



Nebraska Library Commission

"Bringing together people and information"

LSTA FIVE-YEAR PLAN 2008-2012

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

For submission to the Institute of Museum & Library Services

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Introduction

Nebraska libraries are vital links to local, regional, state and global information resources, and as such are valuable community and state assets. The purpose of the Nebraska Library Commission's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan 2008-2012 (hereinafter referred to as the LSTA Plan) is to identify goals and activities designed to improve access to library and information services for all Nebraskans. These goals and activities are based on the library and information service needs of Nebraskans as determined through broad based communication and information sources, including the Commission's recent five-year LSTA program evaluation and regional public meetings.

Specifically, this LSTA Plan sets forth the mission, needs, goals, activities, intended outcomes, timeline, and planning and implementation procedures for administering Nebraska's LSTA program from 2008 through 2012. It defines stakeholders and their roles, and the communication and monitoring procedures for involvement of the library community and library users in the execution of Nebraska's LSTA program.

The Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) supports programs and services to libraries and the public with a combination of state general funds and federal LSTA funds. LSTA funds comprised approximately 30% of Library Commission total funding for the fiscal period 2003 – 2007. State general funds and LSTA funds are combined in Library Commission operations and library aid programs and services.

The LSTA Plan has been updated and revised based on the Commission's ongoing administration of Nebraska's LSTA program, emerging issues and trends, input from the library community and public, five-year program evaluation (completed earlier this year), input from the State Advisory Council on Libraries, Commission members and staff, and regional public meetings held to solicit ideas and conversation concerning libraries and library services now and over the next five-year period.

The LSTA Plan also reflects planning undertaken in preparation of the Nebraska Library Commission's 2007-2009 biennium budget request submitted to the Governor and Legislature in September 2006.

The LSTA Plan will be available electronically through the Nebraska Library Commission Web site (www.nlc.state.ne.us). Strategic action plans will be used for program management and evaluation purposes.

Mission

The mission of the Nebraska Library Commission 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 Nebraskans.

General Statutory Authority

The Nebraska Library Commission's statutory authority is set forth under Article 4, Chapter 51 of Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska¹. In addition to the powers granted in Chapter 51, state statutes provide that the Commission is the state agency designated to receive federal library program funds appropriated for the Library Services and Technology Act.

Trends and Issues

Economy – The Nebraska economy has rebounded in recent years from a downturn that occurred from approximately 2001 through 2004. The Library Commission's state general fund support has remained somewhat stable and is nearly level funded for the state biennium budget beginning July 2007. As a result, it continues to be necessary for the Library Commission and Nebraska libraries to explore alternate, innovative and collaborative funding sources to ensure growth and development of library and information services.

Library Personnel – Nebraska's LSTA Five-Year Plan Evaluation² reaffirms that *people* make the significant difference in determining the quality of library services. As noted in Nebraska's 2003 – 2007 LSTA Plan, significant numbers of library personnel will reach retirement age in the coming decade. A priority need is the successful recruitment of talented library personnel, provision of professional and continuing education (CE) opportunities, and improvement of a support system that places value on the work of library personnel and provides significant improvement in compensation. Considerable progress has been made and new opportunities created through an IMLS Librarians for the 21st Century grant that has supported development of the Now hiring @ your library[®] recruitment and retention project. The Now Hiring project has resulted in a significant increase in the number of students involved in professional education. In addition, a new Library Technical Assistant program was developed and is now offered through a partnership among Nebraska's community colleges.

Demographics – The 2000 U. S. Census and 2006 Census update affirmed the trend toward declining population in many of Nebraska's rural counties. Overall, state population has grown, but continues to shift from smaller rural communities to larger and urban metropolitan areas, with continuing movement of younger Nebraskans from rural to urban communities and out of state. Of Nebraska's 396 cities and towns, 75% lost residents between 2000 and 2006. These population shifts create a challenge for maintaining effective community services and for community survival. Nebraska has experienced population growth in several ethnic groups, increasing the need for diversity in library resources, services and personnel.

The 2006 Census estimate counted Nebraska's population at 1,768,331 persons in a 76,872 square mile area (22.3 persons per square mile). This was a 3.3% increase from the 2000 Census count. Population changes also reflect continuing growth in linguistic and ethnic

¹ <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/web/public/home>

² <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/mission/missionandgoals.html>

diversity in Nebraska, particularly in counties where large meat packing plants are attracting non-white or Hispanic workers, or in counties hosting refugee resettlement programs.

