Nebraska in a searchable database from the holdings of museums and libraries across Nebraska. These images illustrate Nebraska's rich trails of all types--pioneer wagon trails, railroads, highways, nature trails, and modern recreational trails. See <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/westerntrails/home.html> and report on Goal 3C for detail.

Goal 3: Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to assess and deliver online library and information services.

3A. Administer grants to public libraries and library consortia for planning, selection, and implementation of technology tools for access to library and information services.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Local support will continue to be generated through the requirement of matching funds for awarded grants.
2. Libraries will increase the number and types of technologies available to provide access to materials and other resources.
3. Nebraskans will have improved access to online library and information services.

Need:

Sustainability, or the need to build in ongoing local funding for technology replacement as well as for new technologies, is an issue of concern on the local as well as state level. A fair number of Nebraska public libraries have acquired much of their technology through grant programs (LSTA, State Aid, NITC, etc.) and have yet to develop a plan for supporting and maintaining hardware and connectivity.

Methodology:

Nebraska's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants are made available in accordance with the vision, activities, goals, and intended outcomes expressed in *Making a Difference @ your libraryTM: Nebraska Library Services and Technology Act Plan for Library and Information Services 2003-2007*.

During this five-year period, all competitive federal grants offered required a minimum of 25% local matching funds, in order to demonstrate local support potential sustainability of the projects.

In 2004, priority projects were identified in two areas:

1. Applicants proposing programs and services that meet the needs of the English Language Learner (ELL).
2. Applicants proposing digitization projects.

Of the fifteen applications received that year, eight applications involved digitization projects and four focused on ELL activities. These priorities were again emphasized in the 2005 round of competitive grants offered. In order to prepare grant recipients for implementation of digital projects, the Commission offered workshops in scanning, digitization, metadata, and cataloging. A total of 239 people attended these nine workshops, for a total of 46.5 CE contact hours. [See Appendix A]

Also funding was provided to support projects that increased the number and types of technologies available to provide access to library and information resources. IN 2005, an LSTA grant was awarded in the amount of \$1,471 to Crawford Public Library (population served 1,071) for a project entitled, "Sustain our Cultural Heritage." This purpose of this project was to locate, conserve, digitize, and share images indigenous to the settlement and growth of the rural urban Northern Nebraska Panhandle area

between 1874 and 1960. The base area was Dawes County and the Crawford area.

A grant was awarded to the Scribner Public Library (population served 942) in the amount of \$8,273 for a project entitled, "Services for Lifelong Learning." This purpose of this project was to establish a mobile computer lab within the library in order to teach computer skills to senior citizens. The laptops allowed more patrons to use computers when the three public access computers were in use. Classes for other ages were also added. This project was a huge success in the small community of Scribner. Here's one of the many excited responses received from the library director:

I just wanted to let you know that we have another 20+ people signed up to take senior citizen classes on the computer. A few of these are taking advanced classes in word and Internet and e-mail, but most are taking the beginning classes. We are so amazed that they just keep signing up. We had originally planned to make brochures and distribute them, but so far, we have not had that expense. We will do that once this taper off, but we can hardly handle what we have now. Isn't this great?

I just had to let you know how great this grant was for us. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Plattsmouth Public Library was awarded a grant of LSTA funds in the amount of \$51,000, as part of an \$86,000 project entitled *RFID @ in my Library*. The purpose of this project was described in the grant application, as follows:

"This project will provide Plattsmouth Public Library staff with the freedom to spend more time with our patrons in other library services such as: requests for information, research, computer support, book selections, genealogy research, and additional outreach programs for adults and children."

After this project had been fully implemented for less than a month, one staff member submitted the following comments:

Just this short time of three weeks that we have been fully operational the staff has started to experienced the benefits of this technology. Even our patrons are getting excited about this new technology and embracing it overwhelmingly. A special note needs to be made...we have patrons helping patrons use our Express checkout. This is very exciting. As patrons learn how to us this system it frees up the staff so they can spend more time assisting patrons with computers, help in finding a book/s, research, or just more time to chat with them. This is what the ultimate goal we were trying to archive; better customer relations, more time to do their jobs better i.e. Collection development, book processing to get new books out on the shelf in less then twenty four hours, writing for our web page, learning software programs, teaching computer skills to our patrons, increases in house and outreach programs, and create more sophisticates, friendly library. As more patron come on board with us the staff will begin to reap the ultimate benefit, time. We will then to be able to be more Customer/Patron focused for their needs 110%.

Lincoln City Library was granted \$6,450 in federal funds for a project to redesign the library's Web site. This busy library system serves all residents of Lancaster county (Legal Service Area: 261,742). Seventy-one percent (71%) of those residents are cardholders, and the library's Web site is a frequent point of contact. The purpose of the project, as stated in the grant application, was to "...update the look and feel of our web pages for enhanced navigation, stronger reputation as an electronic resource, and to facilitate customer access to the myriad resources available there. Our priorities include a new and more appealing appearance for our homepage, for our Youth Services homepage, and for our Young Adult



Beverly, Ryan, and Matt Kappenman (l-r) use a new self-checkout machine at Lincoln City Libraries' Gere branch.

