

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)

FIVE-YEAR PLAN

2008–2012

District of Columbia Public Library
901 G St. N.W.
Washington D.C. 20001



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INTRODUCTION

The District of Columbia Public Library's (DCPL) primary responsibility is to provide quality public library services to approximately 580,000 residents of the City of Washington, D.C. However, in addition to this important role as the public library for the nation's capital, DCPL also acts as a "state library administrative agency (SLAA)." As the SLAA for the District, DCPL is responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) in the District of Columbia. LSTA is a Federal program that provides annual funding to all states using a population-based formula. The program is administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

In order to be eligible to receive LSTA funds, each SLAA must submit a five-year plan that outlines how the state agency intends to utilize the Federal funds in accordance with the six purposes specified in the LSTA language. The five-year plan must include a needs assessment as well as goals, activities, and processes that will be used to evaluate the state agency's progress toward its goals.

The LSTA 2008–2012 planning cycle comes at an exciting juncture in the history of the District of Columbia and of DCPL. Both the City and the Library are under new leadership. The new mayor, Adrian Fenty, was elected in November 2006. DCPL's new administrative team, headed by Chief Librarian Ginnie Cooper, has been in place for less than a year. Both the Mayor and the Chief Librarian have signaled that the coming years will bring exciting changes that will enhance the lives of the District's residents.

The major message contained in Mayor Fenty's first State of the District Addressⁱ was that he and his team are serious about making government work better and more openly. He stressed the importance of creating opportunities for all and shared his vision for a "world-class city with no neighborhood left behind."

While Mayor Fenty spoke of improving services to all Washingtonians, he emphasized those with an impact on children and seniors. To demonstrate his commitment to acting on his vision, he quoted an old Japanese proverb that says, "Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare." He concluded, "We can't afford any more daydreams or nightmares when it comes to the future of our kids."

The new Chief Librarian expressed a parallel vision for DCPL. In the press release announcing her acceptance of this positionⁱⁱ, Ms. Cooper is quoted as saying, "I look forward to working with the Board of Trustees and library staff to create a world-class, state-of-the-art library system that offers innovative programming and services to the citizens of Washington, D.C."

The spirit of great anticipation permeates the atmosphere in the District of Columbia and the DCPL LSTA Five-Year Plan reflects this desire for change. Although the LSTA grant represents only a small fraction of the funding spent on providing library services to District residents, it is, nevertheless, critically important. The LSTA program provides opportunities to innovate, offers a platform for building strategic partnerships with other libraries and community organizations, and helps to ensure that all D.C. residents have access to quality library and information resources.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC LIBRARY'S VISION AND MISSION

The District of Columbia Public Library's vision statement reads as follows:

The D.C. Public Library will be a recognized force in the community for engaging the mind, expanding opportunities, and elevating the quality of life. We believe equitable access to information, tailored to customer needs, equips people to learn all their lives, embrace diversity, and build a thriving city.

The Mission of the District of Columbia Public Library is to provide:

- ***Environments that invite reading, learning, and community discussion.***
- ***Trained staff and technology to help in finding, evaluating, and using information.***
- ***Opportunities for children, teenagers, adults, and senior citizens to learn and use information resources for personal growth and development.***

The Library's vision and mission statements both speak to the idea that library resources and services can transform lives and help build stronger communities. The Library's vision and mission are also highly compatible with the six LSTA purposes and consistent with the emphasis IMLS and the Library Services and Technology Act itself place on outcome-based assessment.

The District of Columbia Public Library clearly is striving to make a difference in the lives of the residents it serves. Furthermore, it is reaching out to other libraries and to community-based organizations in its determined effort to ensure that all Washingtonians have "equitable access to information, tailored to customer needs, that equips them to learn all their lives."

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A variety of data sources was used to develop the needs assessment portion of the Plan. Principal among them were U.S. Census data; demographic projections from Claritas, Inc.; statistical information gathered through the Federal-State Cooperative System and reported by the National Center for Education Statistics; a web survey distributed by the District of Columbia Library Association (DCLA) on behalf of DCPL; and a report entitled *The State of Adult Literacy Report: Investing in Human Capital*ⁱⁱⁱ, which was released by the University of the District of Columbia and the State Education Agency in 2007.

Demographics

The nation's capital is a city of contrasts. It is home to the rich and powerful and, at the same time, to the poor and forgotten. Educational attainment measured by the percentage of the population with college degrees is extremely high. However, the high school dropout rate in the city's public schools is among the highest in the nation.

Claritas, Inc., a provider of demographic data to the commercial and retail markets, estimates that by the year 2012, 6.00% of the households in the District will have incomes in excess of \$250,000/year^{iv}. The estimate for household income at this level for the United States as a whole is 2.64%. This means that the percentage of households with incomes of more than \$250,000/year in the District will be more than twice the national rate. At the other end of the economic scale, Claritas projects that the percentage of households in the District with incomes of less than \$25,000/year in 2012 will be 24.03%, whereas the national percentage that year is projected to be 21.56%.

Contrasts in educational attainment are similarly stark. Among District residents over age 25, 20.8% have earned a Master's, professional or doctoral degree; the national average is 8.8%. Ironically, according to *The State of Adult Literacy Report*, over 100,000 people, or 18.95% of the District's population, lack a high school diploma or equivalency credential (GED).

