

**New York State
Library Services and Technology Act
Five-Year Evaluation Report**

October 1, 2002–September 30, 2007



**The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
The New York State Library
Cultural Education Center
Albany, New York 12230
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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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The New York State Library used federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds to carry out the goals and objectives of the LSTA Five-Year Plan for the period October 1, 2002, to September 30, 2007. This report contains an overall evaluation of the impact of LSTA-funded programs and services conducted by New York State Library staff, results of an in-depth evaluation performed by an outside consultant, progress made through the State Library's initiative in outcome-based evaluation training, and lessons learned through the evaluation processes.

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I. Importance and Impact of LSTA Funding in New York State

The Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program is essential to libraries and library services throughout New York State. The funds provided both support statewide services and make possible grants programs administered by the New York State Library, thereby encouraging the blending of local, state, and federal resources to build and enhance library services for all New Yorkers.

Through statewide services and competitive grants, the LSTA program helps to provide the following services to New York's library users in their communities:

- Access from home, school, or office to high-quality online resources
- Projects that provide equitable access to technology through cooperative efforts among New York's 7,000 libraries, 73 library systems, and the New York State Library
- Projects that promote better access to information for all residents, such as adult and family literacy programs and programs to help at-risk preschoolers develop literacy skills
- Training for entrepreneurs in the skills needed to research and develop their business plans; marketing, demographic, and other information resources crucial to small and mid-sized businesses

Although federal LSTA funds represent less than one percent of library expenditures in New York State, their impact is great. The following statistics show how LSTA grants have leveraged state and local matching funds in recent years.

| LSTA Funds Awarded Through Grants Programs—2003 to Present | |
|---|------------------------|
| Total amount awarded: | \$12,132,543 |
| In-kind funds generated: | \$8,633,238 |
| Total to carry out projects: | \$20,765,781 |
| In-kind contributions from library systems: | 41.6% of project costs |

LSTA funding has been crucial in helping the New York State Library and its partners implement the visionary recommendations of the New York State Board of Regents Commission on Library Services. In 2000, this Commission issued its final report (available at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov:80/rcols/finalrpt.htm>) and 10 recommendations "to deliver 21st-century library services to all New Yorkers." Those recommendations, constituting a bold policy to transform New York's libraries, have provided the foundation for library initiatives in New York State, including legislative initiatives that have achieved increased state support for libraries and the activities described in New York's LSTA Five-Year Plans.

LSTA funding has made possible progress toward six of the 10 recommendations of the Regents Commission. Most notably, it has enabled the implementation of NOVEL, envisioned in the Commission's recommendation number one: "Create NOVEL, the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library, to deliver high-quality, reliable digital information to all New Yorkers."

Today, NOVEL helps to bridge the digital divide for residents and supports New York's educational and business communities. NOVEL provides an online collection of electronic full-text magazines, newspapers, books, encyclopedias, and other collections licensed on a statewide basis for free access through public, academic, and school libraries; through special libraries in not-for-profit organizations; and remotely from homes and offices by means of a New York State driver license or non-driver ID number. Electronic resources purchased on a statewide basis provide great economies of scale, offering access to \$30 in resources for every \$1 of LSTA funding used.

Use of NOVEL resources is soaring. The annual number of searches increased to 31 million in 2006 from 2 million in 2001. The number of visits to NOVEL through driver-license access jumped 350 percent after announcement in the media of the NOVEL Driver License Access Project.

LSTA funding has also significantly supported training for library staff and library users in the use of NOVEL resources and network technology. The State Library allocated LSTA funds for an invitational grant program that has helped build awareness and use of NOVEL resources through increased training opportunities for library system and member library staff, students, faculty, businesspeople, media, and the public. In addition, regional training sessions are held periodically for librarians through their library systems.

Grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and federal E-Rate funds, used in combination with LSTA funds, have helped enhance technology training for public library staff and upgrade public access to NOVEL and the Internet in public libraries. However, the resources available through NOVEL have been funded solely through the LSTA program.

In addition, LSTA funding has significantly aided the New York State Library’s Statewide Summer Reading Program, which helps children develop a love for reading and maintain the reading skills they learn during the school year. This program supports the Regents Commission’s recommendation number 7: “Strengthen the ability of New York’s libraries to help library users acquire basic English literacy, information literacy, and computer literacy skills in their communities.”

The highly successful Summer Reading Program has grown from 172,000 participants in 1999 to well over one million children in 2006, and has been enhanced by the availability of LSTA-funded Statewide Summer Reading Program Minigrants to promote the program locally. LSTA funding for the statewide Growing a Reader Program has enabled training of 1,250 youth librarians over two years to teach parents and caregivers critical early literacy skills, also in support of implementing recommendation number seven.

Other Regents Commission recommendations that have been partially implemented through the availability of LSTA funding include the following:

| Recommendation | Supported Through LSTA Funding |
|--|--|
| 2. Ensure that all New York’s students are information literate by providing strong school library media programs that include appropriately certified professional staff, adequate resources, and technology. | Automation of some school library collections through the Database Development Incentive Program. |
| 3. Promote the availability of local public library service to all New Yorkers and improve local support for public libraries through the formation of Public Library Districts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a how-to guide and a Public Library District website. • Training and expert consultation services provided to library directors and trustees on creating public library districts. |
| 4. Promote equitable library services for all New Yorkers through a need-based formula to reduce disparities in public library funding, and create NY EXCELS to promote service excellence in all types of libraries and library systems through enabling and incentive aid. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Service Improvement competitive grants to fund library system projects targeted at improving quality. • Development by the State Library of an “outcome-based evaluation website,” a train-the-trainer curriculum, and statewide “outcome-based evaluation training” for State Library and library system staff. |
| 8. Enhance access to the specialized resources held by New York’s academic, special, and research libraries to improve educational achievement, economic development, and health care for all New Yorkers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional digitization plans developed by reference and research library resources systems. • LIBQUAL+ project to help 77 academic and research libraries identify user needs, align resources with user expectations, and improve services. |
| 9. Support and enhance a highly skilled library workforce to meet the information needs of New Yorkers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online teleconferences provided by the State Library by means of a statewide license. • Online trustee training modules under development. |

II. Overall Report of Results in Achieving Goals and Objectives Based on Five-Year Plan

Goal 1: All New Yorkers will have reliable and equitable statewide electronic access to information resources through the creation of NOVEL and through enhancement and expansion of libraries' technology capabilities to meet users' informational needs.

Progress toward goal:

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

Objective/Target No. 1: Carry out the August 2001 NOVEL Implementation Plan.

NOVEL (New York Online Virtual Electronic Library) is New York's first statewide online library, which provides a collection of core electronic resources for all New Yorkers. In late 2006, during the development of a statewide education and communication plan for NOVEL (see Objective/Target No. 2), the name was changed to NOVELNY. The NOVEL Steering Committee, the primary advisory group for the program, and the State Library have worked steadily towards implementing the recommendations of the August 2001 NOVEL Implementation Plan (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/library/novel/finalpln.htm>). Great progress has been made on two priority initiatives: (1) offering an online library of core electronic resources to all New Yorkers through their local library, and (2) creating a NOVEL portal. The NOVEL Steering Committee and the State Library agreed to set aside work on the other initiatives in the plan to focus limited resources on these two critical activities. The NOVEL Steering Committee revisited the NOVEL Implementation Plan in 2006 and reaffirmed that its recommendations are still relevant. The NOVEL Steering Committee plans to begin work on a third initiative, digitization, in 2007.

Access to NOVEL for library staff and library users across New York State has vastly improved since 2002. More than 5,000 local libraries are now participating in NOVEL, and the number of annual NOVEL searches continues to climb exponentially. In addition, NOVEL is now available to New Yorkers remotely from home, office, or school by using a New York driver license or non-driver ID number. For more detailed information on outputs and outcomes, as well as the impact on library services statewide, please see the NOVEL Evaluation Report attached as Appendix 1.

Objective/Target No. 2: Develop a communications plan that will provide broad and deep awareness of the NOVEL program among New Yorkers.