Gere Branch Library is the busiest branch in the Lincoln City Library system, in terms of circulation. A grant in the amount of \$27,210 was given to this branch, to support the purchase of additional self-checkout machines. “This project would meet planning goal number 3 by providing technology that will help library users borrow resources quickly and easily....Gere is the busiest branch in the Lincoln City Libraries system, regularly experiencing checkouts in the area of 70,000 per month. Their customers need a quick, easy, and reliable way to check out material themselves so that they can avoid long wait times and congestion at the service desk.”

Each year the Library Commission provides an opportunity for eligible libraries to apply to for federal LSTA funds to support programs and services that enhance library and information services provided to Nebraska communities. In 2007, the name of this annual grant opportunity was changed from LSTA grants, to Library Improvement Grants. The purpose of this name change is to encourage the submission of a broader range of projects and activities. This grant application period closed at the end of 2006. Twenty-seven grant applications were submitted, requesting a total of \$371,666 in federal funds, for projects totaling \$534,689. These projects do represent a broad range of programs and services, as well as a somewhat wider range of applicants. There are several collaborative projects, and one application from an eligible institutional library.

The Library Commission has clearly met the intent and outcomes of Goal 3A in our long range plan. We will continue to encourage innovative and responsive grant projects to best utilize the federal funds provided for this purpose.

Digitization Workshops

Title	Targets	Topics	City	County	Start Date	Total Attend.	Contact Hours
Antelope and Madison County Library Associations Meeting	Public libr	Digitization	Tilden	Madison	11/15/2005	15	1.5
Digital Photography Workshop	Librarians;	Digitization	Scottsbluff	Scotts Blu	03/05/2004	13	3
2006 Digitization Workshops (2nd), Introduction to Digitization	Academic	Digitization	North Platt	Lincoln	07/17/2006	22	5.5
2006 Digitization Workshops (2nd), Introduction to Scanning Principles & Best Practices	Academic	Digitization	North Platt	Lincoln	07/18/2006	20	5.5
2006 Digitization Workshops, Introduction to Digitization	Academic	Digitization	Walton	Lancaster	03/07/2006	33	6.5
2006 Digitization Workshops, Introduction to Scanning	Academic	Digitization	Walton	Lancaster	03/08/2006	30	6.5
Digitization Workshop	Librarians	Digitization	Lincoln	Lancaster	12/01/2004	39	6
Introduction to Digitization	Digitization	Digitization	Lincoln	Lancaster	04/14/2004	27	6
Introduction to Scanning	Librarians	Digitization	Lincoln	Lancaster	12/02/2004	40	6
9						239	46.5

3B. Review and adopt appropriate standards and protocols for hardware, software, Internet connectivity, and access to broadband services.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Grant criteria and guidelines will be developed that apply these standards and protocols.
2. NLC staff and local library personnel will have enhanced ability to provide training and consultation.
3. Nebraska libraries will have an improved infrastructure for resource sharing.

The Nebraska Library Commission has developed guidelines that are kept current for libraries planning to purchase general-purpose microcomputer hardware or software - <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/comp/recommend.html>. The Library Commission's information technology staff participate in review of grant applications to help assure appropriate selection of technology.

The Library Commission has participated in grant projects funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to improve availability of public access computers with a result that over 90% of Nebraska public libraries provide computers for public use. Gates Foundation grant funds have also supported extensive technology training for library workers both on-site and via online courses.

The Gates Foundation has awarded grant funding to the Library Commission to provide incentives for installing broadband services. Libraries have been identified that would benefit from improved telecommunication services.

Gates Foundation funds also support a new technology innovation librarian position at the Library Commission. This new position will have responsibility for training and advising on appropriate and new technologies of value and benefit in providing library services.

3C. Identify and implement statewide digitization initiatives, including the Western Trails Project⁴, access to genealogical resources and other appropriate enterprises.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Nebraskans will have access to a virtual collection of digital primary source materials through the Western Trails Project.
2. Local and remote access to local genealogy resources and services will be enhanced.
3. NLC staff will have knowledge of potential statewide digitization initiatives for planning, coordination, and funding.

Strategies and Activities:

- **Western Trails Project** <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/westertrails>

Final Report <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/westertrails/statefinal.html>

Nebraska was one of four states participating in a collaborative IMLS-funded project to digitize primary source materials relating to overland trails, railroads, and highways. The grant was awarded in October 2001, with the bulk of participant activities taking place from February 2002 to December 2003. The Collaborative Digitization Program in Colorado was project leader, with the state libraries of Wyoming, Kansas, Colorado and the Nebraska Library Commission project leaders in their states. Five Nebraska participants (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska State Historical Society, Omaha Public Library, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Oregon Trail Museum) received small grants. Participants received training on project planning and best practices for scanning and metadata. Scanned images were put into a searchable database. Participants created individual web sites as well as the Nebraska project site. Usability studies were conducted and lesson plans created for inclusion on the web site.

- **Nebraska Memories Project** <http://www.memories.ne.gov>

The Nebraska Library Commission implemented a statewide digitization project in the summer of 2005. We heard over time that libraries were interested in digitizing materials but most did not have

the funding, staff or technical knowledge to implement a digital database to maintain their collections. To assist in this endeavor the Commission purchased a license to CONTENTdm in the summer of 2005 with the objective of allowing Nebraska libraries and other cultural heritage institutions to add materials to the database yet not have the responsibility of maintaining the server or technical side of the project. In 2006 libraries were invited to join the Nebraska Memories project and could apply for LSTA funding for digitization projects to be added to the database. Currently ten libraries and/or library museum partnerships have received LSTA funding for digitization projects. Other libraries have participated in the project without LSTA grant funds. At this time libraries have contributed 2,722 items to the Nebraska Memories database and new participants continuing to join the project.