Although the District's population is quite diverse, the details differ from national findings. At 54.9%, Washington's African-American population is the largest segment. This compares with an average of 12.4% in the U.S. as a whole. On the other hand, the City's Hispanic population is 8.7%, compared with 14.9% across the U.S.

Washington's workforce differs, too, from the national norm. Among the District's workers over age 16, 73.5% are employed in "white-collar" jobs while the national average is 60.1%. Importantly, a smaller percentage of the District's population over age 16 is employed—45.7% in D.C. vs. 47.1% in the U.S. as a whole.

Finally, after several decades of decline, the D.C. population is beginning to rebound. Although the District lost 34,841 persons between 1990 and 2000, the population has grown by more than 8,000 since the 2000 census^v, and is projected to continue to grow at a modest rate in the coming years.

Library Services

The fact that DCPL serves as a municipal library and as a state library administrative agency, makes comparing its performance with that of other states difficult, and, sometimes misleading. However, a few comparisons may serve to illustrate some of the challenges that DCPL faces in its efforts to provide quality library services to the people of the District.

Data for Fiscal Year 2004, the most recent year that includes data from every state and D.C., are compiled by the Federal State Cooperative System and reported by the National Center for Education Statistics^{vi}. The report shows that the District of Columbia places last in circulation transactions per capita and 43rd of 51 in library visits per capita. Another critical area in which D.C. fares poorly is the number of public-use Internet terminals per 5,000 of population. The District ranks 47th of the 51 “states” with only 2.19 public-use Internet terminals for every 5,000 permanent residents.

On the other hand, DCPL ranks 9th of 51 in the number of print volumes per capita and 1st in the number of reference transactions per capita. The District also ranks 1st among the states in the number of librarians holding Master’s degrees in Library Science (MLS) per 25,000 population. This ranking is somewhat skewed due to the fact that there is only one public library in the District and it serves a municipal population as opposed to many states in which there are significant numbers of libraries operated by individuals without a master’s degree. A fairer comparison would be between DCPL and other major urban libraries. Nevertheless, the District offers its public a high level of professionally trained staff.

Literacy

The State of Adult Literacy Report: Investing in Human Capital offers an assessment of the magnitude of the illiteracy problem in D.C. The report suggests that approximately 36% of adults in the District function at the “below basic” level. This compares with 21%-23% nationally. The University of the District Columbia/State Education Agency report estimates that as many as 170,620 residents of D.C., or 29.40%, are functionally illiterate. It is easy to see why library circulation per capita in the District may be low when nearly one-third of the population cannot read or finds it difficult to read even very basic documents.

The report goes on to demonstrate the relationship between illiteracy and poverty, unemployment, and health. Illiteracy is at the core of many of the District's problems.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) statistics for 2005^{vii}, which are reported by the National Center for Education Statistics, show that the District of Columbia ranks last in the nation in 4th grade reading proficiency. The District's 4th graders in the "below basic" category added up to 67%. Another 22% were reading at the "basic" level. Only 9% were categorized as "proficient" and only 2% reached the "advanced" level. In comparison, national statistics place 38% of 4th graders at the "below basic" level, 33% at the "basic" level, 23% at the "proficient" level, and 7% at the "advanced" level.

The D.C. library community is fully aware of the importance of literacy. Responses to the web survey completed by members of the DCLA ranked literacy as the highest priority for LSTA funds. Similarly, the LSTA Advisory Council identified various forms of literacy, ranging from emergent literacy to workplace literacy to information literacy, as a primary focus for the LSTA program. In fact, the Advisory Council ranked literacy as its highest priority for LSTA funding. Literacy efforts that involve partnerships with the public schools to reach children at risk were seen as particularly valuable.

Access to Information

As stated earlier, DCPL has a large number of print volumes per capita. In fact, the depth of DCPL collections goes well beyond its collection of monographs. In particular, DCPL's Washingtoniana Division contains a wealth of resources, ranging from land records to personal papers, and from the "morgue" of the now defunct *Washington Star* newspaper to the records of civic and social organizations that influenced the District's development. While finding tools have been created to enable researchers to locate many of these resources, very few of these tools are available in electronic form. Digitization efforts to date have merely scratched the surface of what needs to be done.

The recent fire at the Georgetown Neighborhood Library, which houses the Peabody Room and additional irreplaceable collections, underscores the importance of securing valuable historical collections both through preservation and digitization. Fortunately, it appears that much of the Peabody Room's collection can be saved. Nevertheless, providing future generations with access to Washington's historic record is a critical need.

The members of the LSTA Advisory Council ranked the augmentation of electronic resources, including digitization, enhanced web content, and database access, as their third highest priority for LSTA funding.

Other access issues confronting DCPL are quite different in nature. As a state library agency, DCPL acts as the District's affiliate of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. In addition to offering traditional "talking book" services, DCPL's Adaptive Services Division provides a variety of adaptive technologies to address the reading needs of D.C. residents who are blind or whose visual ability is severely impaired.

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey^{viii} reports that nearly 15% of all Americans have a disability that impairs their ability to see or hear or that limits their mobility. When this percentage is applied to the District's population, it yields a total of approximately 86,500 people who may have difficulty accessing traditional library resources. Affording access to library resources to individuals with special needs must be considered a high priority.