Usage statistics indicate more than 32 million searches of the NOVEL databases during the year ending July 2006, an almost 400-percent increase since 2002. More than 5,337 libraries out of some 6,300 eligible ones had registered to participate in NOVEL by December 2006. However, some preliminary results from the NOVEL evaluation indicate that the majority of people in New York State are still not aware of the program or the benefits it could offer. In 2004, the NOVEL Steering Committee recommended implementation of a comprehensive communication plan to publicize NOVEL. In March 2006, the State Library awarded a contract to the Ivy Group for a Statewide Education and Information Program. The consultants' plan includes a timeline for promotional activities starting in 2007. Recommendations in the plan include a revision of the NOVEL logo and a complete revision of the current NOVEL website www.novelnewyork.org.

The outputs for this initiative include a communication plan, a revised NOVELNY logo, a revision of the www.novelnewyork.org website, and revised toolkit materials with sample bookmarks, brochures and mailers that libraries can use to communicate the value of the NOVEL database program to their communities and other target groups. A sampling of New York residents' awareness of NOVEL will be a part of the Education and Information Program to be carried out by the Ivy Group in 2008. In focus groups of librarians held in the summer of 2006 as part of the NOVEL evaluation (see Appendix I), participants indicated a need for more training in NOVEL, although the specific question on confidence in the promotion of NOVEL databases was not asked.

Because this objective is still in its development stage, benefits for the library community are not yet apparent; however activities for 2007 and beyond will help to make all New Yorkers aware of the benefits of NOVEL resources.

Objective/Target No. 3: Continue to implement the Electronic Doorway Library recognition program as libraries meet the criteria for Basic, Advanced, or Leader level.

The Electronic Doorway Library (EDL) recognition program, which began in 1993, was refreshed in 1998 to update the criteria for Basic, Advanced, and Leader levels. The program became the NOVEL-Ready EDL program in 2003. Because of staffing constraints, the State Library no longer takes the lead in recognizing the progress of libraries in this program. However, in 2005, the State Library provided a website that will allow libraries and library systems to continue the recognition program on their own. Included on the website is a registration toolkit that provides member libraries with application forms to submit to their library systems as well as certificates for the systems to print out and award to their member libraries. This website is at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nvready/index.html>.

All the public libraries in New York have reached at least the Basic level. Of the 4,077 public school libraries in New York State, 3,409 (approximately 84 percent) have reported at least the Basic level, which is above the key output target for this objective. Over 90 percent of the 272 academic libraries have reached the Basic level.

Library users benefit from this statewide initiative because libraries have recognized and increasingly met higher technology standards.

Objective/Target No. 4: Expand partnerships with other units within state government, private industry, and the nonprofit sector that will result in increased information access through technology and increased knowledge of emerging technologies.

- Coordinate with the Gates Library Foundation the implementation of the Gates Initiative Training Program Grant to provide further technology training for New York's public libraries.
- Partner with the Governor's Office for Technology to provide libraries with access to information about new trends in emerging technologies and opportunities for libraries' participation in statewide plans.
- Coordinate with government agencies that can help libraries with cooperative telecommunications efforts locally and regionally, specifically to create statewide broadband telecommunications access.

Since 2002, several opportunities have enabled the State Library to secure funding from the private sector and to partner with other areas of state government to enhance information access and benefit the library community.

In 2002, the State Library received a Library Training grant of \$257,700 from the Gates Foundation. These funds, awarded to the state's 23 public library systems (which represent 1,066 member libraries and branches and 13,000 public library staff), enabled the systems to develop and implement a technology training program for their librarians and library staff. All participants agreed on a plan that developed teams of skilled trainers who would train library staff at different levels on a variety of library technology-related topics, including NOVEL. This grant resulted in the training of 4,199 library staff members by the end of the grant period in December 2004.

In 2003, the State Library was awarded \$222,640 by the Gates Foundation in Phase One of the Staying Connected Grant Program. The state's 23 public library systems received \$137,440 of the total to support technology training (including NOVEL training) for public library staff. The remaining \$85,200 funded replacement or upgrading of public-access computers in three urban library systems determined by the Gates Foundation: Brooklyn Public Library, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, and The New York Public Library. This grant project also trained 3,414 library staff members.

The NOVEL Steering Committee's Telecommunications subgroup began making initial contacts with other state and regional government agencies in 2002 and 2003 to discuss the telecommunications needs of New York's 7,000 libraries. Informal discussions about broadband access occurred with school networks (Board of Cooperative Educational Services/Regional Information Centers), the State University of New York/City University of New York systems, and the Governor's Office for Technology. The NOVEL Steering Committee and the Southern Tier Library System partnered to offer a well-attended free seminar "Integrating Wireless Telecommunications into a Wide Area Network: Opportunities and Challenges for Libraries" at the Albany Public Library on June 26, 2003. Content delivered at the seminar was drawn from an LSTA demonstration grant project. In 2003, after careful deliberation, the NOVEL Steering Committee formally suspended the work of their Telecommunications and Digitization subgroups to refocus limited voluntary NOVEL Steering Committee resources and State Library staff efforts on implementing the two top NOVEL priorities: (1) offering an online library of core electronic resources to all New Yorkers through their local library, and (2) creating a NOVEL portal.

In 2005, the State Library began working with the University of the State of New York (USNY) Technology Policy and Practices Council and a consultant, the Metiri Group, to include libraries in a statewide plan to collect data about the technology and telecommunications capacities and needs of all educational institutions in New York State. This survey work is still under way and will be completed in 2007. The data collected through the Metiri survey, coupled with data from the Florida State University/Gates/American Library Association public library technology surveys, will help provide a better picture of statewide library telecommunications needs.

The ongoing sponsorship by the Gates Foundation of a variety of technology-related training and equipment enhancement programs has benefited the users of public libraries enormously. Small libraries previously with few or no computers have been able to provide their users with access to rich resources such as NOVEL; large libraries have been able to upgrade and expand their equipment. The new Governor, Eliot Spitzer, recently announced a \$50 million initiative to bring broadband access to all corners of the state in his 2007–2008 budget proposal, and he has

committed to creating “Internet libraries” for New Yorkers. If this funding is passed, libraries and library users across New York will benefit greatly.

Objective/Target No. 5: Support libraries’ and library systems’ efforts to secure E-Rate telecommunications discounts.

- Assist libraries in taking advantage of all possible telecommunications discounts.
- Provide access for libraries to the E-Rate Central Help Desk.
- Ensure that libraries’ and library systems’ technology plans are approved by established deadlines.

The E-Rate program helps New York’s libraries improve the reliability and strength of their technological infrastructure. Through the New York State Library, libraries in New York have access not only to assistance from their library systems and a designated program coordinator at the New York State Library, but also to the nationally recognized expert help available from E-Rate Central. E-Rate Central, under contract with the State Education Department, provides a weekly newsletter, annual training sessions across the state, and a rich variety of tips and information on its website, in addition to help desk support via telephone and e-mail. The New York State Library, with technical assistance from E-Rate Central, approved three-year technology plans for public library systems and reference and research library systems. These systems, in turn, certified technology plans for many of their member libraries for the same period. The State Library is currently receiving plans for the 2007–2010 period.

For each program year within the period covered by this evaluation, including what has been received so far in 2006–07, an average total of 331 libraries and library systems received an average total of \$10.5 million. Problems within the E-Rate program in 2005 may have contributed to a reduction in applications in that year, but 2006 shows better progress toward the key output target goals.

Supporting libraries and library systems in their efforts to secure E-Rate funding has a positive impact on the services delivered to library users. New York’s libraries have had consistent success in their applications for E-Rate discounts. The latest FCC Universal Service Monitoring Report shows that in the years from 2003 to 2005, New York’s libraries were awarded approximately twice as much in discount dollars as the next largest state. Those dollars help libraries institute and sustain the digital delivery integral to library customer outreach and services.

Objective/Target No. 6: Expand access to electronic information provided by the State Library both onsite and through the library’s website.

- Redesign the State Library’s website to provide clear avenues of access.
- Enrich the online catalog, Excelsior, with bibliographic records that link directly to electronic resources.