Library Technology – Nebraska libraries have made significant strides in acquiring and implementing information technology. However, there remain large gaps between needed technology resources (hardware, software, online content, telecommunications, training, and support) and access to those resources. Nebraska’s telecommunications infrastructure is fragmented, with varying availability of pricing and broadband services. With Nebraska political leaders pointing to electronic government as an effective public service strategy, libraries are the primary public access points in many Nebraska communities for citizen access to government services. Further development of electronic library and information resources will increase the viability and value of Nebraska libraries. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has made a significant contribution to the resources and capabilities of Nebraska public libraries in offering public access computers and in helping to increase the availability of broadband services in libraries. The training provided through the Foundation and its partner organizations has improved the knowledge and abilities of library personnel in using and supporting library computers.

Needs Assessment

The Libraries for the 21st Century initiative yielded higher levels of state funding during the period 1996 through 2001. This additional funding was used for licensing subscription databases, increased state aid to public libraries and regional library systems, continuing education and training grants, grants for children’s services, and scholarships for professional library education. LSTA funds also had significant impact, providing nearly one million dollars for technology and support for library services in over fifty-one Nebraska communities, from 2003 to 2007. Those funding levels have eroded somewhat as a result of tax revenue shortfalls during the latter part of 2001 and into 2004. State funding was reduced, has stabilized but not increased, for state library aid programs. Increases in LSTA funding have contributed to more funding being available for sub-grant projects.

The LSTA plan reflects experiences, results and trends from the past few years and takes into account the five-year evaluation completed earlier this year. The plan also reflects discussions and ideas that came about through a long range plan discussion with the State Advisory Council on Libraries and participants in six regional public meetings held for public input for preparation of the LSTA plan, as well as in-house discussions open to all Library Commission staff.

A State Advisory Council on Libraries session and six regional public meetings held across Nebraska used a simple format that included a set of questions developed to initiate discussion for long range plan input. The State Advisory Council recommended that the Library Commission use the *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources* (2005) study conducted for OCLC and the Americans for Libraries Council, sponsored and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-funded national study, *Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About*

Libraries in the 21st Century as background for the public meetings. Discussion questions were prepared in light of findings from these two studies. Results from the State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting and the regional meetings were compiled for Library Commission staff review and discussion.

Questions for State Advisory Council on Libraries and Regional Public Meetings
Dialogue

1. What are the strengths of Nebraska libraries that need continuing support and improvement?
2. Can we stretch the “Library” brand beyond books? Does it matter and why?
3. The public desires ease of use, convenience and availability. What could be done to support libraries’ efforts to better address these expectations?
4. If recent research shows that the public is dissatisfied with the service experience of libraries, relating to physical factors (lack of hospitality, inconvenient hours, etc.) what could be done to help libraries improve satisfaction with library space and customer service? Other ideas for helping libraries improve customer satisfaction?
5. What services or activities might libraries discontinue or at least de-emphasize?
6. Considering the “general” perceptions that people have of libraries, what will libraries need to do better in the future to remain relevant ?
7. Surveys indicate that the public, generally, holds libraries in high regard. Though, that doesn’t necessarily translate into adequate public funding support. Are there opportunities we are missing to tap the goodwill that apparently exists for libraries?
8. What’s your “vision” for Nebraska library services in 2012?

Programs and services:

- promotion of libraries and library services;
- materials, services, and personnel to meet growing multi-cultural diversity;
- customer and age appropriate space design and furnishings;
- accessible space for technology and community meeting opportunities;
- increased staffing;
- effective customer service;
- more knowledgeable staff;
- increased hours at local library facilities;
- early childhood education;
- literacy (all ages);
- application of technologies for enhanced library services;
- high speed Internet connections for libraries;
- 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, digitization;
- advocacy, including ability to work and succeed in local, regional and state political arenas;
- ability to locate grant opportunities and write successful grant applications;
- maximizing use of NebraskAccess;
- scholarships for library science education (associate, bachelor’s, master’s, Ph.D.)
- staff development and volunteer recruitment and training;
- long range and strategic planning; and
- knowledge of marketing and public relations.

