

**EVALUATION OF USE OF
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT
FUNDING IN OKLAHOMA
1997/1998 - 2000/2001**

**A STUDY
CONDUCTED FOR THE
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES**

**UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies, on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL), undertook an evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the use of LSTA funding in the state of Oklahoma during the grant periods of 1997/1998, 1998/1999, 1999/2000, and 2000/2001. The objectives were to provide an assessment of the overall impact of the funding in meeting needs identified in the state's five-year plan. Emphasis was on three primary areas: statewide projects, competitive grants, and project administration. In addition, in-depth evaluations of two programs funded under LSTA were conducted: the statewide Certification Program, including the Institute in Public Librarianship and the Conference Grants Program, and the Statewide Information Databases Program, in which public, academic, school, and special libraries participate.

Overview and Overall Assessment

Based on the information available in the ODL LSTA documents and associated reports from grantees over the period, assessment was made of the extent to which the various projects funded with LSTA money have contributed to the realization of the goals and priorities established in the state's *Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan 1997-2002*. Projects were analyzed by relationship to the goals, priorities, and procedures of the plan and in seven categories based on the type of project: competitive grants to public and/or institutional libraries, competitive institutional grants, statewide ongoing projects, statewide innovative projects, and centralized services and operations, both continuing and one-time projects.

The basic conclusion of the assessment is that Goal I of the LRP, that "Oklahoma libraries will efficiently utilize electronic networks and information sources to find current, relevant and accurate information for their customers," has been substantially achieved, or will be by the end of the five-year LSTA cycle. Progress toward this goal has been achieved through an integrated and focused series of grant programs, which have benefited from the synergistic effects of other state, federal, and foundation grant programs operating during the same time period.

Goal II of the LRP is of a continual nature, which makes progress toward this goal somewhat more difficult to assess. However, definite strides have been made in ensuring that "Oklahoma libraries will stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries for individuals of diverse geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and to people with limited literacy or information skills." Given the nature of this goal, projects directed toward it have been more diverse and do include a substantial focus on the ongoing provision of assistance to public and institutional libraries in the state. The most striking achievement under this

goal has been the changes that have occurred through the program for certification of public librarians and the public library institute, which are discussed below.

Certification Program

The Certification Program and related Institute in Public Librarianship and Conference Grants Program have positively impacted the level of public library service in the state by providing increased knowledge and confidence and through engendering changes in attitude and service delivery capability of the participants. The programs have potential not only to bring change in the local communities served by participants but also to foster a cumulative raising of the level and quality of information service throughout the state. Although the conference grants program has not yet had the envisioned success in changing participation in the professional community, overall these programs may well be the best use of federal funding occurring during the period under study.

Statewide Databases Program

If the certification program may be the most effective of the projects funded, the one having the most widespread impact and widest participation is the Statewide Information Databases program. Through the leveraging effect of LSTA funds, ODL, in partnership with the state's library community, has been able to increase the state funds available to support provision of statewide databases. The equalizing effect of this program, which makes 28 online databases available to all types of libraries in the state, cannot be overemphasized. Also of significance here is the effect this program seems to be having on the potential for ODL to play an enhanced leadership role with all types of libraries in the state.

PART I: OVERVIEW OF USE OF LSTA FUNDS AND PROGRESS IN MEETING GOALS OF THE *LSTA LONG-RANGE PLAN 1997-2002*

Background of study

This evaluation of the use of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding has been conducted by faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL) during March 2001-January 2002. Faculty members participating in the study were Dr. Kathy Latrobe, Dr. June Lester, Dr. Robert Swisher, Dr. Connie Van Fleet, and Dr. Danny Wallace. Dr. Lester served as coordinator for the study. A description of the methodology of the study is in Part IV. Further details and all instruments used in conducting the study are included in the appendices of this report.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the use of LSTA funding in the state of Oklahoma during the grant periods of 1997/1998, 1998/1999, 1999/2000, and 2000/2001. The primary objectives were to provide

- assessment of the overall impact of the funding in meeting needs identified in the state's five-year plan¹ with emphasis on three primary areas: statewide projects, competitive grants, and project administration
- in-depth evaluation of two programs funded under LSTA
 - the impact and effectiveness of the statewide Certification Program, including the Institute in Public Librarianship and the Conference Grants Program, supported by LSTA funding
 - the impact of the Statewide Information Databases Project, supported by LSTA funding, on public, academic, school, and special libraries participating in the project.

The results of this evaluation are submitted to the ODL for transmission in their report to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the federal agency responsible for administration of LSTA funds, in compliance with the requirements of the Act (20 USCA Sec. 1934 (c)). In addition, these results will be used to

- inform the preparation of the next five-year plan for the state
- make any needed changes in the structure and implementation of the Certification Program and the Statewide Information Databases Project.

This study will be shared by the ODL with the library community in Oklahoma, with appropriate state officials, and with interested members of the general public. The study will be available at the ODL website (<http://www.odl.state.ok.us>).

Introduction

Demographics of Oklahoma

Oklahoma is a largely rural state with a population, according to the 2000 census, of 3,450,654. The state covers 69,919 square miles, for an average population density of 49 per square mile. The largest cities are Oklahoma City (population 506,132), Tulsa (393,049), Norman (95,694), and Lawton (92,757). Oklahoma has the second largest Native American population in the U.S., with 32 of the 77 counties in the state having a Native American population of 10 percent or higher. Racial composition of the state as a whole is 76.2 percent white, 7.9 percent Native American, 7.6 percent African American, 1.4 percent Asian, 2.5 other, and 4.5 percent multiracial. The Hispanic or Latino population is 5.2 percent. The state has 13.2 percent of its population 65 and over, and 25.9 percent under 18, both higher than the nation as a whole. Education levels are below the national norms: 79.8 percent of the population are high school graduates or higher and 20.4 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Poverty levels are higher than national averages: 14.4 percent are below the poverty level.²