Since 2002, the State Library has expanded access to electronic resources by adding more databases, enhancing traditional electronic access tools, introducing new electronic access tools, and adding new communication methods for patrons to request information. Criteria such as remote access and use of electronic resources for interlibrary loan are priorities when negotiating with vendors. Sets of bibliographic records are purchased with the database when available. A federated search tool has been added in addition to an Open URL resolver. The State Library’s home page and some secondary pages were redesigned in spring 2004 and again in August 2005 to

accommodate the federated search tool. A new electronic media management system was implemented to enhance public access to the library's collection of electronic New York State Documents. In 2005, free wireless Internet access became available on the public floor of the library, and remote access to the NOVEL databases was expanded to include access via a New York State driver license number or non-license ID number. Library users can ask reference questions and request materials through e-mail, by using online forms available on the library's website, by submitting a request via the Integrated Library System (ILS), or through the library's online After Hours Reference Service.

The library has not conducted a general survey to determine if website users could find the information they needed, but library staff did conduct a usability study with users in 2004–05 to determine how well they could navigate through the library's website. Based on these usability tests, and on several preliminary tests that usability expert Steve Krug suggested, the library made several changes to various web pages. These changes focused on improved placement of links to other pages and more action-oriented phrasing for those links. The library kept a count of reference questions received electronically through the reference e-mail account for a random three-month period. During that time, 70 to 81 percent of the reference questions were answered the same day or the next day, and 91 to 97 percent were answered within three days. Although the NOVEL website indicates that the NOVEL Help Desk telephone is staffed by the State Library Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Help Desk staff usually start taking calls before 9:00 a.m. and continue until 5:00 p.m., thereby exceeding 40 hours a week. An answering machine takes calls after hours or when a Help Desk staff member is not available.

Users now have several methods of access to electronic information through the website, by email, and onsite. More electronic resources, better methods of communication, and enhanced electronic tools for navigating these resources have helped provide information faster and have allowed staff to serve users better.

Objective/Target No. 7: Enhance access to full-text electronic federal and New York State documents.

The New York State Library is a regional depository in the U.S. Government Printing Office's Federal Depository Library Program. The library subscribes to MARCIVE's GPO Ongoing Database Service (MARC catalog records) and Shipping List Service (Smart Barcode Labels, SuDoc Labels) to make current materials more quickly accessible in the online catalog. Bibliographic records with links to online federal publications are added to the ILS each month.

The Library is the official New York State Document Depository of publications of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, commissions, public authorities, and other agencies of state government. Each month "born digital" New York State publications from these agencies are manually downloaded from the Internet and uploaded to the electronic media management system part of the ILS. The monthly average is 92 new items added to the collection, more than 1,100 annually. Because it is not uncommon for items to be deleted later from the other state websites, the State Library's efforts preserve perpetual access in one searchable file with a uniform display across agencies.

Use of the MARCIVE service has helped the library provide quicker and better access to the federal document collection. Harvesting "born digital" state documents manually is labor intensive and limited. Plans are being formulated to set up an automated process to help increase the number of "born digital" items added to the electronic collection.

Objective/Target No. 8: Participate in consortia to expand State Library holdings of electronic resources such as e-books and databases.

The library worked with Nylink, WALDO (Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization) and NYSHEI (New York State Higher Education Initiative) to expand access while saving money.

The library saved 15 percent on all of its electronic resources by collaborating with these organizations. The library would not have gained access to the Freedom Collection of ScienceDirect without its membership in NYSHEI, because this collection was available only to academic libraries.

Being part of consortia has been beneficial to the library's patrons, especially the State Museum research scientists.

Objective/Target No. 9: Negotiate with publishers and vendors to include provisions for interlibrary loan of electronic resources from the State Library to a wider population.

The State Library negotiates with vendors and publishers to include provisions for interlibrary loan of electronic resources, allowing articles from licensed electronic holdings to be printed and then mailed or faxed to the requesting library. For copyright reasons, electronic transmission is not allowed.

Because no statistics are kept by format for interlibrary loan, no count of requests for items in subscription electronic resources is available. However, staff comments indicate that this is a valuable criterion to include in the agreement, especially for titles that are not available in print.

Goal 2: All New Yorkers will have access to library resources and services that advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, family members, and lifelong learners.

Progress toward goal:

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

Objective/Target No. 10: Increase the visibility of and participation in New York’s Statewide Summer Reading Program.

- Expand partnerships among library systems, public libraries, schools, corporations, the Legislature, and others to improve publicity, promotion, and usage of New York’s Statewide Summer Reading Program.

New York’s Statewide Summer Reading Program is an annual, state-sponsored public library initiative. Its goal is to encourage children and teens across the state to read and participate in traditional and targeted public library activities during the summer. More than 1,100 libraries and branch libraries in New York’s cities, small towns, and rural areas offer the program to children from pre-school through grade 12, with most participants in grades two through six. The statewide program has a theme and promotional materials that are provided to libraries by the New York State Library. In 2005 the theme was “Tune in @ Your Library!” which offered multiple connections with books and literacy activities such as storytelling, drama, writing, and sharing/reporting by children, and featured children’s love of music to help them develop creative expression through music. Each year public libraries and their branches receive a program manual with ready-to-use promotional materials. The manual is also distributed to New York’s 42 (now 41) school library systems so that teachers and school librarians can promote the program to students before school ends in June. The program’s theme is expanded through artistic and colorful posters, reading certificates, and bookmarks, and further publicized through public-service announcements and news stories in all media. To help increase participation at the teen/young adult levels, separate graphics and web pages have been developed. Web page activities such as polls, blogging, and photo and music sharing were tested for teens in 2006.

The State Library promoted the Statewide Summer Reading Program through active public-relations campaigns. The State Education Department’s Commissioner visited libraries for special PR events and a celebrity spokesperson (magician David Blaine in 2006) supported the program through numerous appearances. Special contests, publisher book giveaways, and events to appeal to families helped to increase participation in the program. The Statewide “Love Your Library” License Plate program (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/lylplate/index.html>), developed in cooperation with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, immediately improved the visibility of libraries and is helping to build future funding for the Statewide Summer Reading Program.

From 2003 through 2006, participation in the program grew by 112 percent. The goal of one million participants by 2005 was exceeded by 133,155 or 13.3 percent. In 2006, 1,225,114 youngsters participated in the program through their local public library. A new goal for 2010 has been set at 1.5 million participants. The State Library did not conduct a telephone survey to measure public awareness of the Statewide Summer Reading Program.

Program promotion was achieved through partnerships, promotional events and spokespersons, press coverage, and website outreach. The State Library developed fact sheets for parents, teachers, policy makers, and partner agencies. The website for the Statewide Summer Reading Program recorded 25,775 hits during the summer of 2004, indicating that web information on the program follows the trend for all other information aimed at young people—the Internet is the place to be.

The State Library maintains several websites for this program, including the State Library’s Summer Reading web pages for libraries, library systems, and educators (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/index.html>) and the official Summer Reading Program website for youngsters and families (<http://www.summerreadingnys.org/>). The use of each has increased significantly over the evaluation report period. Usage of the site for libraries increased from 6,809 page hits (or views) in 2002 to 32,574 in 2006. Usage of the site for youngsters and families increased from 22,983 page hits in 2003 to 51,033 in 2006. New to the suite of Statewide Summer Reading Program services provided by the State Library, as well as a successful resource for New York’s library community since 2004, is a database of Performers and Programs for Youth created through an LSTA grant (<http://performersandprograms.com/index.html>). The website for this database reflects a similar growth in page visits from 36,346 in 2004 to 114,083 in 2006.

The Statewide Summer Reading Program brings children and families into the library for reading materials and for enjoyable reading-centered events. Use of the public library in the summer months encourages families to use public libraries all year and to use additional library resources and services. Exposure to books and reading at public library programs gives families an incentive to continue learning through reading and literacy activities at home; it creates a positive connection for youngsters when they return to school in the fall by giving them reading and learning experiences to report on, share, and enhance their classroom learning. At the same time, summer reading helps to prevent the loss of reading skills experienced by students who do not read during the summer.

Objective/Target No. 11: Strengthen the State Library’s partnership with the State Education Department’s Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC), school library systems, and others to improve and enhance New York’s school library media programs.

- Develop and implement a new School Library Support Aid program that will provide funds to high-need school districts to increase the number of certified staff and strengthen school library media programs.