As stated earlier, D.C. ranked 47th of 51 in the number of public-use Internet terminals per 5,000 population. Given the high percentage of households in the District that fall below the poverty line, free access to the Internet at the public library becomes a significant equity issue. Because DCPL has not been in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) in the past, the Library has not been eligible to expend LSTA dollars to address this need. However, the Library Board of Trustees has recently approved a new Internet Use Policy consistent with the requirements of CIPA and filtering software will be installed as required. Public access to the Internet, and through it to other online resources, is an important continuing need that LSTA funding can help the Library address.

Staff Development

Although DCPL has the highest number of MLS-degreed public librarians among the 51 states, the continual introduction of new technologies and increasing expectations by the public make continuing education and skills development essential for the staff. Staff training must be a constant if public libraries intend to be major sources of relevant information services in the 21st Century.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The LSTA Advisory Council saw cooperation and collaboration as an essential component of the LSTA program. In fact, the Advisory Council ranked it second only to literacy as a priority. The web survey of DCLA members underscored this theme. In response to a question asking which of the LSTA priorities should be highest, one survey respondent said, "It seems to me that effective collaboration and partnerships are essential to success in achieving all of the other LSTA purposes. It should simply be a given part of the way the LSTA program operates."

Several of the DCPL programs that have been funded with LSTA dollars in the past have included substantive cooperation and collaboration with community organizations. However, little has been done in cooperation with other types of libraries. As the District's LSTA program moves in a more collaborative direction, additional cooperative efforts with multiple types of libraries are anticipated.

Summary of Conditions and Needs

- **Approximately 170,000 (36%) of the District's adult population are functionally illiterate.**
- **More than two-thirds of the District's 4th graders fall into the "below basic" category in reading proficiency.**
- **The District of Columbia ranks 47th among the states in the number of public-use Internet terminals per 5,000 of population.**
- **Many District residents lack the financial resources necessary to purchase a computer, subscribe to the Internet, and/or buy books and other information resources and tools.**
- **DCPL lacks a comprehensive budgeted plan for the preservation and digitization of irreplaceable historic resources.**
- **Some District residents are unable to read standard print-on-paper resources or are unable to get to a library due to disabilities.**
- **Access to many valuable resources and services is limited because they are not available in digital formats.**
- **Library staff in the District continually need to upgrade their skills.**
- **Collaboration and cooperation between and among different types of libraries are relatively weak.**
- **DCPL lacks sufficient funding for "research and development" activities related to library and information services.**

LSTA GOALS, OUTCOMES, AND POTENTIAL TARGETS

The District of Columbia's LSTA Goals for 2008–2012 are designed to foster progress in addressing the needs identified above within the framework of the six purposes for the LSTA program specified in the Library Services and Technology Act ([LSTA] [20 U.S.C. 9141]). The Act indicates that a State Library Administrative Agency shall expend funds for one or more of the following:

1. Expand 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. Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
3. Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
4. Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.
5. Target 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.
6. Target 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 section 673[2] of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902[2]) applicable to a family of the size involved.

What follows are DCPL's 2008–2012 LSTA Goals, the outcomes the Library hopes to achieve, the strategic focus of each outcome, the need (or needs) each is intended to address, the LSTA purposes served by each outcome, examples of programs that may be funded, examples of baseline data needed, possible methods to create baseline information, and potential targets that may be used to assess progress.

The evaluation of D.C.'s implementation of the 2003–2007 LSTA Plan noted that baselines against which progress could be measured had rarely been established. The absence of quality baseline data makes it difficult, if not impossible, to establish meaningful targets. Therefore, considerable effort will be expended to identify and collect baseline data during the first two years of the 2008–2012 LSTA cycle.

**GOAL #1 –
ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RESIDENTS CAN READ.**

OUTCOME 1.1.

All preschool children in the District of Columbia enter school ready to learn.

Strategic Focus: Emergent literacy

Need Addressed:

More than two-thirds of the District's 4th graders fall into the "below basic" category in reading proficiency.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations

- #5 Target 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

- #6 Target 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 section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902 [2]) applicable to a family of the size involved

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- "Reach Out and Read" and other early childhood initiatives
- Summer Reading Programs
- Staff education and training related to the provision of emergent literacy services such as training in how language skills develop in young children
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

Work with the D.C. Public Schools, parents, and perhaps a college or university school of education in the District to create a formal study that follows a sample of children who do and who do not participate in Library programs from their pre-school years through the administration of standardized testing in 4th grade. The study might use the following techniques:

- Develop a scientific sample of preschool children in D.C. enrolled in Library programs after obtaining permission from parents to test children and have access to test scores.

- Assess school readiness of children who were enrolled in Library programs as they enter school to compare with a similar assessment of the population as a whole or a sample of children who are not participating in Library programs. Alternatively, conduct a longitudinal comparison with NCES National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005 Trial Urban District Reading Assessment scores; 2005 is the most recent year available. (The District of Columbia is one of the urban districts included in the NAEP Assessment.)
- Assess current staff skills related to emergent literacy to create a baseline against which knowledge and skill development can be measured.
- List the existing partnerships the Library has with other agencies that work in emergent literacy.