Status of libraries in Oklahoma at the beginning of the implementation of LSTA funding

In fiscal 1997, the year prior to the implementation of LSTA funding, there were 115 established public libraries in the state, which included 8 library systems. The largest category of libraries by population was those serving populations of less than 2,000. The table below shows the distribution by size, average per capita income for that category, average percentage of local income, and average amount of federal grant funding received. Of the 115 libraries and library systems, only 27 or 23 percent, had at least one MLS degreed librarian on staff.³

Population served	Number in category	Average per capita support	Average % local income	Average amount of federal grant funding
Library systems	8	\$14.48	86	\$31,726
25,000 or more	5	19.52	90	5,283
10,000-24,999	16	14.05	92	463
5,000-9,999	15	15.33	91	492
2,000-4,999	30	15.30	91	294
Less than 2,000	41	14.55	89	41

Table based on data in "Analysis of FY 1997 Data for Public Libraries," *Statistics of Oklahoma Public and Institutional Libraries, July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997), 1-3.

There were 30 institutional libraries for which ODL provided services, including 14 correctional center libraries, libraries in the state penitentiary and state reformatory, libraries in two juvenile centers, libraries in three state hospitals, and the libraries in the Oklahoma School for the Deaf and the Oklahoma School for the Blind. Average per capita income for these institutional libraries was \$53.63; an average of 88 percent of income came from the state.⁴

Academic libraries in the state were found in two- and four-year public and private colleges and institutions, as well as in vocational-technical institutions and in higher education centers. The table below shows the distribution by level of institution.⁵

Vocational -Technical Institutions	Higher Education Centers	Two-year Colleges		Four-year Colleges/Universities	
		Public	Private	Public	Private
43	2	13	1	13	13

In fiscal 1997 special libraries in Oklahoma numbered 109.⁶

School library media centers in the state operated in a total of 1769 school units in 1997. The distribution of these libraries is shown in the following table.

	Public Schools	Private Schools	Parochial Schools
High schools	456	13	
Mid-high schools	15		
Junior high schools	122		
Middle schools	167		
Elementary schools	852	98	46

Table based on data in *Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan 1997-2002, Submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, March 25, 1997* ([Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997]), 2.

The majority of these libraries, regardless of type, had limited (if any) access to online databases. For most public libraries and school library media centers there was no access. Even for academic and special libraries, the categories that were more likely to have some access, the extent of databases available online was very limited. Public libraries in the size categories serving under 10,000 and the institutional libraries had limited automation of their basic functions (cataloging and circulation) and the majority had no Internet access.

Role and functions of ODL

The Oklahoma Department of Libraries is charged in state law to "discharge the state's responsibility for library service, including service to state government, to public and special libraries⁷ and library services, cooperation with and rendering of services to local units of government in the establishment and operation of local libraries and library

systems, and the performance of all technical and other services necessary to the Department." In addition, the "Department shall assist with and supervise the establishment and operation of libraries at all state institutions and agencies, except public schools and institutions of higher learning." ODL is further allocated the functions of "library services, library research, library development, archival, records management and preservation, legislative reference, legal reference, general reference, library promotion and public information, informational, information processing and retrieval, government documents and any allied, cognate or related functions⁸ and is authorized to "cooperate and undertake joint activities or programs with" other entities related to library purposes or services.⁹ Hence, ODL is responsible for public library development in the state, for publicly supported institutional libraries, and for libraries serving state agencies. While ODL has no statutory responsibility for either academic or school libraries, it is authorized to work in cooperation with other types of libraries in the provision of library services.

Prior to the implementation of LSTA funded projects, ODL had limited interaction with academic libraries of the state through the Oklahoma Library Technology Network (OLTN) Online Catalog and the Oklahoma Union List of Serials (OKULS) project. There were no other services funded by or through ODL that directly provided assistance to academic libraries. Likewise, there were no other services available to school or special (non-institutional) libraries that were provided by or through ODL.

Planning efforts prior to LSTA implementation and relationship to LRP

Development of ODL Process

In 1995-1996, the Oklahoma Department of Libraries undertook a multifaceted planning process for the joint purposes of determining new direction for the agency and the development of a new strategic plan. This process involved a sixteen-member Steering Committee composed of representatives from rural and urban public libraries and library systems, state government, and higher education institutions. In addition, there were six internal committees and task forces, which operated under the general direction of an Ad-Hoc Management Review Team, and ten outside consultants who participated in the eighteen-month effort.¹⁰

Fortuitously, the culmination of this planning endeavor coincided with the passage of the Library Services and Technology Act, providing the background and venues for the development of the state's Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan, 1997-2002 (LRP). The Plan was approved by the ODL Board on 25 March 1997.¹¹

The previously constituted LSCA Advisory Council, which had contributed to the development of the new LRP, was dissolved in April 1997. Advisory functions regarding use of LSTA funds were assumed by the OLTN Advisory Council and the

ODL Steering Committee, which had been involved with the planning process that led to the new plan.¹²

Summary of LRP and relationship to LSTA funding

Goals and priorities

The LRP is organized in a three-level structure: two overall goals, related to the two major thrusts of the LSTA legislation; priorities for each goal; and procedures identified to address the priorities. The goals and priorities are as follows:¹³

Goal I: Oklahoma libraries will efficiently utilize electronic networks and information sources to find current, relevant and accurate information for their customers.

Priority 1: The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will facilitate access to electronic information resources.

Priority 2: The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will organize and implement technology training for all types of libraries.

Goal II: Oklahoma libraries will stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries for individuals of diverse geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and to people with limited literacy or informational skills.

Priority 1: The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will provide statewide services to local librarians and trustees.

Priority 2: The ODL will coordinate, facilitate and implement the Certification for Public Librarians Program.

Priority 3: ODL will offer special purpose grants to provide service to those segments of the population disadvantaged through poverty, illiteracy, age or geography.