As part of the implementation of the recommendations of the Regents Commission on Library Services, the State Library obtained Board of Regents commitment to include a budget request for \$15 million in new state funding for school library support aid in their priority legislative proposals from 2001 through 2006. The funding program was not approved by the Governor or Legislature. In 2006, under the leadership of State Librarian Janet M. Welch, the State Library changed strategy and focused on collaborating with the School Aid Workgroup within the State Education Department. This collaboration led to the development of a rationale and a justification for increasing an existing School Library Materials Aid program from \$6 to \$10 per pupil. The funding for School Library Materials Aid, a component of state aid to school districts, had not been increased since 1998. A team composed of State Library and other State Education Department staff developed a new conceptual proposal linking research data from 60 state and national studies on the impact of strong school libraries on student achievement with Education Department data on highly performing school districts.

The Board of Regents accepted the conceptual proposal in the fall of 2006 and the proposed increase for School Library Materials Aid to \$10 per pupil was included in the Regents 2007–08

State Aid for Schools request. The Governor has proposed an increase from \$6 to \$6.25 per pupil. Work continues on developing a program to address the lack of certified school librarians in school libraries across the State.

- Provide expert assistance to school library systems in their efforts to strengthen local school library media centers.

State Library staff provided assistance to school library systems whose main objective is to provide a range of services to local school library media centers. Staff advisors promoted the importance and value of certified school library media specialists with school administrators, school boards, the Board of Regents, and deans of New York's seven library schools. Despite their efforts, the number of certified school library media specialists declined slightly from 3,267 in 2002 to 3,226 in 2006.

State Library staff attended nearly 100 school library system meetings in the period 2002–2006. They disseminated numerous listserv messages to school library system directors; maintained liaison with the School Library System Association representing the school library system directors; and participated in meetings of the New York Library Association's School Library Media Section as a non-voting liaison from the New York State Library. LSTA retrospective conversion grants to school library systems enabled their member libraries to develop automated systems and their regions to expand their resource sharing.

The State Library's technical assistance and expert advice to the school library systems enabled those systems, in turn, to assist their member libraries in improving school library services and programs.

Objective/Target No. 12: Partner with EMSC (Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education), the Department of Labor, and others to increase the visibility of library programs and services that contribute to workforce development and economic revitalization.

The State Library works with the New York State Agency Training Council to disseminate information about the library's programs and services to state employees. The State Library also contacts agency librarians with information about new booklists and online databases to forward to their agency employees and visits state agency sites to conduct customized training for agency employees in using the library's online databases. The library works with the regional Chamber of Commerce to educate them about library resources and to elicit suggestions on best practices to reach the business community. The library also revised its website's online business pages to target workers and employers, highlighting business collections (marketing, accounting, trademarks) and specialized services (document delivery, reference e-mail, customized classes).

From 2002 through 2006, the State Library trained more than 3,800 state agency staff in use of the library's resources that would contribute to their productivity in the workplace. Library staff participated in the Chamber's 2006 Capital District Business XPO, providing a manned exhibit booth from which they disseminated information about State Library print and electronic resources related to business. Several hundred information sheets and library card applications were distributed to area businessmen and women. Two business organizations signed up for customized training in business resources provided by the library.

State agency staff members and the business community benefit from having a greater knowledge of State Library resources that can assist in workforce development and economic revitalization.

Objective/Target No. 13: Encourage full participation of libraries and library systems in the Alliance for Family Literacy publicity campaign and training programs and in family literacy grants.

The Alliance for Family Literacy is a consortium of state agencies, early-childhood and adult education programs, family literacy providers, libraries, higher education, and other organizations that are involved in literacy education. Public libraries are both providers of literacy services and partners in ensuring access to literacy services and programs in New York. The Alliance developed a public-relations campaign and offered ten regional grants throughout New York State. The grants helped form partnerships among literacy providers to ensure that families know about and can access literacy opportunities. Key goals of the publicity and partnerships included (1) interactive literacy between parents and children—helping parents to support their children’s literacy development through activities such as connecting stories to children’s experience; engaging children in discussion; and using everyday activities to connect sounds, oral language, and print and (2) parenting education—enhancing relationships between parents and their children to help parents understand their children’s academic, physical, and emotional development. These activities also support family-school partnerships and foster learning in the home.

As a result of the State Library’s participation in the development of the Alliance, librarians who work with young children and families have a new set of resources easily available through the following web pages: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/youthsvs/links.htm> and <http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/resources/literacy.htm>.

Librarians are working with community agencies that provide literacy training, offering library-based supports to parents, children, and adult learners through the new literacy resources. One example is the Yonkers Family Literacy Alliance, a partnership of the Yonkers Public Library and local Literacy Volunteers Affiliates that include a hospital, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, public schools, the Jewish Council, and Head Start among others, all working together to provide family literacy resources, referrals, and programs. A database of literacy resources is available on the library’s web page: www.ypl.org/YFLA.htm.

Objective/Target No. 14: Partner with EMSC to implement the Reading Excellence Act grant program in New York State and to encourage full participation of libraries and library systems as partners with eligible school districts.

State Library staff worked collaboratively with State Education Department Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education staff on a Reading Excellence Act advisory committee. Despite best efforts to include school and public libraries as integral components of New York’s statewide Reading Excellence Act program, subsequent changes in policies related to the Reading First program, part of No Child Left Behind, restricted the use of federal funds to direct reading instruction in the classroom. Some Reading First federal funds were used to support the reading curriculum in school libraries; however, most of the federal funds were used for classroom collections or classroom libraries and computerized reading programs.

Objective/Target No. 15: Increase the visibility of and participation in the Great New York ReadAloud Program.

- Convene a representative advisory group to make suggestions for increasing visibility and program participation.
- Coordinate the implementation of the advisory group’s recommendations.

For 15 years, through spring 2004, the State Library encouraged libraries and schools throughout New York State to sponsor “ReadAlouds” during National Library Week and School Library Media Month. The Great New York ReadAloud was at one time one of the largest one-day reading events in the nation. The ReadAloud programs focused on the joy of reading out loud and promoted the love of reading and the lifelong learning associated with reading. The program enjoyed much support with many organizational partners, including statewide library and education groups, the library committees in the State Legislature, and multiple corporate sponsors. ProQuest Company, the 2004 ReadAloud corporate sponsor, provided 18,000 posters in three languages (Chinese, English, and Spanish) for 6,000 libraries and schools.

Successful statewide Great New York ReadAloud celebrations were held in spring 2003 and 2004, reaching an estimated 175,000 people each year. The planned new external advisory group and other actions listed under this objective were never initiated because of staffing constraints at the State Library. In addition, the State Library no longer had the staff resources to provide technical assistance in planning and implementing reading celebrations for hundreds of individual libraries.

In fall 2004, the State Library reprioritized statewide programs in light of limited resources and Regents policy priorities, and consciously chose to suspend the ReadAloud program for 2005. The limited resources formerly targeted for the ReadAloud were refocused towards expanding and enhancing the highly successful annual Statewide Summer Reading Program, described elsewhere in this report.

Objective/Target No. 16: Partner with school and public library systems to increase awareness of New York State’s two regional and two sub-regional Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to increase significantly the number of New Yorkers with print-related disabilities receiving library services.

Three libraries currently make up the statewide network of libraries serving people who are blind or physically disabled in New York State. These libraries are part of the national network that makes up the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The New York State Talking Book and Braille Library (TBBL) is the regional library for New York’s 55 upstate counties. The New York Public Library’s Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library is the regional library serving residents of New York City and Long Island. The two former sub-regional libraries that served Long Island combined resources and locations and became the Long Island Talking Book Library, which provides Nassau and Suffolk counties with the recorded book portion of this program’s service.

The State Library, through the combined efforts of the Talking Book and Braille Library, the Research Library, and the Division of Library Development, promote the specialized services provided by the three libraries in New York State. Information about these services is shared widely through school and public library systems by e-mail, mail, local site visits, and statewide meetings. Statewide meetings were held every other year for public library system outreach coordinators between 2002 and 2006. In addition, library system outreach staff and others were informed and encouraged to share information and experience through several statewide and national listservs. Statewide promotion, such as that done at the Conference of Teaching and Learning in New York City in 2006, and activities conducted by the State Library’s Division of Library Development offering statewide information-sharing, make up another part of this effort. Information on the regional and sub-regional libraries that serve New York State was distributed at many events, including the New York State Education Department’s Office of Cultural Education booth during

the 2006 Conference on Teaching and Learning in New York City, National Library Week, and PTA conventions. This promotional activity will be repeated in spring 2007. The reporting period for this report saw an increase in outreach and promotion to nursing homes and their residents who need this service, especially at the Andrew Heiskell Library.