The following goals, activities and intended outcomes and outputs are a result of an analysis of input gathered from stakeholders and are related to the following LSTA purposes.

LSTA Purposes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages; 2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; 3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries; 4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; 5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and 6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved. <p>20 USC § 9141. GRANTS TO STATES</p>

Policy Statement for Use of LSTA and State Funds for Five-Year Plan Activities

The Library Services and Technology Act state program is a shared federal/state effort. Nebraska’s LSTA Five-Year Plan also serves as a strategic plan for the Nebraska Library Commission. Activities in the plan are funded with a combination of state and federal monies with state funds used to fulfill the Library Commission’s statutory responsibilities and as for match and maintenance of effort of federal State Program funds. LSTA funding is used as

appropriate in meeting the six purposes of the LSTA Grants to States Program within this plan's two major goals as outlined below.

Goals, Activities and Intended Outcomes and Outputs

Goal 1: All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.

Need: Eighty-eight percent of public libraries in Nebraska serve communities of fewer than 5,000 (238 of Nebraska's 271 public libraries). In many cases library personnel are employed part-time, do not receive benefits (e.g., insurance), and receive low wages. All of which may contribute to the likelihood of high turnover and a disincentive to actively pursue additional training that could lead to improved services. 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 thrive in a global environment. The resource sharing infrastructure, developed and maintained by the Library Commission, exists to facilitate statewide customer access to the mixed variety and multiple formats of library and information resources.

A continuing trend is for more library and information services to be delivered electronically, making access and use of those resources increasingly challenging. In spite of these conditions, the majority of the state's public libraries are currently accredited (188 of the 271) at one of three levels, 183 of Nebraska's public library directors are certified, and a total of 784 library staff have attained certification. Certification indicates that staff have taken, or are taking a series of training classes known as Basic Skills, and/or have attained at least 45 hours of training within a three-year period. Training is integral to preparing librarians and board members to develop, expand, deliver, or promote services and programs that are essential to the achievement of this goal.

As affirmed in discussions with the State Advisory Council on Libraries and public meetings held for discussion of long range plan needs and strategies, continuing education and training programs are essential to the effectiveness of all libraries, and the Nebraska plan is inclusive of library workers in the state's public, academic, school, special and institutional libraries. Training for public library boards is also an essential part of this plan.

Comments from the State Advisory Council on Libraries and regional public meetings noted the value of strengthening partnerships among Nebraska libraries for continued service delivery and improvement.

The LSTA plan builds on the success of the Now hiring @ your library[®] initiatives with continuing emphasis on support for financial aid for library science education. The Library Commission will need to assume a more active informant role, letting library staff and supporters

know of available and useful opportunities. The Commission will also collaborate with other library education and training providers to seek the most effective mix of delivery options and offer effective ways for librarians to access educational and training programs.

A number of participants at the regional public meetings emphasized the need for library staff, board members and other supporters to possess skills that go beyond traditional library education and training. Among the items identified were: diversity training, advocacy, staff development “beyond the book,” marketing, improved rapport with city officials, customer service, dealing with continual change, keeping up with technology in general, knowing how to get involved in the community, representing the library in the community, ability to teach technology to customers, determining “return on investment,” connecting to community economic development, customer-centered service, etc. The Nebraska Library Commission accepts the challenge of determining the level of training in these areas to be included in future “Basic Skills” (or other) courses offered to library staff and supporters.

Most 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. Other activities relate to providing books and magazines, in recorded or Braille formats, to Nebraskans who experience a print-related disability. In addition to circulating materials provided by the Library of Congress/National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Library Commission’s Talking Book and Braille Service records and circulates books and magazines of regional interest in its own studios.

Activities:

1A. The Nebraska Library Commission’s improved Library Training Web Portal will continue to serve the Nebraska library community, assisting them in finding information about education and training to facilitate offering improved library services to their customers.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Public library directors will report using the site to find information and/or to register for training.
2. Public library boards will report using the site for information and/or for registering for training.
3. Users will report positive experiences using the training site.