Process for development and approval of annual program for use of LSTA funds

The projects that receive funding from each year's allocation of LSTA funds to the state of Oklahoma are developed through a process of project proposal and review conducted by ODL under the general leadership of the ODL Office of Library Development (OLD). A call for proposals is issued by the head of the OLD. Currently the call is distributed via email to all ODL professional staff, with a deadline date specified for submission. Each proposed project must target one of the LRP goals and priorities, and most of the projects submitted are related to a specifically identified procedure in the LRP. Information to be provided in the proposals includes the following:

- project title
- name of proposer

- funding amount requested for the project
- LRP goal, priority, procedure that the project supports
- need for the project
- project objective
- action steps to be taken
- evaluation.

Although there is a prescribed format for the proposals distributed in the call, not all proposals follow the format and not all of the proposals include each element of the specified information.

Proposed new projects grow out of an informal process of observations of need by the ODL consultants who work with the public and institutional libraries of the state, through conversations among the consultants, and in discussions in ODL staff meetings. There is at present no formal or systematic process of identifying annually the most critical needs that could appropriately be addressed through the LSTA funded projects and no sense of set priorities for allocation of certain proportions of the funds (except as noted below) to particular areas.

The proposals are reviewed by an internal Program Review Panel (PRP) composed of the heads of the OLD, the Office of Public Information (PIO), Oklahoma Telecommunications Interlibrary System (OTIS)/Information Services, and the Deputy Director. Other members of the PRP have included the director of library technology and the fiscal and special projects librarian. Copies of the proposals are sent to the PRP members, who provide written comments and assessment of each project to either the OLD head or to the LSTA administrator. Previously, the PRP met as a group to discuss the projects, but the current procedure was adopted as a means of addressing difficulties encountered in critically commenting on proposals submitted by PRP members.

After review by the PRP, the OLD head and the ODL Director meet to determine the specific allocation of funds to the projects that have received recommendation for funding. Adjustments may be made in the amounts allocated to the individual projects, with some projects receiving less than requested and others more, although the latter happens less frequently. The final decision on the amounts to be allocated is made by the Director. The entire list of projects and recommended amounts is submitted to the ODL Board for review and approval at one of their regularly scheduled meetings, in recent years (1997-2001) in the meeting in July, August, September, or October.

Although there is no written list of projects that are expected to be funded each year through LSTA (and previously LSCA) funds, the members of the PRP have an understanding of which projects historically are funded "off the top." This implicit list of projects funded annually by LSTA money does change over time, with addition of new projects and occasional dropping of others. This group of projects can be identified by tracking the annual project lists and is included in the overall analysis of use of LSTA money in the next section of this report. Even though there are project proposals formally submitted for each of the projects in this group, the real decision making done

through the PRP review process is the recommendation of how the funds remaining will be used to fund new projects, usually ones that are for competitive grants available to the public and institutional libraries of the state.

Following the initial selection of grant projects, in the latter part of the fiscal year, a second round of project proposal and review takes place, following the same procedures as the first round, to allocate funds remaining for that fiscal year. These "fallback" funds generally accrue as a result of some approved projects not being undertaken and/or some projects not using all funds allocated. The "fallback" projects may be implemented in that fiscal year or may be carried over to the next one.¹⁴

Process for selection of competitive grant recipients

For those projects that provide competitive grant opportunities for either public or institutional libraries, there is a standard proposal and review process. Announcement is made of the grant opportunity through official publication in the *Oklahoma Register* and by mailings to those libraries eligible to apply. Information provided in the mailings includes the eligibility requirements, the purpose and nature of the grant, the total funds available, the procedures for application, including any required application forms, and the application deadline. Proposals received are initially reviewed by the LSTA program administrator for compliance with eligibility requirements and then are reviewed by at least three members of the ODL staff with MLS degrees. The lead officer on the project, that is, the ODL staff member who had proposed the project initially, may be included in this review panel. Others may be members of the PRP.¹⁵ After this review, recommendations for award of the grants is sent to the PRP, who review and comment on the recommendations, which are then forwarded to the ODL Director for final approval.

Analysis of use of LSTA funds over FY 1998-2001

Summary of use by goal and priority and procedure

The charts below illustrate which goals, priorities, and procedures have been addressed in LSTA funded projects in the fiscal years 1998-2001.¹⁶ Funded projects are included in the fiscal year in which funds were allotted to the state, regardless of the fiscal year in which the project was implemented.

As can be observed in Chart 1, overall the largest percentage (54) of the funds has gone to address Goal II,

"Oklahoma libraries will stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries for individuals of diverse