Nebraska Memories



Making Nebraska's past unforgettable.

- **Saving Nebraska's Treasures**

The Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS), and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) are partnering on a \$249,837 grant awarded by the Partnership for a Nation of Learners, a collaboration of the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The grant was one of seven awarded in 2005 from a national pool of 132 applicants.

The goal of "Saving Nebraska's Treasures" is to create awareness of the importance of preserving the state's cultural heritage, and educate families, museum workers, and librarians about how to slow the deterioration of artifacts, photographs, and documents. This is expected to impact on how heritage collections in the state's museums and libraries are handled, and to increase participation in the Library Commission's Nebraska Memories project.

Three heirloom health clinics were taped for a television program to air in the summer of 2007. In the program Nebraskans are offered consultations and "health tips" about their family and community heirlooms in an "Antiques Roadshow"-style program, featuring footage of engaging excerpts from the clinics and interviews with conservators. A complementary Website is in development, along with three distance learning workshops for library/museum staff and volunteers on conservation, preservation, and digitization.



Conservators provide preservation tips at heirloom health clinics

Outputs and Outcomes:

Intended Outcome: Project participants will increase understanding of the benefits of collaboration.

Two of the participants (University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Nebraska State Historical Society) have collaborated on several previous projects. Others had not participated in a collaboration like this before. All participants shared a common desire to provide better public access to the primary source materials in their collections. The participant meetings helped them develop a common understanding of the goals of the project.

Intended Outcome: Nebraska Cultural Heritage Institutions will increase their knowledge about digitization project management including market analysis, metadata, scanning, legal issues and sustainability. Grant participants will apply what they learn through training and use of the information on the websites by conducting successful Western Trails' projects.

Our participants had varying amounts of prior knowledge about digital imaging technology, legal issues, and metadata creation. Everybody learned something. The museum partners (Oregon Trail, NSHS, Stuhr Museum) were fairly knowledgeable about legal issues but had less knowledge than the library partners (OPL, UNL, NLC) about standard library-type cataloging procedures and metadata. In Nebraska we used funding from the grant to broaden the knowledge base beyond project participants. We sponsored the CDP training twice—the first time to participants plus other cultural heritage institution staff, the second time to staff of libraries with potential digitization projects. In all over 100 persons received training. Evaluations and test scores indicated that participants gained knowledge and skills to use for their own projects.

The Commission continued offering digitization workshops after the Western Trails project ended and has trained over 100 library and cultural heritage institution staff since that time. Training participants often go on to participate in the Nebraska Memories project.

Intended Outcome: The amount of primary source material on Nebraska trails available in digital format will increase.

In Nebraska a unique database was created for the Nebraska images and records, programmed and hosted at the University of Nebraska Lincoln on a server purchased with LSTA National Leadership Grant funds from IMLS and LSTA state program funds from IMLS and through the NLC. 2900 was our target number of images. 3285 TIFFS and 3633 access images, nearly all of material not previously available in digitized form, were created. The central database is linked from a web site hosted at the Library Commission. Most participants also created individual web sites linking to their images. The Nebraska database is searchable from the overall project database <http://www.cdpheritage.org/exhibit/>

The Nebraska Memories database currently contains 2,722 digitized items relating to Nebraska history.

Intended Outcome: End users will have increased capability to access digital content.

A usability test of the Nebraska web site was conducted February 18, 2004. The testers were impressed with the content and felt that it will be a valuable collection of primary source materials for historians, educators, and the general public. As a result of suggestions made by testers lesson plans were added to the web site. The Nebraska Western Trails site ranks in the top 20 most accessed Library Commission subdirectories, averaging over 2000 hits per month.

The Nebraska Memories website has provided access to previously unavailable content to users worldwide.

Overall Impact

Partly as a result of participation in this project, since 2004 the Library Commission has designated digitization projects as one of the priority areas for funding LSTA grant applications. Grants have been awarded for newspaper digitization, digitizing original music scores, funding for digital microfilm readers, and collaborative library/museum scanning projects. *Nebraska Memories*, www.nebraskamemories.org, was launched in 2005 as a cooperative project to digitize Nebraska-related historical and cultural heritage materials and make them available to researchers of all ages via the Internet. The digitization knowledge and skills of Nebraska library and museum personnel continues to grow because the Library Commission continues to offer affordable digitization training similar the training offered during the Western Trails project.

3D. Facilitate library participation in the U.S. Library Program and the Staying Connected initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

The three outcomes identified for this activity were:

1. Libraries will acquire additional computers, networking equipment, and telecommunications services for Internet access.
2. Library personnel will benefit from training and technical support on network administration, computer and Internet applications, and computer systems management.
3. Nebraskans will have enhanced access to information resources.

Observations: All three intended outcomes are listed together rather than having separate observations for each one because the Gates Foundation program addressed all three outcomes. The Gates Foundation process was so well-designed that all three of these intended outcomes were met. This is not to say that additional efforts are not needed, for the process of bringing Nebraska's public libraries to the level they need to be for modern library services is ongoing and will continue to be. But the foundation laid down under this program is a strong and solid one, and it will enable the Nebraska Library Commission to work with libraries to improve continuously their services to communities statewide.