Library services to New Yorkers who have a disability that prevents their use of print books and materials have been maintained despite resource and staffing challenges. A focus on marketing to elderly persons and students mean that more local libraries, schools, and adult care facilities are able to assist students, residents, and clients in obtaining these services.

Objective/Target No. 17: Participate in the development of the 2-1-1 New York Collaborative Program, sponsored by United Way affiliates and the New York State Association of Information and Referral Services.

The 2-1-1 New York initiative has already established call centers in some regions of the state and is working to establish call centers in all regions to help residents locate health and human services information tailored to their needs. By dialing 2-1-1 from anywhere in the state, 24 hours a day, a caller will be connected to a regional certified information and referral specialist who will interview the caller, maintain confidentiality, and provide detailed assistance in accessing appropriate agencies and services. Services will be provided in multiple languages and through appropriate technology for the hearing-impaired on an as-needed basis. The New York State Library has endorsed and participated in the development of this initiative from the beginning.

During the period 2003 to 2006, the State Library liaison to the 2-1-1 New York Collaborative participated in planning meetings for the initiative and shared information on initiative development with public libraries and library systems through e-mail updates, meeting presentations, and a New York Library Association poster session. The State Library developed a web page on 2-1-1 with federal, state, and regional updates and contact persons (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/outreach/211nys.htm>). During 2005, the State Library liaison recruited and recommended a library liaison who continues to serve on the 2-1-1 New York Policy Board, providing libraries and library systems with current information and sharing the public library perspective with the board, whose mission is closely linked to library service.

New York's public library community is aware of and involved in local 2-1-1 programs and initiatives. In some cases, databases are developed cooperatively with public library systems. In addition, information on 2-1-1 and its development and implementation in New York State is available through public libraries and on the State Library website. This information will be expanded as the service becomes operational in more locations.

Objective/Target No. 18: Partner with reference and research library resources systems to promote and enhance the services of their special client populations.

The predominant strategy for partnering with library systems to promote services to their special client populations is through grants. One of the best examples of a reference and research library resources system's enhancement of services to a special client population began with an LSTA grant awarded by the State Library to the Rochester Regional Library Council in 2003. The initial grant established "CLIC-on-Health" (at <http://www.cliconhealth.org>), a partnership between libraries and community health organizations. The grant resulted in the creation of a website and several training sessions.

This grant demonstrates the best that LSTA funds can accomplish. The program has continued with grant funds from other sources, including state money from legislative member items, and money from the National Library of Medicine. The current project continues both training people to use health information on the Internet and providing a web portal with information specific to Rochester healthcare—a “one-stop shopping” site for health information.

Objective/Target No. 19: Increase the visibility of Research Library programs and services available to all New Yorkers to promote economic development and lifelong learning.

The Research Library developed specific activities focused on each targeted customer group identified in the library’s 2005–2008 marketing and communication plan. For teachers, the library developed a web page (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/teachers.htm>), which became operational in October 2006, and gave several presentations to education groups. For the business community, the library developed several strategies to let that community know how the rich resources of the library might contribute to economic development. For the general public, the Research Library presented programs; established the New York State Resident Borrowers program, which affords onsite State Library borrowing privileges to all New Yorkers 18 years and older; and developed educational information to make the public more aware of the resources in the library.

Research Library staff made a presentation about the library’s resources to the board of the Capital Region Teacher Center and provided materials to be distributed in each school. They also demonstrated the library’s electronic resources to 100 educators at the March 2006 Celebration of Teaching and Learning.

In 2006, library staff had two meetings with local Chamber of Commerce staff to collect feedback on services, collections, and programs that might be of particular interest to the business community. Web pages developed in 2006 focusing on services to the business community will be available on the library’s website at the end of March 2007. In October 2006, the Research Library participated in the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce Business XPO 2006, staffing a booth to promote library programs and services and to network with the local business community. More than 200 handouts were distributed.

Between October 1, 2002, and December 31, 2006, the Research Library held an average of 36 public programs each year on topics such as “Doing Business with New York State,” “Using Online Newspapers,” and “Finding Consumer Health Information”; provided tours and presentations about library collections and services to a number of groups; and added ten finding aids to the library’s website. In 2006, the Research Library developed a 12-minute video on library resources and services that plays continuously in the main lobby of the Cultural Education Center. The video is also available online from the State Library website and available for presentations. Twenty-five newspaper articles on Research Library collections and collaborative exhibits were featured in New York State newspapers in 2006. A History Channel segment on the library’s George Washington collection was filmed and broadcast on national television in December 2006.

In 2004, the New York State Resident Borrowers program was publicized throughout the state through newspaper articles, listservs, fliers, and e-mail messages, and at various meetings and conferences. As of January 2007, the library had 2,540 Resident Borrowers cardholders, up from 990 at the beginning of 2005. Currently, approximately 50 percent of Resident Borrowers are from the Capital District, with other cardholders distributed across the state.

Through the Resident Borrowers program, the State Library has increased the use of Research Library materials by state residents from localities geographically distant from the institution. Attendance at public programs has risen steadily, reflecting increased interest in program topics and library materials. Outreach activities, such as the booth at the Business XPO, have resulted in three additional requests from the business community in the last six months for customized training classes in using State Library resources.

Objective/Target No. 20: Expand use of Research Library resources by providing timely access to collections and information.

Since 2002, the Research Library has added new services and procedures to expand access rights, as well as provide for timely access to collections and information. One of the most significant actions was a major change in access policy in June 2004. Prior to that date, a very limited group of individuals were eligible for direct borrowing; most individuals could borrow State Library materials only through Interlibrary Loan. The new policy expanded access by allowing all New York State residents 18 years and older to borrow items directly from the library's circulating collection. The library received many positive comments about this change in policy.

The Research Library also used technology, e.g., e-mail and the Internet, to increase ease of access and provide more timely access to collections. Before 2002, Research Library staff accepted requests for materials located in closed stacks from customers onsite, over the telephone, via fax, and through the online catalog; in 2002, staff began accepting e-mail requests for materials. An online Interlibrary Loan form for (non-protocol) requests from other libraries was made available on the State Library's website in 2003. The online form provides faster access to State Library collections for libraries that had been mailing a paper request form. In response to customer requests, the Research Library began providing a monthly list of new books available from the State Library on the library's website. The library's Document Delivery unit was able to reduce the time needed to get requested copies to direct customers and libraries by scanning the requested materials and sending them by e-mail rather than using UPS or U.S. mail. This service received very positive feedback from customers and libraries; in fact, many customers and libraries now prefer to receive copies by e-mail. The number of pages sent by e-mail doubled from 66,537 pages in 2002 to 124,595 pages in 2006. Library staff began receiving an increasing number of requests from users to digitize older, historical materials in the library's collection and make the digitized versions available 24/7 on the library's website. In 2005–06, the Research Library conducted a project to digitize a selected number of high-use historical and primary source materials from the library's collection, scanning a total of 32,057 pages. These digitized documents are now available to all users on the website and through the online catalog.

Also to enhance timely access to information, the Research Library instituted a "rush" policy to order and process "rush requests" from State Government customers who indicate that they have an immediate work-related need for an item not owned by the library. Approximately 98 percent of State Government customers who requested that we rush-order a new title received the item within 24 hours from the date that the Research Library received the new title.

The Research Library has used a combination of strategies to respond to customer requests for more and faster access to library collections and information. New technologies have given library staff the ability to expand timely access to collections and information and increase customer satisfaction with no increase in staffing. To meet the research and information needs of today's customers, the Research Library will continue to develop and implement strategies to increase access to the Research Library's collection.

Goal 3: Libraries, library systems, and the New York State Library will deliver programs that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services.

Progress toward goal:

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

Objective/Target No. 21: Partner with library systems and others to develop and fully implement the New York’s Excellent Library Service Program (NY EXCELS) to promote service excellence in all types of libraries and library systems.