Chart 1: Allocation of LSTA Funds 1998-2001

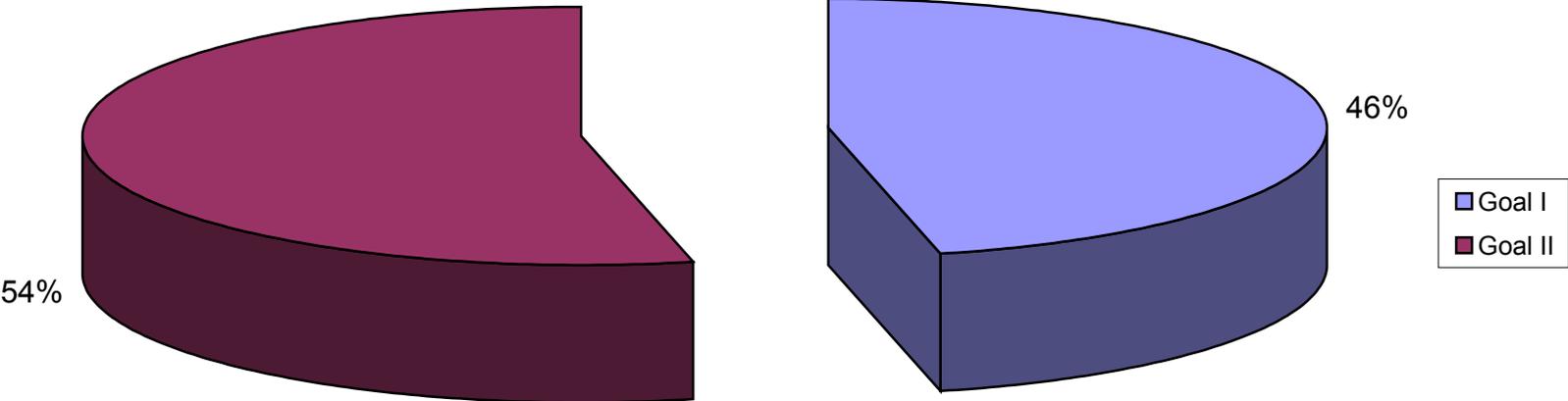
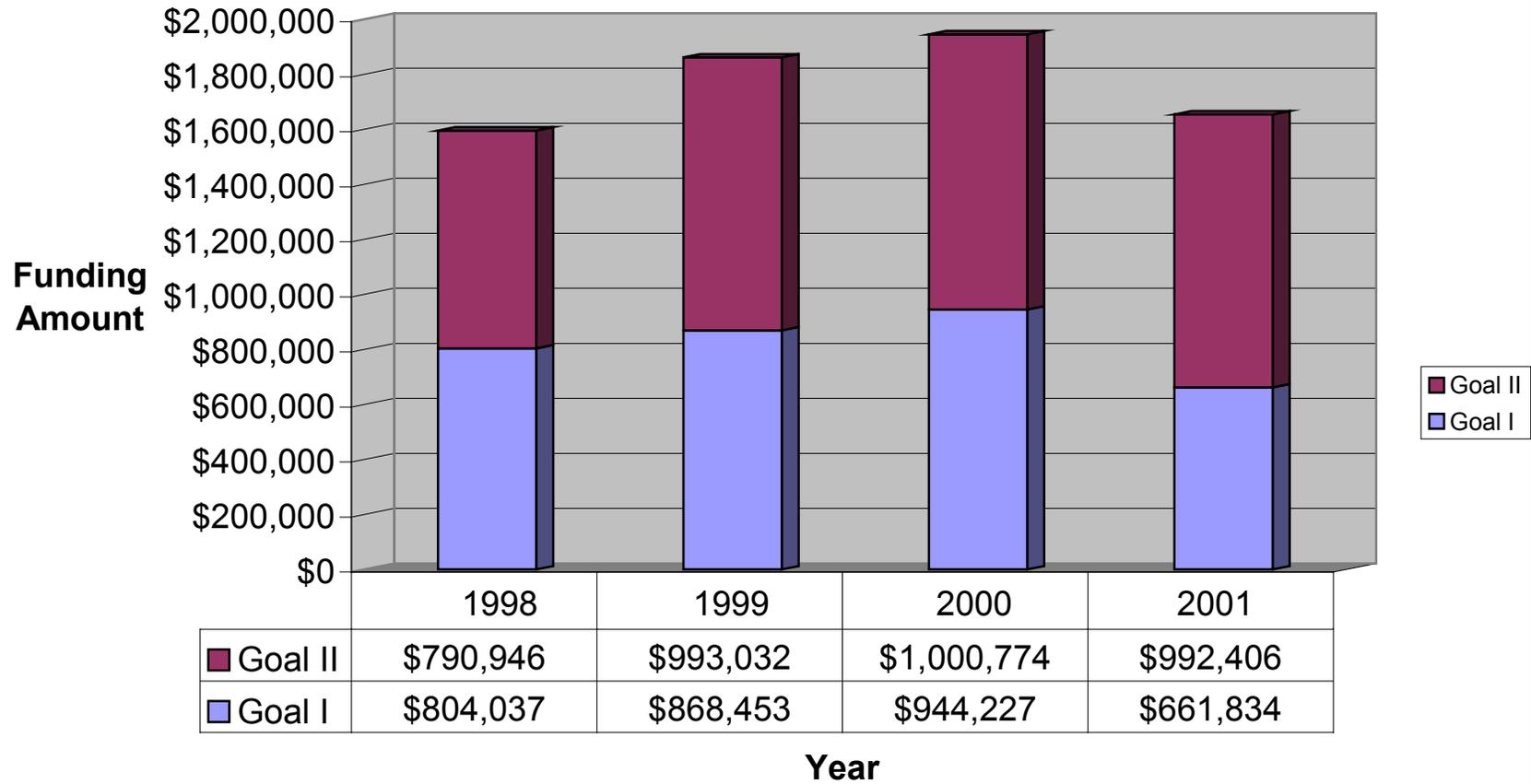


Chart 2: Yearly Allocation of LSTA Funds



geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and to people with limited literacy or informational skills."

On a yearly basis, funding for Goal II exceeded that for Goal I each year except 1998 (see "Chart 2: Yearly Allocation of LSTA Funds").

Within each Goal, the highest funded priority over the total four years has been Priority 1 of Goal II,

"The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will provide statewide services to local librarians and trustees."

(See "Chart 3: Goal I Allocations: 1998-2001 " and Chart 4: Goal II Allocations: 1998-2001.")

This priority was the most heavily funded each year except for 2000 ("Chart 5: Goal I Yearly Allocations, 1998-2001" and "Chart 6: Goal II Yearly Allocations, 1998-2001").

The priority receiving the least separately allocated funding over the four years was Priority 2 of Goal I,

"The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will organize and implement technology training for all types of libraries."

However, this measurement is misleading, in that technology training has been an ongoing emphasis over the four years in the funding allocated to Goal II Priority 1.