In April of 2001 the Commission announced to the library community that Nebraska would be one

of sixteen states in the fourth round of the U.S. Library Program to receive free computer equipment, software, and training. This program, the first major philanthropic venture of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, was a boon to the many small public libraries in Nebraska, most of which could not have afforded to acquire the quality of equipment and expertise brought to the state by this program. Following training of Commission staff who would be involved, those staff gathered preliminary information on potentially eligible libraries and provided this to the Gates Foundation. Determination of eligibility had to be completed using a formula devised by the Foundation which took into account poverty levels within prescribed distances from the library, rather than simply following traditional boundaries of the libraries. Altogether 202 public libraries and branches, six regional library system offices, three tribal libraries and the Commission received nearly \$1.7 million worth of hardware alone. This total does not include the cost of software loaded on the computers, nor does it address the costs related to the frequent and wide-spread training provided by Gates Foundation staff. Nebraska libraries gained approximately 377 new computers during this phase of the project. (Note: Earlier Omaha Public Libraries received equipment for a complete computer lab at its main library as did Tilden Public Library. During this process, Lincoln City Libraries received equipment for a computer lab in its downtown library as well. None of this equipment is counted in the figures cited just above.)

- **Timetable:** The rest of the timeline to implement the receipt, set up, training and use of the equipment was as follows:
- March - April, 2002 -- In cooperation with Nebraska's regional Library Systems, the Nebraska Library Commission sponsored training sessions in seven sites across the state to help library staff complete application forms for the Gates grants.
- March 26, 2002 -- Applications mailed to Nebraska libraries from the Foundation.
- April 10, 2002--Teleconference call with the Gates Foundation staff to assist eligible libraries with the applications.
- April 22, 2002 -- Applications to be postmarked no later than this day.
- Early June 2002 -- Applications reviewed by Foundation.
- September 2002 -- Training sessions provided by Gates Foundation trainers helped prepare library staff to order hardware. These sessions, held in eight sites across Nebraska, included a demonstration of the computers and distribution of media kits developed by the Library Commission and using Gates Foundation materials to help spread the word about the community's expanded public access to the Internet. These were known as the BYCA ("Before Your Computer Arrives") workshops.
- December 2002 -- Within one or two weeks after computers were received, regional workshops, set up of equipment, and training in each library were be conducted by Gates Foundation trainers. This effort began in December 2002.
- Follow-up training: In early 2003 training sessions were provided at various sites in Nebraska. This training occurred approximately four to six weeks after the computers were up and running in libraries.
- Content Server Training: In late Spring 2003 training sessions were provided at Bennett Martin Public Library in Lincoln for libraries that received content servers as part of the grant award. Some libraries were reimbursed for travel and lodging costs.
- May 2003 -- Implementation ends.

Purchase Option Grants: The Commission undertook a concurrent effort to complement those of the Gates Foundation. A number of Nebraska public libraries were determined to be ineligible for “building grants” which offered free hardware, software, and training primarily because their level of affluence was deemed too great to qualify. However, those libraries were eligible for a “purchase option grant” by which they could purchase the hardware, then receive the software free and also be allowed to attend all training offered. Because of the cost of the hardware and because the Commission wanted to have as many of the state’s public libraries with comparable computers, it decided to offer to pay half the purchase price. Not all purchase option grant-eligible libraries agreed to this arrangement, but there were seven additional libraries that did participate.

Additional Training: The Gates Foundation effort was planned almost like a military maneuver, and it was obvious the Foundation staff had learned much during earlier rounds about how to complete the process successfully. Another thing they learned was that ongoing training would be needed if libraries were to make the most effective use of their new equipment and software. The Gates Foundation followed their generous donation with another grant to provide just such training. From early October through mid-November of 2004 Commission staff from Library Development and Network Services departments assisted a trainer hired from SOLINET to teach: Basic Computer Troubleshooting, FrontPage (Basic and Advanced – the latter on creating web pages), and a beginning course on PowerPoint. These workshops were offered twice each in five geographically dispersed sites across Nebraska. In the troubleshooting session all participants had an opportunity to work inside a computer tower, performing activities such as identifying basic elements of the computer, adding additional memory, replacing a burned-out cooling fan, etc.

To facilitate this additional training throughout the state, the Commission purchased twelve laptop computers with related peripherals and software in late summer of 2004 as part of its required match for the Foundation’s grants. The acquisition of these computers allowed for portable training of up to 24 individuals in one session almost anywhere in the state that could accommodate that number of students. Nearly all of this follow up training took place in motel meeting rooms which were turned into temporary learning labs. For concurrent sessions, the Commission’s older portable learning lab was also used if the number of students dictated the need.

Online Training: In the fall of 2005 the Commission made a number of online courses available via contracts with various education providers:

- Through **Nylink** the Commission offered two different courses: “Understanding PCs and Operating Systems” and “Introduction to Networking for Librarians.” Each person completing the course received 15 hours of CE credit, and 20 seats were available for each course. The cost of a course is normally \$150, but participation was free to librarians through this contract. Blackboard was the educational software used to deliver these courses.
- Through the **Missouri Library Network Corporation (MLNC)** the Commission offered “Kids’ Stuff on the Internet” on four different dates via the Centra educational software program. Participants received two hours of CE credit. Eighteen seats were available for this course.