State Library staff analyzed a variety of strategies for implementing recommendation 4 of the Regents Commission on Library Services, particularly in relation to developing a new state funding program to spur excellence in library service for all New Yorkers. A proposal to create and fund such a program was put forward as part of the Regents comprehensive legislative proposals in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

In 2002, the State Library began to test some of the strategies for implementing recommendation 4 by using LSTA funds. State Library staff developed a new category of LSTA grants called “Service Improvement.” Service Improvement grant programs and guidelines provided the library systems and central libraries with a broad menu of choices for improving system and local library services and moving library services towards excellence. In addition, systems were required to link their grant projects directly to the achievement of specific goals within the systems’ five-year plans of service. Funded “service improvement” projects will continue through March 31, 2008. This evaluation report does not include information about the 62 Service Improvement grant applications received in January 2007 and still under review.

In the period covered by this report, the State Library awarded 55 Service Improvement grants. Twenty-six of these are duplicates, because they represent the second year of a two-year project; therefore, the program has supported 29 unique projects. The State Library will also approve an additional 62 Service Improvement grants for all types of library systems for 2007–2008. The total LSTA funds invested in these 117 projects is \$3.84 million.

Analysis of the 29 unique Service Improvement projects revealed that 24 fell into the three major groupings described below. These addressed issues involved in improving library services and appeared to move library systems and many of their member libraries further along the continuum towards excellence:

- Building public awareness of the importance of library services—This group included six projects, five implemented by public library systems or a central library, and one implemented by a reference and research library resources system. Some of these projects included the work that several public library systems are doing to help member libraries change their governance structure to ensure more accountability for public funds and more reliable and sustained financial support. Others involved use of marketing and PR experts to help libraries understand how to build public awareness of their services.
- Community needs assessment—This group had six projects, including both public library systems and reference and research library resources systems. The purpose of these projects

was to help member libraries learn how to assess community needs (whether the general public or the academic community) and plan to change and improve services based on what the assessment showed.

- Leadership and professional development—Twelve projects were implemented by all three types of library systems. These projects included training programs for library staff to improve customer service; professional development programs to build leadership and management skills in staff at various levels; and improved and more expansive training programs for public library trustees.

Objective/Target No. 22: Introduce service improvement and evaluation processes to all types of libraries and library systems to help them use performance (outputs) and results (outcomes) in measuring their progress towards excellence.

- Provide State Library and library system staff with “train-the-trainer” instruction in service improvement and evaluation methods.
- Provide library systems with a range of advisory services to support instruction for member library staff in service improvement and evaluation methods.
- Partner with library systems in providing user-friendly, timely, and accurate data for evaluation of library services and programs via the World Wide Web.
- Create opportunities for statewide communication of best practices of exemplary library programs.

Since the approval by IMLS of the State Library’s Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) Training Plan in 2003, a plan to train library system and member library staff in the basics of OBE and to deliver OBE training to relevant library staff, the State Library has been moving forward in delivering OBE training across the state. In 2003 to 2005, eight OBE basic training regional workshops were held in different areas of New York State, and three more were held in 2006. In the fall of 2005, an advanced training session was held in the Albany area, culminating in the certification of 10 OBE trainers. These trainers are certified by the State Library and have completed a minimum of six days of OBE training at the basic, train-the-trainer, and advanced levels.

In January 2006, the State Library launched an OBE website (www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/obe/index.htm) containing a timeline of State Library-related OBE activities, all training manuals developed under the plan, a list of certified trainers, and other information links relevant to OBE, including IMLS information. The State Library also incorporated OBE training into the state’s Gates/WebJunction 2005–2006 Rural Sustainability Program for rural and small libraries serving fewer than 25,000. Eleven regional workshops were held across the state, with a total of almost 500 participants. Counting the Gates Foundation Grant Program and the OBE workshops directly sponsored by the State Library, 749 library staff members have been trained since 2003, 10 of them certified OBE trainers.

The goal, i.e., to have State Library and system staff demonstrate skill in using OBE evaluation methods, was met. This is indicated in data supplied by the workshop trainers in separate evaluation reports and the State Library certification of 10 OBE trainers. A complete description of the workshops and their evaluations are included in the attached Outcome-Based Evaluation Report (see Appendix II).

Objective/Target No. 23: Improve the range and depth of expert advisory services available to libraries and library systems to help them respond to changing technologies, demographics, and user needs in support of improved access to information for all New Yorkers.

- Provide State Library and library system staff with training opportunities to improve skills in the areas of leadership, facilitation, communication, project management, conflict negotiation, and others as needed.

The State Library has partnered with Libraries for the Future (LFF), the New York Library Association, and the Public Library System Directors Organization to offer the New York EqualAccess Libraries Institute in 2006, 2007, and 2008. EqualAccess provides public librarians and staff with comprehensive training in how to meet their communities' needs effectively through assessment, outreach, and collaboration. Specifically, participants receive training in how to reach and serve health consumers, baby boomers, older adults, or 'tweens and teens in their communities; however, the EqualAccess approach can be applied to any target population.

In early 2006, 35 librarians and staff from four public library systems and 15 public libraries from the Capital Region and surrounding areas participated in the first New York EqualAccess Libraries Institute. In a post-institute survey, 90 percent of respondents rated the program as excellent or good, and they indicated significantly increased confidence in their ability to implement specific skills (assessment, outreach, collaboration, etc.). A follow-up implementation survey will be sent to all participants in 2007.

The State Library has already gained evidence of the institute's positive impact on librarians, libraries, and communities through follow-up correspondence with participants. For example, the Albany Public Library (APL), which sent three librarians to the Institute, has done the following: partnered with the Albany County Department for the Aging to offer Medicare Information Classes for seniors; added two new successful components to their 2006 Summer Reading Program (one for teens and one for adults) in collaboration with local businesses who donated prizes; partnered with the local Women's Bar Association to offer free monthly Legal Clinics at the library.

Unfortunately, during the time period of this evaluation, which began one year after September 11, 2001, New York State government imposed severe restrictions on travel and workshop/conference attendance for State Library staff. These restrictions greatly hampered the State Library's ability to use external, traditional library-based professional development opportunities to build content knowledge and expertise among current and new staff. While very few State Library staff were able to attend critical external workshops or library or technology conferences, the State Library was still able to provide some training opportunities for staff and for the library systems and libraries as follows: (1) providing access to an ongoing suite of training offerings offered by the State Education Department to all employees; (2) purchasing statewide access for all libraries in New York State to the College of DuPage teleconferences; (3) supporting technology, special services, and service improvement training programs delivered through LSTA subgrants managed by the library systems; (4) purchasing expert consultant services to develop and/or deliver targeted training and professional development as well as materials on key topic areas related to implementation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan and the Regents Commission recommendations; and (6) partnering with a host of other organizations to deliver training to library staff and trustees (e.g., "Training on the Go," launched by the State Library and the New York Library Association to provide hundreds of free online courses in a wide variety of topics from WebJunction and Element-K to 700 public library staff over the next two years.

Some 18,995 library staff and library trustees received training in more than 1,900 training sessions from 2003 through 2006. Through such training sessions and expert advisory services delivered and

supported by the State Library, the library systems, and partner organizations, thousands of library and library system staff and trustees in New York State are better able to anticipate and meet changing customer needs and better able to measure their progress towards achieving service excellence.

Objective/Target No. 24: Partner with public library systems and other organizations to help libraries and communities create and strengthen Public Library Districts so that every New Yorker will have a local library and every library will have a reliable, adequate source of local funding.

State Library staff worked with public library systems, the New York State Association of Library Boards, and the New York Library Association (NYLA) to develop a web-based Public Library District How-To Kit and Guide to help public libraries work with their communities to achieve sustained and reliable local funding. NYLA created a Library Districts Advisory Task Force to provide expert assistance and information to public libraries interested in forming public library districts. The State Library also provided the services of an expert consultant to interested libraries and library systems statewide. The expert consultant and State Library staff provided numerous workshops and consultations, e.g., seven workshops and 74 consultations for 342 people in 2006.

In addition, the State Library regularly updated GIS maps for each public library service area by county and by public library system and made the maps available to libraries and the public on the State Library's website at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/pldtools/index.html>. The maps show the various types of chartered library service areas as well as unserved areas (areas not served by a local public library). Use of the State Library's Public Library District How-To Kit almost doubled over four years, from 2,148 hits in 2003 to 4,038 hits in 2006.