Within priorities, the procedure receiving the largest amount of funding, both overall and on a yearly basis was Procedure 1 of Goal II Priority 1:

"The ODL will assist local public and institutional libraries with library development issues, such as management and administration, technology and the internet, personnel, planning, collection maintenance, publicity, buildings, and grant-writing."

Of those procedures specifically funded,¹⁷ the procedure receiving the least amount of funding (only \$3000 over four years) was Procedure 6 of Goal II Priority 1.

"The ODL will provide training and consultation for public library trustees."

Again, this measurement is misleading, in that training and consultation is provided for public library trustees on an ongoing basis, with annual trustee workshops, under Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 1.

Chart 3: Goal I Allocations, 1998-2001

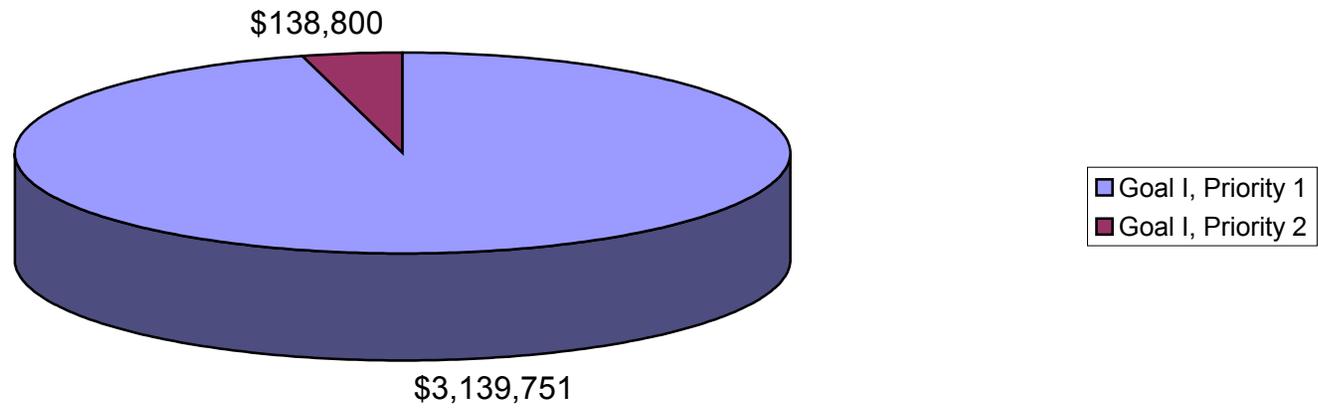


Chart 4: Goal II Allocations, 1998-2001

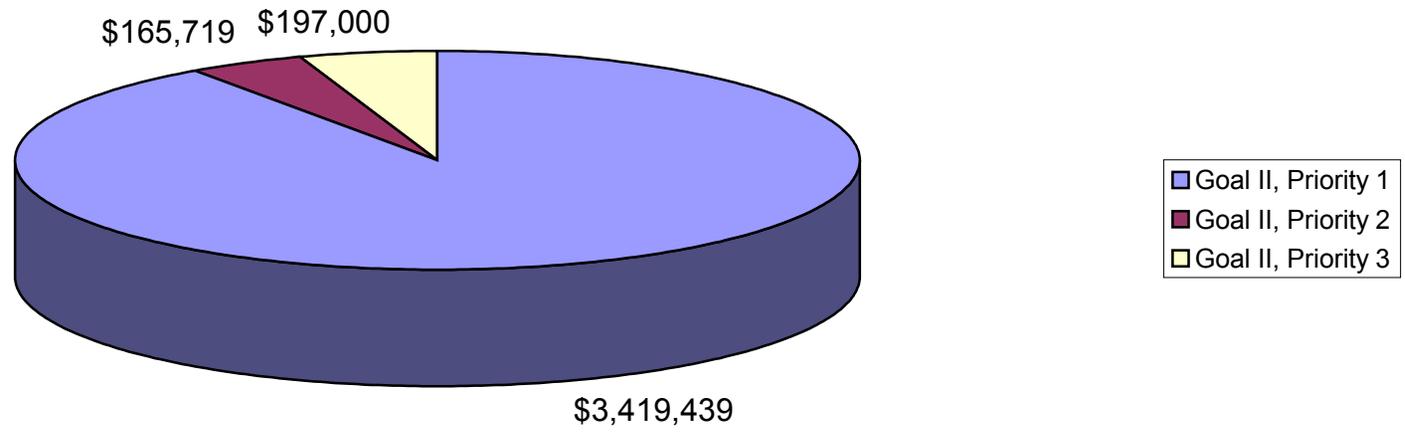


Chart 5: Goal I Yearly Allocations, 1998-2001

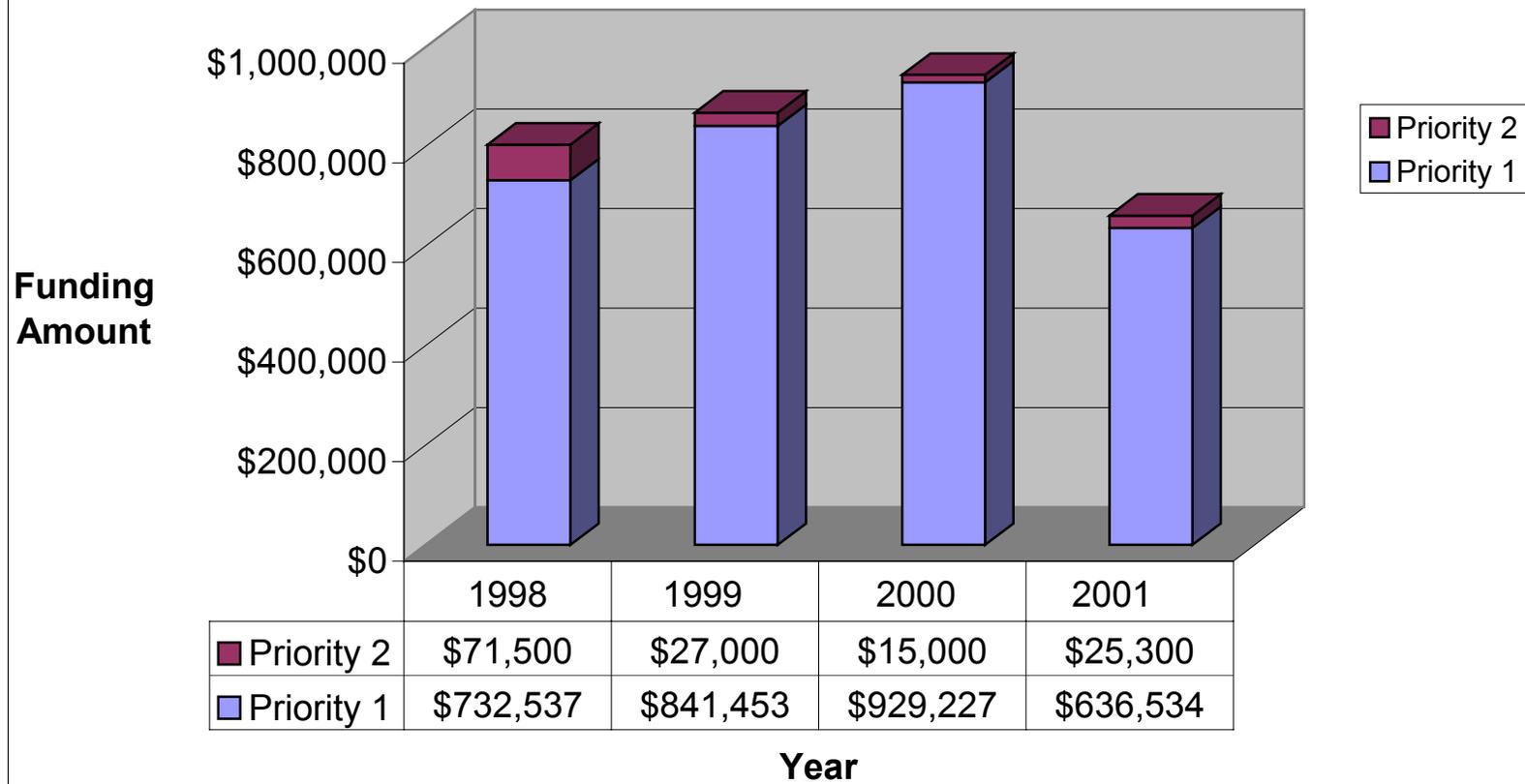
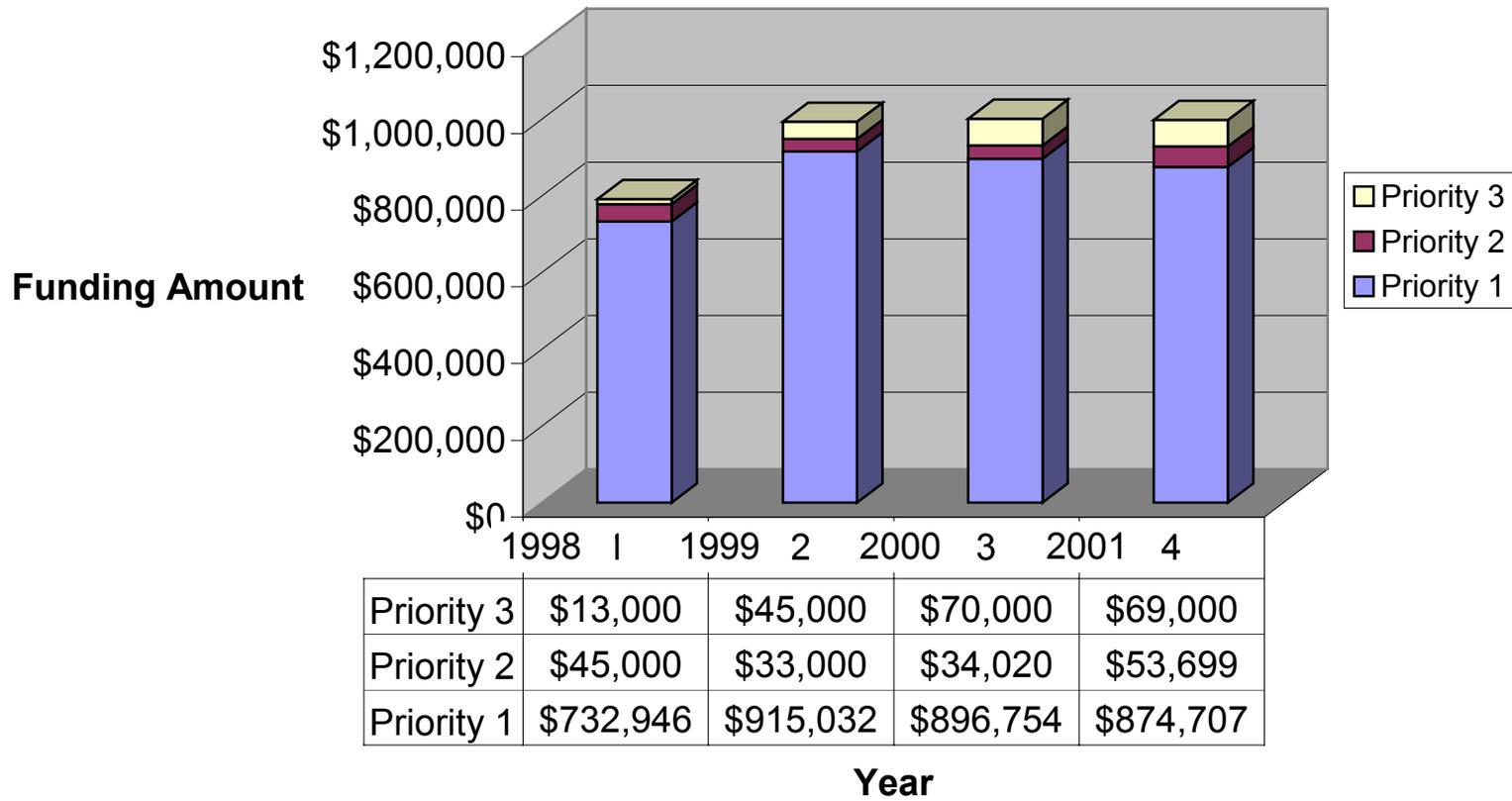