1B. The Nebraska Library Commission will improve Web functionality related to training and continuing education, including exploring a course notification system and development of individualized education plans.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Certified public librarians will use the system to successfully develop individualized education plans, receive notifications of training opportunities, and other career development activities.

1C. The Nebraska Library Commission will revise Basic Skills classes to complement the Western Council of State Libraries (Western Council) and the American Library Association (ALA) core competencies projects. The Library Commission will become a provider for the Western Council education project by designing at least two courses that are accepted by that organization.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Nebraska library staff members will offer improved library services to their customers based on competencies gained by attending the improved Basic Skills and Nebraska Library Technical Assistant courses.
2. The Western Council project will adopt and offer at least two courses developed by the Library Commission.

1D. The Nebraska Library Commission will evaluate and revise the scholarship program administered as part of the IMLS grant, “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies,” the Now hiring @ your library[®] recruitment and retention project.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Scholarship program will better meet the needs of students.
2. Scholarship recipients will provide feedback on the impact of the financial support and the education they received with that support.

1E. The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased online educational opportunities, promoting these through a variety of multi-format communication efforts.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Public librarian certification participants will participate in and evaluate online education opportunities.
2. Skills and information from these education opportunities will be incorporated into the programs and services of Nebraska libraries.

1F. The Nebraska Library Commission will revise the 2006 edition of *The Nebraska Library Board Manual* (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/neboardmanual/index.html>).

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Library boards will access the revised manual from the Library Commission Web site and use it for guidance and reference in library planning, policy development and administration.

1G. The Nebraska Library Commission will provide access to and promote use of subscription databases (NebraskAccess), NEBASE services, and cooperative purchasing and licensing agreements.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Personal and business success stories and testimonials will demonstrate the impact of database resource use.
2. Improved student achievement will be facilitated through the use of education and information resources.
3. Public awareness and use of NebraskAccess subscription databases will increase.
4. The number of statewide subscription databases and downloadable resources will increase.
5. Nebraska libraries participating in cooperative purchasing will realize significant cost savings.
6. Participation in consortia database purchasing will increase.
7. Ninety-five percent of Nebraska libraries with Internet access will be registered for statewide subscription databases.
8. NEBASE member libraries will acknowledge a high level of satisfaction with the Library Commission's administrative, technical, training and consultation in support of OCLC products and services.

1H. The Nebraska Library Commission will identify, facilitate, and implement statewide digitization initiatives.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Nebraskans will have increased access to a virtual library of digital primary source materials through **Nebraska Memories** (Nebraska's cooperative project to digitize Nebraska-related historical and cultural heritage materials) increasing availability to researchers of all ages via the Internet.
2. Local and remote access to local genealogy resources and services will be enhanced.

1I. The Nebraska Library Commission will administer the Public Library Accreditation program (revised and fully implemented in 2006).

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. The number of public libraries that meet Public Library Accreditation Guidelines will increase, and the number of libraries that meet the enhanced and excellent levels will increase.
 2. Appropriate stakeholders will provide feedback on Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation.
- 1J.** The Nebraska Library Commission will develop and promote library and information services for children and young adults.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Library personnel will demonstrate improved knowledge and skills in providing library and information services to children and youth.
2. Use of library and information services by Nebraska children and young adults will increase.
3. Testimonials and anecdotes will indicate successful and beneficial use of library services and resources.
4. Children identified within the Spanish Language Outreach program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will receive increased and improved library and information services.

1K. The Nebraska Library Commission will ensure that Nebraskans with a print-related disability will have access to regional books and magazines in an accessible format as well as to the Library of Congress talking book and Braille collection by:

1. Distribution of talking book and Braille materials, playback equipment, and movies with audio description to eligible Nebraskans,
2. Identification and recording of materials of special interest to Nebraska borrowers.
3. Providing reader advisory services to assist eligible Nebraskans in initiating service, selecting materials, and in determining the quantity and materials,
4. Promoting talking book and Braille services, using a variety of approaches, such as contacts with eye care professionals and other care providers, librarians, support group leaders, and advertisements in publications of interest to Nebraska's senior citizens, and
5. Recruiting volunteers to assist in audio production to supplement the efforts of paid staff.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Testimonials from talking book borrowers will indicate successful and beneficial use of library services and resources.
2. The Nebraska talking book collection will increase.
3. Sources of referrals for talking book borrowers will increase.