In spring 2005, and running for a full year, the Commission negotiated a contract with **LE@D (Library Education @ your Desktop)** for two courses: “Customer Service in a Multicultural Environment” and “Improving Your Communication Skills: Presentation Skills for Librarians.”

Funding from either the Gates Foundation Education grant or from the Foundation’s Rural Library Sustainability grant provided all these courses.

Using “Staying Connected” grant monies (another grant category) from the Gates Foundation, the Commission provided access to the following courses from **WebJunction**:

- Under PC Maintenance and Networking the following two courses: “Introduction to PCs” and “Networking Essentials.”
- Under Web Page Development, the following courses: “HTML” and “FrontPage 2000.”
- Under the Basic Computing and Applications Series: “Access 2002”; “Excel 2002”; “PowerPoint 2002”; “PowerPoint 2003”; and “Word 2002.”
- “Developing Digital Projects.”

From offering the above opportunities for on-line courses, the Commission learned that many of our librarians and trustees were apparently not yet ready to go off on their own to master these skills. (Some of the sign-up procedures, it must be said, for some of the courses, were not very “user friendly,” and that may have had an unintended effect on participation as well.) What we suspect is that we still need to provide a mix of face-to-face and online experiences to our libraries in order to allow them to keep up with technology and public access computing. There was a brief mention above of the “Staying Connected” grant monies. Only a small portion of these monies have been expended thus far. One of the goals the Commission has set is to focus more intensely on providing technology training for Nebraska’s libraries. This effort will be facilitated quite well with the filling of a new position entitled, Technology Innovation Librarian. Again, the monies granted from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are helping to bring this about. We have concluded that, while we may have met the intended outcomes we set out for ourselves a number of years ago, the target has moved considerably. We look forward to our efforts to hit this new target. The Gates Foundation has given Nebraska, as well as many other states, the basis and the tools to do that.

3E. Promote participation in the Universal Service Fund’s E-rate program through training and consultation.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. The number of public libraries participating in the Universal Service Fund’s E-rate program will increase.

Observations: Statistics for the last full five years (i.e. July 1, 2001 through June30, 2002 is Year 2001) of participation by Nebraska libraries and regional library systems shows participation ranging from 97 to 121. Year 2005, the most recent year completed, showed a drop in participation from 120 in the previous year to 107 participants. An interesting development has occurred during the period, however, in which a number of libraries have reported the following:

- Offers from their Internet service provider to offer Internet free or at much reduced rates (lower than the discounts the library would receive from E-rate) thus eliminating the need for the library and provider to go through the process.
- Libraries not having to worry about the Children’s Internet Protection Act under which they have to put filters on all their computers with Internet access which also must be easily be

turned into “unfiltered” computers if requested by an adult user.

Based on these observations, increasing the number of libraries participating in the E-rate program becomes of lesser importance than the libraries providing access to the Internet whether or not E-rate is the means to that end.

2. Public libraries will apply for funding for a broader base of eligible E-rate services.

Observations: As noted above, we have not observed an appreciable change in the number of libraries applying for E-rate funding; it does not seem to be related to the number of workshops offered, number of phone calls for help in filling out the required forms, etc. While the list of services which may be applied for is fairly extensive, none of our libraries have chosen to apply for any other than the two main services – telecommunications and Internet access, with the proportion being nearly two to one, telecommunications versus Internet. The offer to provide for internal connections, for example, requires an unusually high rate of students who are eligible for free or discounted lunches, somewhere usually about 87% or so. Very few of our libraries fall within that range, and those that do usually do not have a use of discounts for internal connections. Add to that the two-in-five rule (by which a library can only receive discounts in two out of any five-year period), and few libraries are interesting in pursuing this possibility.

3. Library personnel will have increased knowledge of telecommunication costs and issues.

Observations: There is no doubt that the level of knowledge in Nebraska’s library community has increased due to a concentrated and consistent program of training, communication and consulting. Both the questions that the Commission receives and the quality of the information received by the Schools and Libraries Division have markedly improved. We even find when there is a turnover in the library and E-rate is handed off to someone else to do, that person is usually at least nominally conversant with the program and what needs to be done (and often knows to call the Commission for needed help).

3F. Participate in statewide information technology strategic planning and management initiatives, including the Nebraska Information Technology Commission’s Nebraska Network initiative, Community and State Government Councils, and Technologies Across Nebraska⁵.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
- Met this goal
- Made progress towards this goal
- Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

1. Libraries will have access to and participate in a unified statewide telecommunications infrastructure.
2. Grant funds will be available for library technology projects through the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.
3. Libraries will participate in statewide telecommunications collaborative efforts.
4. Libraries will be represented in state level information technology planning and policy

organizations.

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) initiated planning and implementation of Network Nebraska to create a statewide telecommunications network for state and local government entities, and for Nebraska's schools, colleges and universities. A phased approach to network development has resulted in progress toward statewide coverage, but access and affordability remain barriers to significant participation for libraries. The network, however, offers significant potential for library access to high-speed broadband services for a broad range of applications.

Network Nebraska offers the following vision and benefits:

Vision – Government, educational institutions, and the private sector working together to insure that Nebraska has an efficient, affordable, reliable and scalable telecommunications infrastructure, widespread communications networks and sufficient network support functions.