Chart 6: Goal II Yearly Allocations, 1998-2001



Analysis by category

In addition to examination of the use of the LSTA funds by Goal, Priority, and Procedure addressed, another useful consideration is the extent to which LSTA funding has been allocated to competitive grant projects awarded to individual libraries, to statewide projects conducted centrally by ODL, and to centralized services and operation in support of libraries, both ongoing and one-time projects. The following charts illustrate uses along these dimensions.

The categories and their definitions are as follows:

Competitive grants to public and/or institutional libraries - These projects provided grants to individual libraries, based on application, with administration by each grant recipient. The projects were targeted to a specific Goal/Priority/Procedure of the LRP and were not repeated beyond a second year.

Competitive institutional grants - These projects provided grants to institutional libraries served by ODL, were based on application, with administration by each grant recipient. The grants addressed a specific Goal/Priority/Procedure of the LRP.

*Statewide ongoing projects*¹⁸ - These projects were undertaken by and administered by ODL but provided services that were distributed or delivered directly to eligible libraries throughout the state. The projects are funded on an annual basis through the use of LSTA funds.

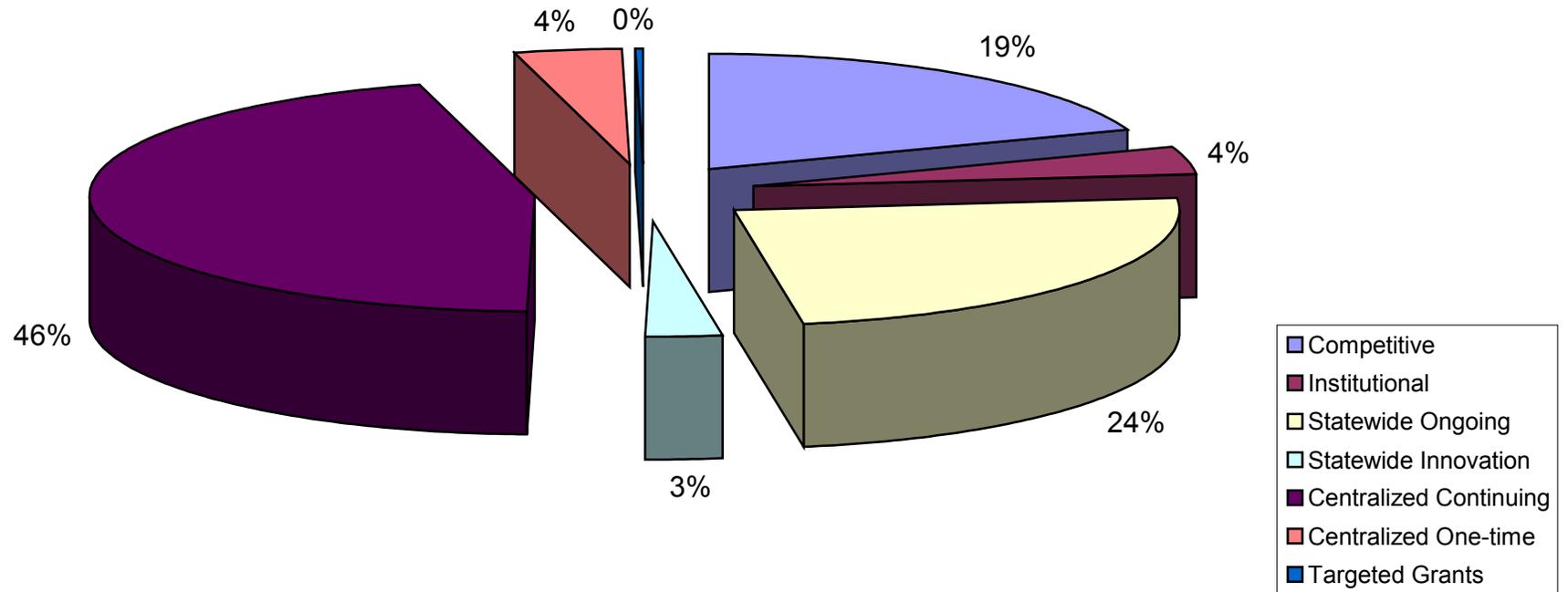
Statewide innovative projects - These projects were undertaken by and administered by ODL, provided services that were distributed or delivered directly to eligible libraries throughout the state, but were not repeated beyond one year.

Centralized services and operations, continuing - These projects funded services and operations through which ODL provided assistance to public and institutional libraries on an ongoing basis.

Centralized services and operations, one-time projects - These projects funded one-time centralized services and operations through which ODL provided assistance to public and institutional libraries but that were not repeated.

As can be observed in Chart 7, the largest percentage (45) of funding overall supported centralized services and operations to provide assistance to libraries on an ongoing basis. Joined with the centralized one-time projects (4 percent), these two constituted an overall allocation of 49 percent of the funding over the four years. Statewide projects received 27 percent, with ongoing projects accounting for the bulk of these funds (24 percent; 3 percent to innovative projects). Competitive grant projects combined received 24 percent (20 percent to competitive, 4 percent to competitive institutional).¹⁹

**Chart 7: LSTA Funds Allocation by Category
1998-2001**



Across the four years, funding allocated to competitive grants has declined, and funding for continuing centralized services and operations has declined slightly in 2001, whereas all other categories have increased. The largest percentage increase was in funding for statewide innovative projects. See “Chart 8: LSTA Funds Allocation by Category and Year.”