Possible Method to Create Baseline Information:

- Draw a sample from the 2007 registration data for preschool children who enroll in Library programs. These children are the ones who will be tested and whose progress is to be observed over time.
- Track both the unique (unduplicated) participants and the general number of participants who continue in other Library reading programs.
- Partner with the D.C. Public Schools or an academic partner to provide recognized educational tests for students who were enrolled in Library programs. If the object is to test the short-term impact of the Library program, a number of assessment instruments might be used for preschoolers. For example, Virginia and Texas use PALS PreK and COR—Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Preschool and the High/Scope Child Observation Record—to assess preschoolers’ progress during their preschool year, and their readiness for school. Alternatively, D.C. Public Schools, as a partner, could allow the Library access to the test scores of those students who were enrolled in the Library programs on whatever tests the District uses to measure progress at various grade levels. This was done in Carroll County, Maryland.
- Develop or build on an existing assessment survey and administer to all staff involved in emergent literacy services. Establish proficient and highly proficient thresholds against which staff can be measured. The American Library Association (ALA)/Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) “Born to Read” program provides a good basis for the identification of core competencies for library workers involved in emergent literacy.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alscresources/borntoread/bornread.htm>
- Use 2005 as baseline data for test scores of 4th graders in D.C. from NCES NAEP. In four years, the 2007 preschool library program attendees will be included in the test scores.

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number of preschool children participating in library programs by 5% each year.

- By 2011, increase by 10% the percentage of D.C. 4th graders who read at the “basic” level.
- By 2011, increase performance of all staff involved in emergent literacy services to the proficient level with at least 50% of the staff achieving the highly proficient level.
- Increase by two each year the number of partnerships with other agencies that work on emergent literacy.

OUTCOME 1.2.

All adults in the District of Columbia possess the reading skills they need to succeed in school, at work, and in their personal lives.

Strategic Focus: Adult Literacy/English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Need Addressed:

Approximately 170,000 (36%) of the District’s adult population are functionally illiterate.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.
- #5 Target 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.
- #6 Target 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 section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902 [2]) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Adult Literacy Resources and Services
- Workplace literacy programs
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Services to new immigrants
- World Language collection development
- Staff education and training related to the provision of family and adult literacy services such as training in how adults acquire literacy skills

- Staff education and training related to cultural awareness and issues related to effective interaction with adults involved in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current number of adults who participate in literacy and ESOL programs sponsored or associated with the Library
- Initial percentage of participants who report that they have been successful in meeting a personal goal, such as reading to a child, receiving a GED, applying for a job, or becoming a U.S. citizen
- Assess current staff skills related to family and adult literacy to create a baseline against which knowledge and skill development can be measured. Training resources available through the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)/ProLiteracy “Thinkfinity Literacy Network” program is one source that provides a basis for the identification of core competencies for library workers involved in family literacy.
<http://www.thinkfinity.org/home.aspx>
- Assess current staff skills related to ESOL to create a baseline against which knowledge and skill development can be measured. A draft document entitled “Standards for Teachers of Adult Learners” developed by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) provides some insight into the core competencies that might be expected of library workers involved in ESOL programs.
http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/seccss.asp?CID=86&DID=1556
- Current number of productive partnerships with other organizations and agencies that work on literacy; the Library will have to develop specific criteria for evaluating “productive” partnerships

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

- Use 2007 registration data to identify participants in literacy and ESOL programs, including those referred by DCPL to partner organizations.
- Develop a quick response survey for participants to complete at the end of the program to find out how the program helped them attain their goals. This could be conducted as an interview. Ask participants to continue informally to share their successes in the future by creating a list of key events to track, such as applying for citizenship, receiving a GED, getting a job, etc.
- Develop or build on an existing assessment survey and administer to all staff involved in family and adult literacy services. Establish proficient and highly proficient thresholds against which staff can be measured.
- Monitor the success of participants referred to partner organizations to identify those partnerships that hold the most promise for addressing this outcome in the future.

Potential Targets:

- Increase annually the number of participants/referrals in literacy and ESOL programs. (Existing participation and referral activity can be used as an initial baseline.) Work with partner organizations to determine existing capacity and set a percentage increase target. Monitor capacity to determine how DCPL might be instrumental in increasing capacity to provide literacy/ESOL services.
- At least one-half of all participants/referrals surveyed or interviewed will report having attained at least one of the “key event” goals, such as applying for citizenship, receiving a GED, getting a job, etc. Track this over the first two years of the Plan (2008–2009) and then set targets for increasing the success rate. Perhaps DCPL can develop an index that tracks multiple success indicators, including the percentage of participants/referrals who reach at least two “key event” goals.
- By 2011, increase performance of all staff involved in family and adult literacy services to the proficient level with at least 50% of the staff achieving the highly proficient level.
- Increase the overall success rate by monitoring the impact of various partner programs. Building stronger relationships with those that are very successful and determining ways in which DCPL can help strengthen programs that are less successful are the next steps. If an unproductive partnership does not become effective despite a reasonable effort at turnaround—perhaps three years—discontinuation may be the obvious choice.

OUTCOME 1.3.

All residents of the District of Columbia possess the skills they need to find, evaluate and use information effectively.

Strategic Focus: Information literacy**Needs Addressed:**

- Approximately 170,000 (36%) of the District’s adult population are functionally illiterate.
- More than two-thirds of the District’s 4th graders fall into the “below basic” category in reading proficiency.