Since October 1, 2002, 14 new public library districts have been created. These 14 districts, in addition to other service area increases, have resulted in 123,911 formerly unserved New Yorkers having a local library in their community. As of 2006, 24 percent of the public libraries in New York State are either school district or special legislative district public libraries. Twenty percent of the 1.3 million unserved New Yorkers identified in 1999 now have a local library in their community. In addition, the statewide average local income for support of public libraries has increased to \$45.52, over the target for the LSTA Plan.

Objective/Target No. 25: Partner with public library systems and other organizations to periodically assess public library needs for building construction, expansion, and renovation, and actively use the data to propose solutions to policymakers.

Recommendation 5 of the Regents Commission report recommends increased state support for public library construction, expansion, and renovation. Of the more than 1,110 public library buildings in New York State, more than half are at least 50 years old, and another 30 percent are more than two decades old and unable to accommodate new technologies or the needs of New Yorkers with disabilities.

Keeping accurate information on the current status of this number of public library facilities is a daunting task. In 2001, the State Library partnered with the public library systems and the New York Library Association to begin developing a process for documenting the construction needs of individual public library facilities. In addition to using some data elements collected annually from the public library annual reports, the library systems were asked to collect information from their member libraries about estimated costs to meet construction needs. The State Library also partnered

with the library systems and NYLA in developing and conducting an in-depth voluntary online construction and technology survey to which more than 400 libraries responded early in 2006. This valuable data about construction needs was compiled, analyzed, and shared with library leaders and decision makers in a variety of ways. A list of the individual libraries with identified construction needs is posted on the State Library's website at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/needs.htm>. As of fall 2006, the data reported by local libraries and the library systems documents a \$1.7 billion need in New York State for public library construction and renovation.

In spring 2006, the New York State Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, the New York Library Association, and other groups used the public library facility construction needs data provided by the State Library to inform discussions during a statewide legislative hearing about public library construction needs. One tremendously successful result of this consistent, ongoing focused education, data collection, and reporting effort was the 2006–2007 one-time appropriation of \$14 million in State capital funds for public library construction. Some 200 library facilities across the state will benefit from construction projects supported by this \$14 million. While the permanent ongoing program of state funds for public library construction is still \$800,000 a year, the Governor has proposed another \$14 million in capital funds for library construction in his 2007–2008 Executive Budget. The Regents have proposed making the \$14 million permanent for 2007–08 and providing \$30 million annually thereafter.

Objective/Target No. 26: Strengthen the State Library's partnership with the State Education Department's Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC), school library systems, and others to improve and enhance New York's school library media programs.

The New York State Education Department's Virtual Learning System (VLS) is designed to encourage the use of the Internet as a tool for teaching and learning and to assist classroom teachers and school library media specialists in locating Internet resources for instruction. State Library staff have served on the VLS steering committee and its subcommittees since its inception in 2002.

Currently, the VLS home page contains links to educational resources from the State Library via a hotlink entitled "cultural resources." This includes the NOVEL databases, as well as links to special collections and programs (such as the Statewide Summer Reading Program) sponsored by the State Library. All classroom teachers can now access the NOVEL databases through the VLS by using their driver license number or non-driver ID number. State Library resources contained on the VLS can be seen at <http://www.oce.nysed.gov/ctl/index.htm>

State Library staff are currently partnering with EMSC staff by participating in the E-Grants initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to develop a standardized electronic grant application form, thereby streamlining the process by which educators apply for EMSC-sponsored grants. The e-grants application form is still under development. Only the fiscal form has been streamlined and recommended for general use by all State Education Departments. The fiscal form was used in LSTA grants awarded in 2007.

Objective/Target No. 27: Strengthen the State Library's partnership with academic and research libraries and reference and research library systems, the State Education Department's Office of Higher Education, and others to improve and enhance New York's academic and research libraries.

The State Library maintains an ex-officio seat on the board of the New York Higher Education Initiative (NYSHEI), a collaborative, member-supported and member-governed organization of

New York's public and private institutions of higher education and their libraries. NYSHEI is in its fifth year of existence. The State Library also maintains membership in Nylink, the OCLC regional network with a majority of members from the academic library community in New York. A librarian from the State Library serves on the Nylink Council as a representative of the "Other" library category. The Director of the Research Library serves as an OCLC Members Council delegate from Nylink.

NYSHEI members make up over 80 percent of all accredited institutions of higher education in New York State, including all of the State University of New York and City University of New York, joined by a majority of the private (independent) institutions. It is the only statewide organization in New York focused exclusively on the information access issues of higher education. This collaboration has facilitated New York State Library partnerships with other academic and research libraries in developing strategies for statewide resource sharing, collection development, collaborative licensing, and scholarly communication. Nylink is one of nine regional networks nationwide for OCLC member libraries. The New York State Library participates in joint licensing and other network services with other academic libraries for discounts, training, and technical support.

These memberships and seats on the governing bodies have permitted the State Library to play an active role in statewide planning and enhancement of academic library contributions to the overall library infrastructure of the state.

Objective/Target No. 28: Improve library system programs and services by aligning system plans of service to other key activities such as annual reports, grant applications, and program evaluations.

Building on the success of the online public library annual report for 750+ libraries, the strategy involved designing new, streamlined, more meaningful products for the three types of library systems to use with the State Library: budget applications, annual report forms, and a long-range plan of service. From 2002 to 2004, an internal team worked to design the content of forms based on Education Department policy, customers' needs/input, and regulatory requirements for various state-aided programs. An external review team of 10 library system directors suggested improvements on various drafts of the forms and documents and met with the facilitator and the internal team to finalize the product design and content. Detailed instructions for the online products were written by the internal team.

Staff in the Division of Library Development and from all 73 library systems have been trained to use the software for the annual reports, plans of service, and budget applications. Ten regional sessions were conducted for clients by two State Library staff members and a vendor representative. Suggested improvements are part of each product and the State Library works with the vendor annually to implement some of the product changes recommended by the library system clients.

The 73 library systems are submitting online annual budget applications, annual reports, and five-year plans of service to the State Library. Links to the approved five-year plans of service for each system are available on the State Library's website at (www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/pos/pos-url.htm). Use of the online forms has resulted in more streamlined processes with fewer staff at the State Library being involved with dissemination and handling of paper forms.

Goal 4: New York State libraries, library systems, library organizations, and the New York State Library will strengthen public policy support for upgrading library services for every New Yorker through statewide communication and advocacy efforts.

Progress toward goal:

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

Objective/Target No. 29: Enhance the State Library’s marketing and public-relations efforts to establish a supportive attitude from the public, the library community, key partners in the education and business communities, and policymakers.

- Develop a statewide advocacy plan in partnership with representatives from the library community, and communicate this plan to the library community and other stakeholders.
- Form partnerships with policymakers, stakeholders, and the business community that strengthen public awareness and library-advocacy efforts throughout New York State.
- Develop advocacy tools with the help of the library community that will explain the need for all types of library services.
- Assist in creating advocacy task forces within various library and education groups to further statewide library initiatives.

The State Library has far exceeded expectations in its implementation of planned activities identified under this objective during the period included in this evaluation. The library’s Library Advocacy Team (LAT) has met regularly, usually monthly, since it was first formed in 2001. The group’s steering committee meets more frequently, often weekly. The LAT has developed and implemented multiple short-term and long-term advocacy plans; developed and implemented dozens of specific strategies related to achieving the goals of the Regents Commission; collected data and conducted research; and prepared advocacy and informational materials in print and electronic form that are pertinent to all of the Commission recommendations, including websites and online tool kits for use by local libraries and others. LAT has also developed and delivered dozens of education and information programs and presentations across the state with the goal of building partnerships specifically in support of implementing the Commission recommendations and generally in support of improving and advancing library services for all New Yorkers.

Ongoing partnerships have been formed with a wide variety of library groups, education groups, higher education groups, cultural groups, the professions, businesses, unions, and local government organizations.