Benefits – Through aggregation of demand, adoption of common standards and collaboration with network services and applications, participants are achieving many benefits, including:

- Reduce network costs
- Greater efficiency for participating entities
- Interoperability of video conferencing systems
- Increase K-20 educational collaboration
- New educational opportunities
- Competitiveness with surrounding states
- Improving the use of public investments

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission includes public library representatives on its Community Council and school and postsecondary libraries on the Education Council. The Director of the Nebraska Library Commission serves on the NITC's State Government Council. Libraries have received grant funds from the Community Council. However, state budget reductions during the 2001 – 2004 time period resulted in elimination of most grant funds for technology projects. The Nebraska Library Commission has continued to allocate LSTA funds for library technology projects.

Goal 4: Eligible Nebraskans will have access to Talking Book and Braille Service.

Activities in this goal area relate to providing books and magazines, in talking or Braille formats, to Nebraskans who experience a print-related disability. Books and magazines of regional interest will be recorded in the Library Commission's own studios and circulated in special formats, along with materials provided by Library of Congress. Readers Advisors will assist eligible Nebraskans by enrolling them in the service and providing access to the collection. Volunteers are recruited and trained to narrate and produce recordings, and to provide clerical support to staff.

This reporting period coincides with changes in technology that affect service delivery. Studios record book and magazine masters using computers and digital software, rather than open-reel analog recorders. Tape duplication uses noise reduction and other sound editing software to prepare inter-masters for duplication onto audio cassettes and to archive Nebraska books onto DVDs. The next step, circulating materials on flash memory cartridges for use with digital players, is approximately a year and a half away, as per announced plans from the Library of Congress.

4A. Distribute talking book and Braille materials and playback equipment to eligible Nebraskans.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

- Awareness and participation in the Talking Book and Braille Service program will increase.
- Use of talking book and Braille materials will increase.

In FY 2006, the talking book program served 3567 individuals and 334 facilities. In 2002, at the beginning of this reporting period, the program served 3556 individuals and 300 facilities. Fluctuations in readership from year to year can be significant as seen by comparing FY 2002 through FY 2006:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Facilities</u>
2002	3556	300
2003	3695	308
2004	3710	316
2005	3601	317
2006	3567	334

In FY2006, 190,230 items circulated to our borrowers. For 2002, that figure was 175,687. In addition to year-to-year fluctuation, our annual circulation figures were impacted by two factors: several of our larger-circulating magazines on cassette reduced their publication frequency from biweekly to monthly; a change in procedures from Library of Congress allowed network libraries to count catalogs and large-print newsletters as part of circulation. The first change, regarding frequency of magazine publication, hurt our circulation figures; the second change, regarding what could now be counted, helped the circulation figures.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Circulation</u>	<u>Cassette Magazine Circulation</u>
2002	175,687	37,325
2003	218,988	37,111
2004	208,646	43,243
2005	201,325	39,877
2006	190,230	33,221

4B. Identify and record materials of special interest to Nebraska borrowers.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

- The number and quality of locally recorded materials will increase.

Throughout the report period, staff and volunteers continued to record books and magazines within the Library Commission's Prairie Lane Studios. Emphasis is placed on materials about Nebraska or Nebraskans.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Books Recorded</u>	<u>Issues of Magazines Recorded</u>
2002	22	146
2003	34	139
2004	18	148
2005	21	136
2006	27	127

Numbers of books and magazines recorded per year is impacted by the number of pages, type size, frequency of publication, as well as the presence of charts and tables.

During the reporting period, studio volunteer hours reflected a year-to-year fluctuation but also an overall upward trend:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Studio Volunteer Hours</u>
2002	2136
2003	2268
2004	1995
2005	1977
2006	2662

4C. Provide reader advisory services to assist eligible Nebraskans in selecting materials.*Intended Outcomes:*

- Awareness and participation in the Talking Book and Braille Service program will increase.
- Use of talking book and Braille materials will increase.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Throughout the reporting period, the Nebraska Library Commission staffed its Talking Book and Braille Service with 3 FTEs who provided readers advisory services and initiated contact with borrowers and their family members.

A sample comment about the TBBS:

“I wanted to take the time to tell you what excellent customer service your staff provides. I am a customer in two ways, personal and state employee. From the personal side, Library Commission staff Kay and Sarah have been assisting my mother with talking books since she lost her eyesight. I can’t begin to tell you how patient and helpful they have been. My mother was not an avid reader before she lost her eyesight, but with their assistance, a whole new world has opened up to her with the talking books. I give Kay and Sarah the credit because of their assistance in selecting books to read based on her interests.”

“Your service is great . . . (My husband) often bemoans that he spent his active years working, planning to read in his retirement. Happily, in spite of the fact that he can no longer read, he is still able to explore the lives and ideas contained in books. You have indeed given him an open window to the world.”

4D. Provide outreach services, with special emphasis on targeting provision of services to children and young adults.*Intended outcome:*

- Local library personnel will promote talking book and Braille services.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

A variety of strategies were pursued in order to promote talking book and Braille services. Here are those strategies that involved either Nebraska librarians or direct contact to schools:

October 2001: Staff visited Walthill and Alexandria Public Libraries.

January 2002: Staff visited Harvard Public Library

February 2002: Quantity of applications given to Omaha Public Library.