LSTA Purpose Served:

#5 Target 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.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Information literacy training

- Homework help services
- Database/online resource licensing and subscriptions
- Staff education and training related to the provision of information literacy services such as programs related to essential skills used to find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current number of unique (unduplicated) participants in information literacy initiatives—either Library programs or referrals from the Library to other programs
- Current completion rate of participants in information literacy initiatives
- Current number of contact hours of homework help provided
- Current percentage of participants who report that they feel confident in using the skills they acquired in the class or program
- Assessment of initial skill level of participants
- Assess current staff skills related to information literacy to create a baseline against which knowledge and skill development can be measured. Sources of information that can be used to develop core competencies for library workers include the American Library Association and WebJunction. <http://data.webjunction.org/wj/documents/16963.pdf>
- A list of productive partnerships with other organizations and agencies that work to improve literacy; the Library will need to develop specific criteria for evaluating “productive” partnerships
- Current number of hits on electronic databases and resources taught in information literacy initiatives

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

- Use 2007 registration data for participants in information literacy initiatives and homework help programs.
- Use 2007 usage data on resources ‘taught’ in information literacy initiatives to compare before-and-after use of the resources.
- Develop a brief survey for participants to complete at the end of the course or program that asks how the program has helped them gain confidence and skill in using information resources. Ask them to continue informally to report on their successes in the future.
- Develop or build on an existing assessment survey and administer to all staff involved in information literacy services. Establish proficient and highly proficient thresholds against which staff can be measured.
- Identify those partnerships (existing and potential) that hold the most promise for improving this outcome.
- Work with D.C. Public Schools on the development of a joint information literacy curriculum and develop Library programs that support the specific goals included in the curriculum.

Potential Targets:

- Increase annually the number of participants in information literacy initiatives and homework help programs. After an accurate baseline number is established, DCPL can set a target for percentage increases for each year.
- Monitor the use of the resources taught in information literacy initiatives and used in homework help programs. Assessing the degree to which specific online databases are being used might be one approach. The objective is to measure the effectiveness of the classes and determine whether more or better resources, more classes, or both would be most effective in addressing information literacy needs.
- Have participants in each program report on a quick response survey whether they are more confident now in their use of specific resources. Participants' confidence level in using key resources can be tracked over two years (2008–2009). Then targets can be set for overall confidence in seeking information and for confidence in using specific resources.
- Increase participants' skill level in using specific resources.
- By 2011, increase performance of all staff involved in information literacy services to the proficient level with at least 40% of the staff achieving the highly proficient level.
- Implement a coordinated information literacy curriculum in partnership with the D.C. Public Schools.
- Monitor and increase (or decrease) the number of partnerships to maintain the ones that are most successful.

OUTCOME 1.4.

All residents of the District of Columbia discover the joy of reading.

Strategic Focus: The joy of reading**Needs Addressed:**

- Approximately 170,000 (36%) of the District's adult population are functionally illiterate.
- More than two-thirds of the District's 4th graders fall into the "below basic" category in reading proficiency.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #1 Expand 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.
- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Summer Quest
- Holla' Back
- Support for book club activities
- "One Book" programs
- Center for the Book
- Collection development
- Staff education and training related to the provision of readers' advisory and reading readiness services such as training in creating environments that support the development of early literacy skills
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current percentage of participants in Library literacy programs that have an active library card
- Current number of unique (unduplicated) participants who complete Library literacy/ reading programs annually
- Current circulation rates for specific print materials directly related to the literacy/reading programs
- Assess current staff skills related to readers' advisory and reading readiness to create a baseline against which knowledge and skill development can be measured. Examples of resources that can be used to develop an assessment of readers' advisory skills include the Western Council of State Libraries' "Library Practitioner Core Competencies." <http://www.westernco.org/continuum/LCPPfinal.pdf>
- Current number of productive partnerships with other organizations and agencies that promote reading
- Current percentage of District of Columbia residents who respond on an annual survey that reading is very important to them

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

Many of the data elements cited above are available through the Library's automated circulation system and statistics that the Library already keeps. An annual survey would explore several topics, one of which would be to elicit the role reading plays in the lives of District residents. DCPL could pay to "piggyback" on an existing community-wide survey by adding a few "library questions" to a more general survey.

An effort to improve readers' advisory and reading readiness services by increasing staff skills in these areas may also be undertaken. An assessment to create baseline data may include developing or building an existing knowledge and skills survey of all staff involved in information literacy services. Findings will help establish proficient and highly proficient thresholds against which staff can be measured.

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number of registered borrowers.
- Increase the number of participants in reading programs and initiatives.
- Increase the number of unique (unduplicated) participants who complete programs and initiatives.
- Increase the circulation of specific categories of print materials.
- By 2011, increase performance of all staff involved in readers' advisory and reading readiness services to the proficient level with at least 35% of the staff achieving the highly proficient level.
- Increase or decrease the number of partnerships to maintain only the ones that are very successful.
- Increase the percentage of District residents who say reading is very important to them, in response to an annual survey.

GOAL #2 –

ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RESIDENTS HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY INFORMATION RESOURCES THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THEIR LIVES.

OUTCOME 2.1.

All residents of the District of Columbia have access to the Internet.

Strategic Focus: Internet access

Need Addressed:

The District of Columbia ranks 47th among the states in the number of public-use Internet terminals per 5,000 of population.

LSTA Purposes Served:

#2 Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.

#3 Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- The purchase of computers and peripherals
- Upgrade of the network infrastructure

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current number of public-use Internet terminals per 5,000 population
- Current number of unique (unduplicated) individuals using Library Internet terminals
- Current number of hours Library Internet terminals are in use
- Current number of “hits” on Library web pages originating in DCPL facilities

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

Use data that are already available from the Library’s automation system and from the use of existing Internet management software. More sophisticated software could be acquired to track the level and characteristics of Internet use.