One visible outcome of this education effort and partnership development is the heightened awareness among the public and policymakers of the importance of public libraries as community knowledge spaces in the 21st century and the great need for public library building construction and renovation in New York State. This awareness is evidenced by the fact that in 2006, the state provided \$14 million in one-time capital funds for public library construction and renovation and at the same time, many local communities passed local bond issues.

Objective/Target No. 30: Improve mechanisms to share information concerning the impact of LSTA federal funds with the library community, policymakers, and the general public.

- Develop, publish, and distribute brochures that show the relevance and importance of the LSTA program.
- Expand the New York State Library website to promote reporting of LSTA-supported activities.

Each year, the State Library develops a brochure describing the importance and relevance of the LSTA Program in New York State. The brochure is developed in the spring and distributed widely. Exemplary LSTA grant programs are highlighted in the brochure. The latest version is posted on the State Library's website at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/lsta/fundlsta.htm>.

Since 2002, the State Library has improved its dissemination of information on the impact of LSTA funds by increasing the number of LSTA-related messages posted on the statewide library listserv (NYLINE), by posting the annual LSTA brochure online, and by expanding the LSTA website to include both current and past grant programs.

Library staff around the state have benefited from the increased communication by receiving information in a timely manner and by having additional LSTA resources available online. Library services benefit by the increased library visibility to decision makers.

Objective/Target No. 31: Expand awareness of Research Library services within New York's library community.

The Research Library has expanded awareness of library services and resources by exhibiting at several library conferences, and by providing information through exhibit handouts, poster sessions, and library conference programs.

- In 2004, the Research Library provided a web-based tutorial available to all libraries in the state on State Library interlibrary loan services and procedures, enabling libraries to receive materials more quickly and economically.
- In 2005, the Research Library participated in a poster session at an ENY/ARCL conference focusing on the Resident Borrowers program and NOVEL, the Statewide Electronic Library. More than 100 handouts on digitized library collections and 30 Resident Borrowers Card applications were distributed.
- In April 2006, library staff presented a talk about the State Library to 22 Library Assistants at the Capital District Library Assistants program, sponsored by the Capital District Library Council. Thirty Resident Borrowers Card applications were filled out and returned, and 50 more applications were taken by library assistants back to their home libraries. Attendees took 100 informational handouts with links to online State Library resources to distribute and post in their institutions.
- In November 2006, State Library staff had an exhibit at the New York Library Association Annual Conference and distributed more than 500 handouts on the Resident Borrowers Card program, scanned historical documents, and library website "virtual visits." Research Library staff presented a conference program to 80 librarians on the State Library Federated Search pilot program.
- During 2006, the Research Library issued 19 NYLINE messages regarding recently acquired library collections or enhanced access to research library materials, often through online finding aids.

III. Results of In-Depth Evaluations

The New York State Library contracted with Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). The NOVEL program specifically addresses the first goal of New York State's LSTA Plan:

“All New Yorkers will have reliable and equitable statewide electronic access to information resources through the creation of NOVEL and through enhancement and expansion of libraries' technology capabilities to meet users' informational needs.”

NOVEL is the State Library's most significant statewide service provided in the last five years, and the consultants' report attests to its importance to libraries and users. The following is a quotation from their conclusion:

“New Yorkers are very fortunate to have the resources that are offered to them through the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). While the program can be improved, and while public awareness of the database program still needs to be increased, NOVEL nevertheless manages to address all of the high level goals set for the program.... Usage has increased dramatically and the program is known and appreciated by a vast majority of the library community.”

The report is attached as Appendix 1 of this overall report.

IV. Progress in Showing Results of Library Initiatives or Services

The New York State Library has taken a leadership role in working with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) since 2003 to deliver Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) training to New York State's library systems and their member libraries.

With assistance from IMLS, the State Library developed a 10-stage OBE training plan for New York, beginning with a two-day workshop for State Library staff led by IMLS consultants. The library then contracted with an evaluator/trainer to develop a training manual, to deliver OBE training to library system staff, and to provide an evaluation of the training effort as part of the LSTA evaluation. The evaluator/trainer's concludes with this summary:

“OBE practice has made its way into several LSTA grant program applications, data gathering, and reports. It has been used for some plans of service and for rural library action plans. It has been used by some systems to seek funds from other than LSTA sources and by some for general management activities. It clearly has become part of the consciousness of librarians in New York State.”

A copy of the evaluation report on OBE training, prepared by Dr. Eleanor Carter, is attached as Appendix 2 of this overall report.

V. Lessons Learned

The most notable lesson learned from the initiatives supported by the LSTA program concern the two major initiatives: NOVEL and the State Library's Statewide Summer Reading Program. Other states may benefit from New York's experience and recognition that public awareness is vitally important to the success of a statewide project.

Despite the substantial increases in the use of NOVEL resources described in Part I of this report, the evaluation of the NOVEL initiative by Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, in 2006–07 found that the general public was largely unaware of NOVEL and its resources. Even librarians revealed confusion about some aspects of NOVEL (including its name), and most did not distinguish the resources made available through NOVEL from other online resources.

When asked specifically about publicity and awareness of NOVEL, 44 percent of NOVEL users surveyed online said they learned about the NOVEL resources through a librarian or a school library media specialist. In focus groups, librarians said that widespread marketing and promotion are needed to make potential users aware of the information available through NOVEL resources. Users in focus groups believed that librarians are missing a “great PR opportunity” with NOVEL and that a PR campaign should go beyond the library to bring in new users.

In 2006, the New York State Library began a Statewide Education and Information Program for NOVEL. The program is intended to educate and inform the public about NOVEL through a statewide communications plan that will bring about an increased awareness of NOVEL among all New Yorkers and promote its use through local libraries. The program will include communications focused on media relations and outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television, as well as top-notch professional products to be used by libraries to inform their local communities about the information resources available through their libraries. An evaluation component of the program will measure its effectiveness through techniques such as telephone surveys to determine public awareness of NOVEL, use of NOVEL, and levels of local library participation and promotion.

The State Library's experience with the Statewide Summer Reading Program provides a marked contrast to its experience with NOVEL. Although participation in the Summer Reading Program had been growing, it skyrocketed when a public-relations firm was hired to promote it in 2003.

Expectations are that public awareness and use of NOVEL will increase significantly with the rollout of the Statewide Education and Information Program. However, had the initiative included an education/PR campaign similar to that for the Summer Reading Program earlier on, it would have been more widely used, understood, and appreciated throughout New York State.

VI. Brief Description of the Evaluation Process

Who Was Involved

The State Library began its evaluation process in the summer of 2005 with brainstorming sessions by an internal evaluation team. The results of those sessions formed the basis of recommendations to the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries and its LSTA Committee. With agreement that the in-depth evaluation would focus on the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL), the State Library internal evaluation team next discussed various issues concerning that evaluation with the NOVEL Steering Committee, which advises the State Library on matters relating to NOVEL.

In December 2005, the internal evaluation team prepared and issued a Request for Proposal for a consultant to carry out the NOVEL evaluation. Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants were selected and the contract approved on March 28, 2006. A key question to be addressed by the consultants was: “How has NOVEL helped the user, both librarians and their end-users? The library wanted to be sure that the consultants gathered information from all types of NOVEL users.

While the in-depth evaluation was in progress, an internal evaluation work group began gathering information about the State Library’s work over the last five years on other programs and services under the LSTA Plan. This work group included staff from both the Research Library and the Division of Library Development. The library’s management group, including the State Librarian, provided advice and support. In addition, the library hired Dr. Eleanor Carter to evaluate the progress made with the State Library’s OBE Training Plan.

How the Evaluation Was Conducted

For the evaluation of NOVEL, the major statewide initiative, Himmel & Wilson began their work with meetings and interviews with State Library staff. They next conducted a web survey and focus groups that included both librarians and users. They also carried out personal interviews with librarians and a few users. Their work began on April 1, 2006, and concluded on March 31, 2007.

Dr. Carter began collecting data from the OBE training workshops in 2003 and carried out the data analysis in 2006.

Cost of the Evaluation

The major expenditures for the LSTA evaluation were for outside consultants and State Library staff time:

Himmel & Wilson—evaluation of the NOVEL program: \$42,200

Dr. Eleanor Carter—evaluation of the OBE training plan: \$5,000

Estimated value of State Library staff time (August 2005 through March 2007): \$145,000.