April 2002: Staff visited Ruskin, Palmyra, Lynch, and Springbank Township Public Libraries.

May 2002: Staff visited the Genoa Public Library.

June 2002: Staffed a booth at the Eastern Library System annual meeting in Ithaca.

August 2002: Staff made a presentation at “Bricks & Boards: Spruce Up the Library You Have or Get Started on a Brand-new Building” workshop held at Concordia University.

November 2002: Library system administrators were given packets labeled for public libraries which contained application forms, posters, brochures, and magnets.

April 2003: Staff made a presentation at the Grand Island Public Library.

June 2003: Staff made a presentation at the Republican Valley Library System annual meeting at Superior.

July 2003: Promotional materials provided to the Neligh Public Library for display at the Antelope County Fair.

July 2003: Staff made a presentation to a Special Libraries Class, from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

August 2003: Braille alphabet cards and other materials sent to Amherst Public School. February 2004: Staff made a presentation at Young Adult Library Class, taught at University of Nebraska at Omaha.

June 2004: Staff made a presentation at the Nebraska Educational Media Association (NEMA)/Republican Valley Institute at North Platte.

Fall 2004: Coupon caddies distributed to Nebraska public libraries through library systems.

November 2004: Staff worked with Lincoln City Libraries to co-sponsor Kernels in a B.A.S.K.E.T. book-discussion program.



February 2005: Staff made a presentation to Literature for Young Adult class taught at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

June 2005: Staff provided an orientation and tour to the new administrator of the Republican Valley Library System.

October 2005: Staff made a presentation to library system administrators and their board presidents.

November 2005: Braille alphabet cards and other Braille materials were sent to Gretna Public Library for use with a youth group.

December 2005: Posters were mailed to 23 Nebraska public libraries as per their request.

January 2006: Posters were mailed to 5 Nebraska public libraries as per their request.

March 2006: Approximately 30 posters were distributed to Nebraska libraries through the Northeast Library System.

April 2006: Staff worked with Lincoln City Libraries to co-sponsor Kernels in a B.A.S.K.E.T. book-discussion program.

May 2006: Staff held a reception for talking book borrowers hosted by the Keene Memorial Library in Fremont.

May 2006: Staff facilitated a session at the Nebraska Library Association College and University Section spring meeting: “Millennials: The New Generation of Students.”

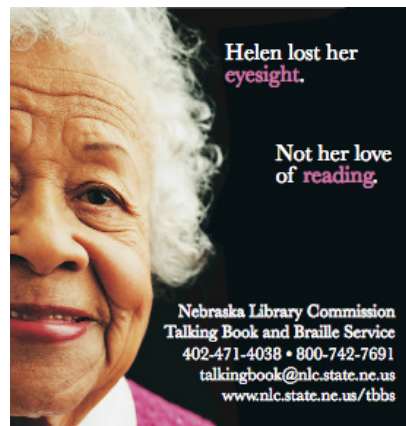
June 2006: Staff held a reception for talking book borrowers at the Ogallala Senior Center that included

a session by staff from the Goodall City Public Library.

June 2006: Staff made a presentation to library system administrators at their quarterly meeting.

August 2006: Braille alphabet cards and other Braille materials were sent to the Karen Western Elementary School in Omaha.

August 2006: Promotional packets were mailed to each of Nebraska's school districts.



4E. Recruit and train volunteers to assist in recording of materials and related talking book and Braille processes.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

- Volunteer number and hours will increase.

Volunteer Service

FFY	Studio Volunteers	Studio Volunteer Hours	Total TBBS Volunteers	Total TBBS Volunteer Hours
2002	31	2136	111	3923
2003	34	2268	100	4049
2004	41	1995	63	4072
2005	35	1977	78	3866
2006	55	2662	104	4388

Volunteers play an important role in the efficient operation of Talking Book and Braille Service to meet the needs of patrons in the space and time available. Volunteers process new books before NLS announces their availability. Volunteers provide essential help in the XESS process; deleting records, bagging recyclables, and preparing boxes for reuse. In the recording studios, volunteers prepare Midwest materials for recording, narrate, and monitor. Volunteers also duplicate, spot check, and erase magazine tapes.

Successes:



Cecilia, Tristan, and Stacy Burda (I to r) of Lincoln volunteered to help process cassette books at the Talking Book and Braille Service in FY 2006.

- Strategic partnerships with community groups have been formed and strengthened for the recruitment and recognition of volunteers and ongoing volunteer management training. TBBS builds a volunteer base with a wide variety of skills through a spectrum of community organizations. Volunteers are placed at Talking Book and Braille Service from Volunteer Partners; Lincoln Area Agency on Aging; Union College; Nebraska Wesleyan University; Cedars Freeway; Boy Scouts; religious groups; Lincoln Public Schools citizenship issues classes, job support classes, and mobility training; and University of Nebraska student involvement, service learning, and Delta Gamma.
- Digital recording technology has had a positive impact on the volunteer program. A volunteer helped with the initial digital studio set-up. Recruitment of monitors became successful once the technology was in place.
- Volunteer studio time increased with additional staff time devoted to the studios, volunteer monitors, and increased use of volunteers to prepare materials for recording.
- Detailed training of monitors was reinforced with a training manual developed in-house. A spreadsheet was designed for calculating side changes.
- Directions for mark-up of magazines were written and repeatedly revised in response new formatting procedures for digital recording.
- Cleaned boxes have been available through volunteer efforts. A supply of boxes has been shelved, and cleaning boxes for reuse will no longer be a major volunteer activity.
- Efficient use of group, episodic volunteer service continues even as the groups themselves shift. An organization for troubled youth no longer sends groups to volunteer, but a high school job support class volunteers three times a week for half a semester. Religious groups and a Boy Scout troop volunteer at TBBS to fulfill their goals. Talking Book and Braille Service has participated in a college's annual community service day.
- Volunteers have been given community awards such as the First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Award for Volunteers in the Arts, Admiralships in the Great Navy of the State of Nebraska, President's Student Service Awards from the Points of Light, a certificate from Keep Lincoln/Lancaster County Beautiful, Runza Spirit of Service Award from the University of Nebraska, Eagle Scout awards, and recognition at the Community Recognition Event hosted by Volunteer Partners.