Potential Targets:

- Increase by 2012 the number of public-use Internet terminals available in DCPL facilities from 2.19 per 5,000 population (47th place) to 3.00 per 5,000 population.
- Increase the number of unique (unduplicated) individuals who have used an Internet accessible computer at DCPL during the previous year.

- Increase the percentage of time that Internet accessible computers are in use in each branch location.
- Increase the number of hits on DCPL web pages that originate from Internet accessible computers in the DCPL system.

OUTCOME 2.2.

All residents of the District of Columbia have access to high quality content through the DCPL website 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week.

Strategic Focus: Enhanced access to electronic resources

Needs Addressed:

- Many District residents who lack the financial resources necessary to purchase a computer, subscribe to the Internet, and/or buy books and other information resources and tools.
- Access to many valuable resources and services is limited because they are not available in digital formats.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #1 Expand 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 Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
- #3 Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Enhancement of DCPL's web presence
- Web content development
- Database/online resource licensing and subscriptions
- Staff education and training related to the provision of virtual reference services and website development. This may include training in electronic systems used to facilitate virtual reference transactions.
- Virtual reference service

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current number of enhanced content web pages on DCPL website
- Current number of databases licensed
- Current number of "hits" on Library web pages

- Current number of participants in Library computer and Internet training classes
- Current number of hours Library Internet computers are in use
- Initial percentage of survey respondents who indicate satisfaction with online resources in annual web-based survey
- Initial assessment of staff skills related to virtual reference and website development. An example of a resource that can be used to develop an assessment tool related to virtual reference services is a set of core competencies developed by the Washington State Virtual Reference Service Training Committee.
https://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/virtualRef/textdocs/vrs_competencies.pdf
- Current number of online queries (reference questions)
- Initial percentage of District residents who participate in an annual survey and say they are aware of the DCPL's web resources

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

- Use data that are already available from the Library's automation system and from existing Internet management software.
- Acquire more sophisticated software to track the level and characteristics of Internet use.
- Create a list of core skills and competencies required to offer high-quality virtual reference services and determine whether those skills and competencies already exist or must be developed.
- Administer an annual survey that explores several topics, one of which assesses respondents' awareness of DCPL web resources. DCPL could pay to "piggyback" on an existing community-wide survey by adding a few "library questions" to a more general survey.

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number and depth of resources available, such as enhanced content on the web pages and licensed databases.
- Increase the usage of specific resources highlighted in other programs—for example, in information literacy efforts.
- Increase the number of Internet terminals available at DCPL.
- Increase the number of reference questions asked online.
- Increase public awareness of resources available through the DCPL website, as reported on a community survey.
- Identify the best mechanism for acquiring skills and competencies (train staff, contract for services, etc.) required to offer high-quality virtual reference services.
- Increase the public's satisfaction with the resources available on the DCPL website, as reported on a community survey.
- Increase the accessibility of DCPL website resources by people with disabilities.

OUTCOME 2.3.

All current and future residents of the District of Columbia have/will have access to Washington's historic record.

Strategic Focus: Preservation and digitization

Needs Addressed:

- DCPL lacks a comprehensive budgeted plan for the preservation and digitization of irreplaceable historic resources.
- Access to many valuable resources and services is limited because they are not available in digital formats.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #1 Expand 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 Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
- #3 Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Washingtoniana
- Black Studies Division
- Preservation of materials
- Digitization of resources
- Staff education related to the provision of preservation and digitization services, such as training on enhancing access to resources through the effective management of metadata
- Development of finding tools

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Assessment of existing major resources that document Washington's historic record in libraries and museums throughout the District—not just DCPL-held resources
- Assessment of additional skills and competencies required to support enhanced preservation and digitization efforts. Resources from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) "Webwise Conference" entitled "Stewardship in the Digital Age: Managing Museum and Library

Collections for Preservation and Use” may be useful in developing a core set of competencies to use with library staff.

<http://www.ims.gov/news/events/webwise07.shtm>

- Assessment of the fragility or instability of critical resources

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

Use LSTA funds and/or foundation or other grant funds to conduct a thorough assessment of resources and develop a comprehensive plan that establishes priorities for the preservation and digitization of the materials identified.

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number of priority items stabilized or preserved.
- Increase the number of priority items digitized.
- Increase the number of priority items included in online finding tools.
- Increase the number of items accessible online.
- Increase the number of “hits” generated by newly digitized resources.
- Increase the number of online requests for information or assistance.
- Increase the length of the average session to access online resources.

OUTCOME 2.4.

All residents of the District of Columbia who require adaptive technology or services have access to quality library and information resources.

Strategic Focus: Services to persons with disabilities

Need Addressed:

Some District residents are unable to read standard print-on-paper resources or are unable to get to a library due to disabling conditions.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #1 Expand 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 Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.
- #5 Target 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.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Adaptive Services
- Talking book program
- Staff education and training related to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities
- Outreach initiatives

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Estimate of the number of print disabled residents in the District of Columbia and categorize the disabilities
- Current number of active users of National Library Service (NLS) program in the District
- Current number of NLS program participants who also use other DCPL resources
- Current number of outreach events and demonstrations of adaptive devices and technologies provided
- Current number of adaptive devices and technologies available in DCPL branches and divisions
- Current percentage of individuals participating in demonstrations of adaptive devices and technologies and subsequently acquire them for use at home
- Existing level of satisfaction of active users with current services as demonstrated through an annual survey

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

- Use existing baseline data.
- Generate an annual survey of Adaptive Services users to obtain longitudinal data on the level of satisfaction with existing and new services being considered. A question about accessibility of resources on the DCPL website should also be included.
- Administer an annual survey that explores several topics, one of which elicits the level of awareness of library services for people with disabilities. DCPL could pay to “piggyback” on an existing community-wide survey by adding a few “library questions.”