4. Skills of studio volunteers will improve.

1L. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and support library and information services for English Language Learners (ELL).

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Nebraska participants in WebJunction's outreach program for library services to Spanish-speaking populations will provide feedback on activities for program development and future initiatives.
2. Library use and reading skills will increase due to the Prime Time Family Reading program, provided through a Library Commission partnership with the Nebraska Humanities Council.
3. ELL needs will be better addressed by local library personnel, through access to existing models of library and information services to meet local ELL needs and through grants to support library and information services.
4. Children and adults who speak English as a learned language will report that library service promotional efforts resulted in greater awareness and library use.

1M. The Nebraska Library Commission will provide statewide reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Library personnel will report improved ability to provide effective reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.
2. Nebraskans will have enhanced access to state and federal government information in a variety of formats.

1N. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote reading by providing support for and promotion of the Nebraska Center for the Book (affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book).

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Public awareness of books written by Nebraska writers or books published in Nebraska will increase.
2. Public participation in author programs and 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.
5. Annual state participation in the National Book Festival will increase.

1O. The Nebraska Library Commission will assist local libraries in improving library facilities and space for more effective customer service and enhanced hospitality.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Testimonials from library users will indicate they appreciate library makeover efforts.
2. Testimonials from library users will indicate a high level of satisfaction with library facilities, resources and customer service.
3. Testimonials from library users will indicate a high level of satisfaction with library

1P. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of the Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. The Nebraska Library Commission and statewide local library personnel will report use of a variety of technologies and formats to communicate more efficiently and effectively their programs and services.
2. A higher percentage of the Library Commission's communication products will be disseminated electronically.
3. Nebraskans will have increased awareness of library services as a result of statewide communication campaigns to increase participation in the Commission's statewide initiatives.

1Q. The Nebraska Library Commission will continue efforts to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Numbers of qualified staff in Nebraska libraries and media centers will increase.
2. Scholarship recipients will provide positive feedback on mentoring activities and scholarships received.
3. Nebraska library staff will report positive experiences through Internships funded by the Library Commission.
4. Nebraskans will report increased awareness about the library profession and the opportunities in Nebraska libraries.

Goal 2: Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to access and deliver online library and information services.

Need: Many communities are attempting to provide new types of library and information

services in inadequate facilities due to a lack of space, poor wiring, and the inefficient use of existing space. Technology is often added to the library without benefit of space planning, appropriate ergonomic furnishings or electrical and data connections. The availability and use of broadband services is growing statewide. However, access, speed and affordable connectivity continue to be issues for many libraries.

Libraries also report difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff with computer knowledge and experience. Positions tend to remain vacant for long periods and when filled are staffed with individuals who require extensive training. There is also a need for ongoing technology training and technical support for existing library personnel. Public libraries, particularly in smaller communities, often lack technology support.

Sustainability, or the need to obtain sufficient local funding for technology replacement as well as for new technologies, is an issue of concern on the local as well as state level. The U.S. Libraries Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation gave many Nebraska public libraries public access computers and staff training resulting in a significant increase in use of libraries, public access computers and services. Nebraska libraries anticipate participation in a new round of grant support to replace public access computers in 2008. Library personnel will continue to benefit from the training made available from funding and other support provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

For Nebraskans with print-related disabilities, the LSTA plan period coincides with the introduction of digital talking books and digital players from the Library of Congress, expected to begin in late 2008 or early 2009. In anticipation of this change, the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service has begun recording books and magazines using computers and digital software. The Commission's tape duplication area currently uses noise reduction and other post-production software and is archiving Nebraska books on DVDs. The phasing-in of books on flash memory and digital players from the Library of Congress is scheduled to take at least four years. Flash memory will replace audio cassettes, a technology that is becoming obsolete and rapidly disappearing outside of talking books.

Activities:

2A. The Nebraska Library Commission will administer grants to public libraries and library consortia for planning, selection, and implementation of technology for access to library and information services.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Local support will continue to be demonstrated through local matching funds for grant awards.
2. Libraries will increase the number and types of technologies available to provide access to materials and other resources.