Challenges:

- Concern has been expressed for maintaining a high quality of recordings while using volunteers.
- The change in NLS XESS timeline may impact the use of college service days in late August.

4F. Monitor and test new technologies developed by the National Library Service for the delivery of digital talking books.

Progress towards goal:

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Intended Outcomes:

- An implementation plan for transition of talking book materials from analog to digital format will be developed.

During this reporting period, both studios were converted to digital mastering. The conversation began in 2002 when the Nebraska Library Commission acquired a Dell computer for one of its studio as well as Sound Forge studio software, sound card, data port, and cables. That same year an acoustic engineer was recruited to train staff in the use of Sound Forge. In April 2002, staff attended a workshop sponsored by Library of Congress: “The Art of Audio Book Production,” which focused on technical and quality issues related to audio book mastering.

In 2002, the Library Commission’s studio complex adopted and trademarked the name “Prairie Lane Studios.” The studios were named in order to focus on their activity and to enhance efforts to recruit additional volunteer narrators and producers.

During 2003, tape duplication and the studios were networked together so that sound files could be downloaded directly into tape duplication’s EDAT digital archiving and editing system. New data jacks and cabling were installed.

The second studio was converted to digital mastering in November 2003.

During FY 2004, the task was completed of archiving onto compact discs all books recorded in the studios on open-reels.

Enhancements during FY 2005 included new microphones, shock mounts, stands, intercom systems between studios and control rooms, associated cabling, headphone amplifiers, intercom microphones, jacks, and tone generators. Also, during FY 2005, the Sound Forge manual was made available online.

Evaluation Process

The Nebraska Library Commission’s 2003 – 2007 Long Range Plan outlined the following evaluation plan:

- Solicit input from the public, including library personnel, trustees and supporters, on library and information service needs.

Comment: Input has been an on-going process for Library Commission programs and services and includes conversations with stakeholders, customers and project partners. Input has also included occasional surveys, State Advisory Council on Libraries meetings, quarterly

meetings with regional library system administrators, Talking Book and Braille Service Advisory Committee, NEBASE Advisory Council, attendance at regional library system board meetings and various library related meetings throughout the year (e.g., Nebraska Library Association (NLA) annual and spring meetings, and Nebraska Educational Media Association (NEMA) annual meeting (joint conference with the NLA)).

- Onsite monitoring of LSTA funded projects.

Comment: On-site monitoring has been done for selected projects. On-site monitoring has not been needed in a number of cases due to the type of project. For a number of projects, Commission staff members have been present to participate or observe. Regional library systems have been recipients of projects grants, including their annual regional service programs. Regional Library System Administrators meet quarterly with Nebraska Library Commission to report on projects and to discuss library service needs, plans and strategies.

- Require reports that utilize outcome based evaluation on LSTA funded projects.

Comment: Project applicants are required to state intended outcomes as part of their project proposals. Project grant recipients are asked to describe outcomes in their reports.

- Strategic action plans, developed by appropriate NLC personnel and stakeholder representatives, will be implemented for each activity, including outputs, outcomes and timelines.

Comment: Strategic action plans have not been used to the extent intended or anticipated, with a few exceptions. While Library Commission staff members have available a considerable amount of program/project information and data, strategic action plans would have resulted in an easier to prepare five-year report and more consistent information.

- Develop consistent reporting documents and data collection mechanisms to ensure timely, accurate and ongoing collection of outcome based evaluation components.

Comment: The strategic action plans were created as a tool for systematic compilation, analysis and reporting of program/project information. The Library Commission has created additional reporting practices for collecting programmatic information and data (e.g., grant project reports, annual library statistical reports, performance data and testimonials collected by program staff). The Library Commission's biennial budget documents are a further source for program and performance information. This information is used by the Governor's budget staff and Legislative staff for budget reviews and appropriation decisions.

- Systematic analysis of informal contacts with stakeholders.

Comment: Library Commission staff members have on-going and frequent communication with stakeholders via meetings, telephone, e-mail, and conferences. Commission staff members meet on a regular basis to share information about program plans, activities and events and to discuss issues, needs and strategies.

- Submit annual reports to IMLS detailing the status of the goals, activities, and intended outcomes.

Comment: Annual reports are a major source for program information and reporting, including reports to the Nebraska library community about state and LSTA funded programs and services.

- Submit a five-year evaluation report to IMLS detailing accomplishments and lessons learned for 2003-2007.