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number of users of NLS services.
- Increase the number or percentage of NLS program participants who also use other DCPL resources.
- Increase the awareness of services to people with disabilities.
- Increase the number of DCPL content-rich web pages that are accessible to people with disabilities.

GOAL #3 –

ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RESIDENTS ARE SERVED BY LIBRARIES THAT IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES BY COLLABORATING WITH OTHER LIBRARIES AND WITH NON-PROFIT AGENCIES, OTHER UNITS OF GOVERNMENT, AND BUSINESSES IN THE COMMUNITY.

OUTCOME 3.1. All District residents are served by libraries that work together to maximize access to quality resources and services.

Strategic Focus: Multitype library cooperation

Need Addressed:

Collaboration and cooperation between and among different types of libraries are relatively weak.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #3 Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Cooperative or collaborative collection development activities
- Cooperative or collaborative preservation and digitization
- Development of cooperative purchasing or licensing groups
- Shared staff development activities
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Current number of formal projects and partnerships among multiple types of libraries in the District
- Current number of informal cooperative activities currently in place
- Current number of unique (unduplicated) libraries represented in staff development activities related to the six LSTA purposes

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

Identify and document the number and type of formal and informal cooperative efforts that exist now.

Potential Targets:

- Increase the number of cooperative efforts.
- Increase the effectiveness of cooperative efforts—efforts that advance the goals and objectives identified in the LSTA five-year plan.

- Increase the participation of representatives of multiple types of libraries in staff development activities.

OUTCOME 3.2.

Residents of the District of Columbia will have expanded access to library and information services and networked information because libraries employ new technologies and delivery mechanisms.

Strategic Focus: Innovation

Need Addressed:

DCPL lacks sufficient funding for “research and development” activities related to library and information services.

LSTA Purposes Served:

- #1 Expand 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.
- #3 Provide electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
- #4 Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Examples of Programs that May Be Funded:

- Pilot projects testing new technologies
- Pilot projects testing new formats or content delivery mechanisms
- Support to enable staff to attend non-library specific conferences that enhance their ability to use technology effectively such as futures conferences, Pop!Tech, and the Consumer Electronics Show (CES)
- Subgrants

Examples of Baseline Data Needed:

- Identification of existing innovative programs and activities provided in other libraries and institutions that might address the needs identified in the LSTA Five-Year Plan
- Identification of areas covered by the LSTA Five-Year Plan in which ongoing efforts with traditional methods have failed to generate desired results

Possible Method to Create Baseline:

- Identify innovative programs that might address needs outlined in the LSTA Five-Year Plan that DCPL is unable to implement with existing funding.
- Identify a dollar amount of the LSTA allocation that can be devoted to innovative projects.

Potential Targets:

- Develop and implement at least one innovative project/initiative in each year covered by the Plan (2008-2012).
- Maintain or increase the number of pilot projects implemented on a system-wide scale.
- Increase the number of libraries—including DCPL branches, divisions at the main library, or libraries that are not part of the DCPL system—that participate in pilot projects.
- Decrease the cost of providing a specific service.
- Increase the effectiveness of a specific service or the reach of the service to a targeted audience.

EVALUATION PLAN

The recently completed evaluation of the District of Columbia Public Library's implementation of the 2003–2007 LSTA Plan states that:

DCPL needs to make the improvement of evaluation one of its priorities for its LSTA program. An effort needs to be made to impart the importance of evaluation both as an accountability mechanism and as a way to improve services. Evaluation needs to become an integral part of all of the LSTA programs carried out under DCPL's auspices regardless of whether they are internal programs or projects that are awarded subgrants.

The District of Columbia Public Library is committed to measuring the impact of the projects and services it supports with funding from all sources. The Institute of Museum and Library Services has strongly encouraged state library administrative agencies to adopt outcome-based evaluation techniques for projects and services supported with LSTA funds.

The District of Columbia Public Library has developed the goals for its 2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan to reflect the impact it hopes to have on real people. Goals are stated in terms of outcomes and every effort will be made to document progress to reflect the benefits received by individuals, including library staff as well as end-users of libraries.

DCPL will continue to monitor and report input and output measures, but will also move toward outcome-based evaluation when possible. This will take real effort on the part of DCPL staff and on the part of library staff in institutions that receive LSTA subgrants.

Some steps DCPL, in its role as a State Library, intends to take to ensure that progress is made toward outcome-based assessment are as follows:

- Goals and objectives will be described in terms of the benefits that will be received by individuals.
- Quality baseline data will be captured to enhance the possibility of measuring progress.
- Follow-up evaluations and studies will be conducted when appropriate.
- DCPL staff and potential subgrantees will be given training in outcome-based evaluation techniques.
- Stronger linkages will be created between planning and evaluation.