2B. The Nebraska Library Commission will review and adopt appropriate standards and protocols for hardware, software, Internet connectivity, and access to broadband services. Grant criteria and guidelines will be developed that apply these standards and protocols.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Nebraska libraries will have an improved infrastructure for resource sharing and information access.
2. Nebraska library staff will improve purchasing decisions by using the Commission Computer Purchasing Recommendations Web site.

2C: The Nebraska Library Commission will offer equipment, software, and support for connect charges to public libraries with inadequate Internet access.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. An increased number of the target libraries will have improved Internet connections and services.

2D. The Nebraska Library Commission will facilitate improved public Internet access through libraries by participation in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation U.S. Libraries Program.³

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Libraries will improve public online access by acquiring computers through Gates Foundation funding.
2. Library personnel will demonstrate and apply skills as a result of participation in training.
3. Nebraskans will report increased educational and economic benefits from using current technology and faster Internet connections in local libraries.
4. Nebraskans will report enhanced access to information resources.

2E. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote participation in the Universal Service Fund's E-rate⁴ program through provision of educational/promotional materials, training, consultation, and technical plan review. A group application for E-rate participation will be explored to increase participation and reduce the burden on libraries in applying for E-rate telecommunication services discounts.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

³ <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/UnitedStates/USLibraryProgram/>

⁴ <http://www.universalservice.org/sl/>

1. The number of public libraries participating in the Universal Service Fund's E-rate program will increase.
2. Public libraries will apply for funding for a broader base of eligible E-rate services.
3. Library personnel will report increased knowledge of telecommunication costs and issues.
4. An increased number of public libraries will apply for E-rate discounts for telephone service only (POTS) through a consortium application process, to be explored by the Nebraska Library Commission.
5. An increased number of public libraries will explore other option for receiving telecommunications services free of charge or at reduced rates.

2F. The Nebraska Library Commission will participate in statewide information technology strategic planning and management initiatives, including the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Network Nebraska initiative, Community and State Government Councils, and Technologies across Nebraska⁵.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Libraries will report access to and participate in a unified statewide telecommunications infrastructure.
2. Libraries will explore grant funding options for library technology projects.
3. Libraries will participate in statewide telecommunications collaborative initiatives.
4. Libraries will be represented in state level information technology planning and policy organizations.
5. Libraries will participate in statewide technology assessments.

2G. The Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service will implement new technologies to deliver digital talking books, as proposed by the Library of Congress.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. The Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service customers will receive and report satisfaction with Nebraska books on flash memory.

2.H. The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased educational opportunities to ensure that library personnel, boards, and supporters have the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide appropriate technology access and to deliver online library and information services.

⁵ <http://www.nitc.ne.gov/> and www.nitc.state.ne.us/toolkit/minigrants.htm

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Technology training participation will increase.
2. Library programs and services offered through Nebraska libraries will improve through the improved skills and information gained by training participants.

2I. The Nebraska Library Commission will explore the feasibility of a shared statewide online catalog for Nebraska libraries.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Library staff will report increased knowledge of options for and benefits of statewide integrated library systems.

Goal and Activity Timeline

	Ongoing	Completion Date
Goal 1: Improved Access to Enhanced Library and Information Services		
1A. Facilitate access through improved training portal	2008-2012	
1B. Improve Web site functionality	2008-2012	
1C. Revise Basic Skills and other training	2008-2012	
1D. Evaluate and revise scholarship program	2008-2012	
1E. Promote increased online educational opportunities	2008-2012	
1F. Revise Library Board Manual		2008
1G. Provide access to and promote use of online information resources	2008-2012	
1H. Increase participation in digitization activities	2008-2012	
1I. Administer Public Library Accreditation program	2008-2012	
1J. Develop and promote programs and services for children and young adults	2008-2012	
1K. Ensure access for individuals with print-related disabilities	2008-2012	
1L. Promote and support services for English Language Learners	2008-2012	
1M. Provide statewide reference, ILL and government information	2008-2012	
1N. Promote reading through the Nebraska Center for the Book	2008-2012	
1O. Assist local libraries in facility planning to improve customer service	2008-2012	
1P. Promote the Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska libraries	2008-2012	
1Q. Promote and recruit for the library profession		2008
Goal 2: Improved Access through Appropriate Technology		
2A. Administer grants	2008-2012	
2B. Review and adopt standards and protocols	2008-2012	
2C. Facilitate improved Internet access	2008-2012	
2D. Facilitate library participation in Gates Foundation Initiatives		2009
2E. Promote participation in E-rate Program	2008-2012	
2F. Participate in statewide information technology initiatives	2008-2012	
2G. Implement improved technologies for users of TBBS services	2008-2012	
2H. Provide continuing education to facilitate access to appropriate technology	2008-2012	
2I. Explore statewide online catalog	2008-2012	

Planning and Implementation Procedures

The following sections summarize stakeholder involvement, communication, monitoring, and evaluation procedures for implementation and administration of this LSTA Plan.