The evaluation of the District of Columbia's implementation of the 2003–2007 LSTA Plan noted that one of DCPL's major shortcomings was that baselines against which progress could be measured had rarely been established. Therefore, considerable effort will be expended to identify and collect baseline data during the first two years of the 2008–2012 LSTA cycle.

In the past, DCPL's State Program Report Summaries submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services have relied heavily on reporting inputs. The reports have recounted how many items have been purchased, how many programs have been conducted, and so forth. Frequently, even output measures have been in short supply. DCPL recognizes that it has a long way to go to achieve excellence in its evaluation processes, but it is committed to doing so. DCPL will work diligently to develop evaluation mechanisms that meet IMLS' expectations for outcome-based evaluation.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The District of Columbia Public Library engaged the services of an experienced library consultant team for the evaluation of its 2003–2007 LSTA Plan and for the development of the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan. Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, submitted a proposal covering both the evaluation and facilitation of the planning process and were subsequently selected to carry out the combined processes.

The consultants were retained to work on the evaluation and on the new LSTA Five-Year Plan. Consequently, the evaluation process was designed to provide insights that would be useful in informing the new Plan.

Both the evaluation and the planning processes were highly inclusive. A variety of methods were used to gain input from many different audiences. During the evaluation process, the consultants interviewed all DCPL staff with oversight responsibilities for LSTA-funded services and initiatives. In addition, the consultants met with staff responsible for the day-to-day operation of multiple programs and with several groups of end-users of LSTA-funded services.

The consultants also met with the Chief Librarian, the Interim Director of Public Services, the DCPL Executive Officer, the LSTA Manager, and with the LSTA Advisory Council on several occasions during the evaluation and planning phases. DCPL collaborated with the District of Columbia Library Association (DCLA) to conduct a web-based survey of DCLA members to gather input on library and information service needs that exist or that are emerging, and to access the library community's priorities for the future of the LSTA program.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

As was noted in DCPL's LSTA evaluation, the LSTA program in the District is in the midst of change. In the past, the program has been administered largely as an "internal" program, with nearly all LSTA funds expended within the District of Columbia Public Library. Planning for the program has also been conducted with very limited input from the broader D.C. library community.

Several notable changes have taken place. First, an LSTA Advisory Council, composed of members who represent multiple types of libraries as well as library customers, has been established. Second, a small competitive grant process has been established. At the time of this writing, the first round of subgrants is under way and a second round of applicants has just been informed of the acceptance of their proposals for an LSTA subgrant. Another manifestation of change is that information about the LSTA program is now available on the DCPL website and on its own website at <http://dclsta.org>.

The 2008–2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan will be available through the website mentioned above. DCPL will also ask the District of Columbia Library Association to notify their members of the Plan's availability on the website. Hard copy of the Plan as submitted to IMLS will be distributed to members of the LSTA Advisory Council and to members of the DCPL Board of Library Trustees.

MONITORING

The District of Columbia Public Library's Grants Manager, who also serves as the District's LSTA Coordinator, will assume the primary direct responsibility for monitoring the implementation of DCPL's 2008–2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan. The District's LSTA Advisory Council will also monitor activities undertaken with LSTA funds.

This seven-member Advisory Council is composed of representatives of different types of libraries in the District as well end-users of libraries. The Council will continue to review and evaluate subgrant applications on an annual basis, and make recommendations to the Chief Librarian, who is also the "state librarian," on which proposals to fund.

General oversight of the 2008–2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan's implementation will be provided by DCPL's Chief Librarian and by the DCPL Executive Officer. All of the parties mentioned above have taken an active role in its development.

DCPL will monitor the implementation of the LSTA Plan at several different levels. They are:

- Management and financial monitoring of the LSTA program
- Overall progress toward the Plan's stated goals

- Specific monitoring of projects and services undertaken using LSTA funds awarded through the subgrant process
- Assessing the need for modification of the Plan and implementing the same formally as needed

ASSURANCES

The following required certifications and assurances are attached:

- Program Assurances for 2008 Grant Award (Includes Internet Safety Assurance)
- Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters: Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Lobbying; Federal Debt Status; and Nondiscrimination
- Assurances of Non-Construction Programs
- State Legal Officer's Certification of Authorized Certifying Official
- Assurance of compliance with the Internet Safety Requirements

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Fenty, Adrian M., *Moving Forward Faster: The 2007 State of the District Address*. March 21, 2007. http://dc.gov/mayor/pdf/2007_03_21_Handout_Final.shtm

ⁱⁱ District of Columbia Public Library. *Ginnie Cooper Named Executive Director of D.C. Public Library*. (Press Release) May 18, 2006. <http://dclibrary.org/news/cooper-announcement.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ University of the District of Columbia, State Education Agency, Adult & Family Literacy. (2007) *The State of Adult Literacy Report: Investing in Human Capital*. <http://literacydc.org/documents/report.pdf>

^{iv} Claritas, Inc. *Sitereports*. (May 2007) <http://www.claritas.com/eReports/Default.jsp>

^v U.S. Census Bureau. *State & County QuickFacts*. (May 2007) <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/11000.html>

^{vi} National Center for Education Statistics, Federal State Cooperative System. *Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2004*. (August 2006).

^{vii} National Center for Education Statistics. *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): Reading*. (2005). <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/getpubcats.asp?sid=031#017>

^{viii} U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (2005). (Reviewed May 2007). <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>