Stakeholder Involvement

1. State Advisory Council on Libraries⁶

The State Advisory Council on Libraries is broadly representative of public, school, academic, special and institutional libraries and libraries serving the handicapped and of persons using such libraries and of geographic areas of the state. Membership includes eighteen members appointed at-large by the Nebraska Library Commission. In addition, there are ex-officio members from the Nebraska Library Association and the Nebraska Educational Media Association.

The State Advisory Council on Libraries is utilized for:

- Advice and planning on such matters on which the Commission may seek counsel.
- Review and evaluation of interlibrary cooperative and resource sharing plans and programs.
- Development, review and evaluation of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan.

2. Library Commissioners⁷

The Commission's six members are appointed by the Governor to three-year terms with members serving no more than two consecutive terms. Members generally are appointed from each of the state's six regional areas. Commission roles and responsibilities relating to the LSTA Plan include:

- Approval of LSTA Plan and revisions.
- Appointment of members to the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries.
- Approval of eligibility requirements and criteria for libraries applying for LSTA grants.
- Serve as the decision body for appeals of LSTA grant awards.

3. Other Partners

The Library Commission involves other library organizations and constituencies in ongoing planning and evaluation. These include, but are not limited to:

⁶ www.nlc.state.ne.us/stadv/stadv.html

⁷ www.nlc.state.ne.us/commis/commis.html

- Nebraska libraries
- Regional Library Systems (www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/index.html)
- Public Resource Library Group
- Post-secondary library representatives
- Nebraska Library Association (www.nebraskalibraries.org/)
- Nebraska Educational Media Association (nema.k12.ne.us)
- Talking Book and Braille Service Advisory Committee (www.nlc.state.ne.us/tbbs/AdvisoryCommittee.html)
- Nebraska Information Technology Commission (www.nitc.state.ne.us/)

Communication Procedures

The LSTA Plan, upon approval by IMLS, will be disseminated to Nebraska libraries and citizens through the Library Commission Web site (www.nlc.state.ne.us). The Library Commission will supply print copies upon request. Summaries and pertinent information from the LSTA Plan will be distributed through NLC's publications (*NCompass* and *NLCommunicator*) to libraries, the State Advisory Council on Libraries, and other library-related organizations. Substantive revisions to the LSTA Plan, due to changing economic conditions or a refocusing of goals and activities, will be submitted to IMLS and made available to appropriate stakeholders.

Strategic action plans, developed as part of the implementation of the LSTA Plan and resulting achievements and outcomes, will be communicated through a variety of information products and resources, including NLC's Web site.

Monitoring Procedures

The Nebraska Library Commission will designate staff responsible for implementing and tracking progress on the LSTA Plan goals, activities and intended outcomes. This will include monitoring of sub-grantee projects and activities funded under the LSTA grant program. Onsite visits will be conducted for selected projects and consistent data collected to include in Annual Reports submitted to IMLS.

Evaluation Plan

The following means will be used to evaluate the goals, activities, and intended outcomes and outputs of the LSTA Plan:

- Solicit input from the public, including library personnel, trustees and supporters, on library and information service needs.
- Monitor selected LSTA funded projects.
- Require reports that utilize outcome based evaluation on LSTA funded projects.

- Develop strategic action plans for each activity, including outputs, outcomes and timelines.
- Develop consistent reporting documents and data collection mechanisms to ensure timely, accurate and ongoing collection of outcome based evaluation components.
- Submit annual reports to IMLS detailing the status of the goals, activities, and intended outcomes and outputs.
- Submit a five-year evaluation report to IMLS detailing accomplishments and lessons learned for 2008-2012.