Within these categories, there has been variation in the area of the LRP that projects have been addressed. Within the statewide ongoing project category allocations, nearly three-fourths of these funds (73 percent) have supported the provision of statewide licenses for databases (Goal I Priority 1 Procedure 4; see “Chart 9: Statewide Ongoing Projects Allocation by Priority and Procedure 1998-2001”).

In the competitive grant category, 66 percent of the funding provided upgrading of electronic equipment or provision of new equipment, including telecommunications, for individual libraries (Goal I Priority 1 Procedure 2; see “Chart 10: Competitive Grant Projects Allocation by Priority and Procedure 1998-2001”).

In the continuing centralized services and operations category, 83 percent went to provide consulting and administrative salaries that enabled assistance on library development issues for public and institutional libraries (Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 1; see “Chart 11: Centralized Continuing Services and Operations by Priority and Procedure 1998-2001”).

Charts 12-14 further illustrate the application of funds in the six categories to the goals/priorities/procedures of the LRP.

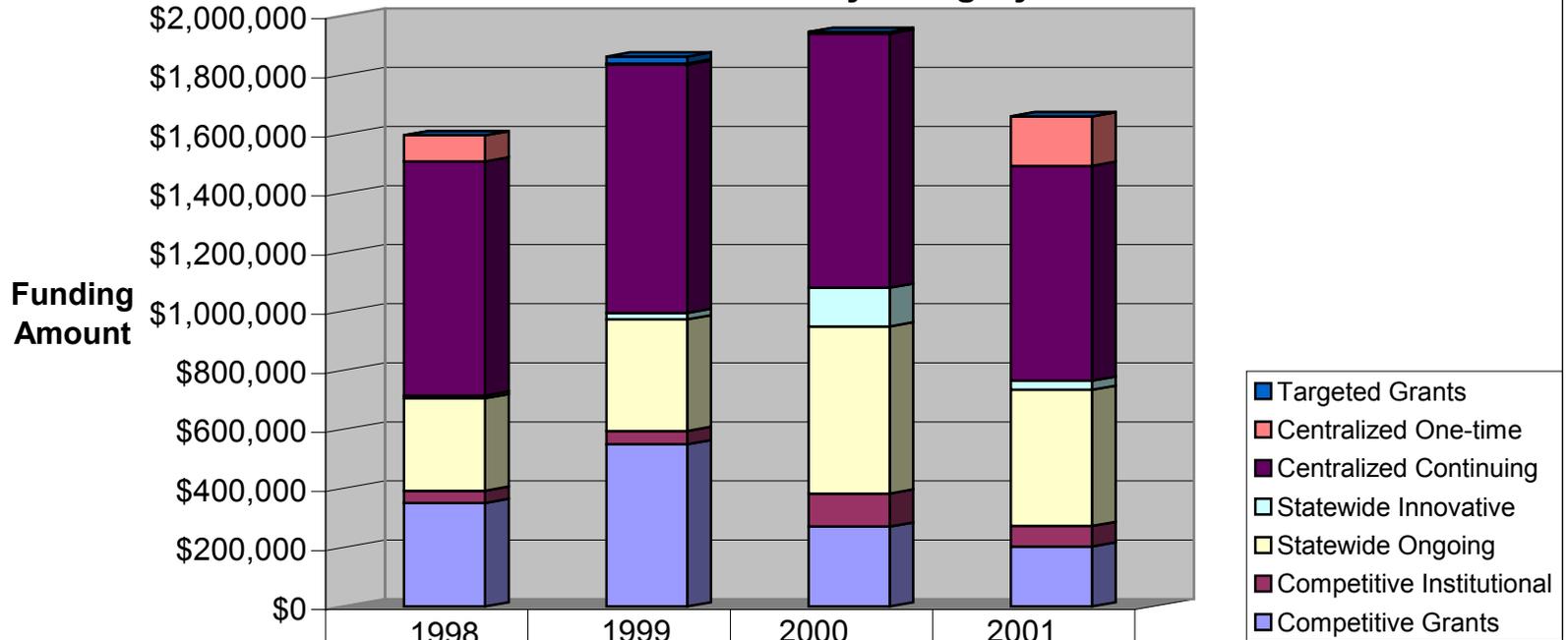
Description of impact of use

Changes in status of libraries relative to state goals as result of LSTA funding

Goal I

Other than the funding of centralized consulting and administrative salaries (Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 1), the project that has received the largest support from LSTA funds over the four years has been the statewide information databases program (17.6 percent of the total funds). This project will be discussed in more detail in Part II of this report, but in summary, it has successfully addressed the priority of ODL facilitation of access to electronic information resources (Goal I Priority 1) and has extended this access to all types of libraries in the state. As a result of this ongoing project, citizens of the state served by 1332 Oklahoma libraries and agencies²⁰ have had access to 28 databases ranging from one targeted to elementary-age children (Kid's Edition) to one providing critical, in-depth, specialized information for health professionals (MEDLINE). The use of LSTA funds for this project served as a catalyst in making the project possible and as a “pump primer” to get state funding for this area.²¹ In addition to contributing to progress toward achieving the goal of Oklahoma libraries efficiently utilizing "electronic networks

Chart 8: LSTA Funds Allocation by Category and Year



	1998	1999	2000	2001
Targeted Grants	\$0	\$23,000	\$0	\$0
Centralized One-time	\$88,643	\$4,500	\$6,000	\$167,605
Centralized Continuing	\$792,746	\$840,127	\$859,804	\$727,312
Statewide Innovative	\$8,500	\$21,705	\$131,115	\$30,850
Statewide Ongoing	\$313,163	\$378,053	\$565,669	\$461,215

Year

Chart 9: Statewide Ongoing Projects Allocation by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001

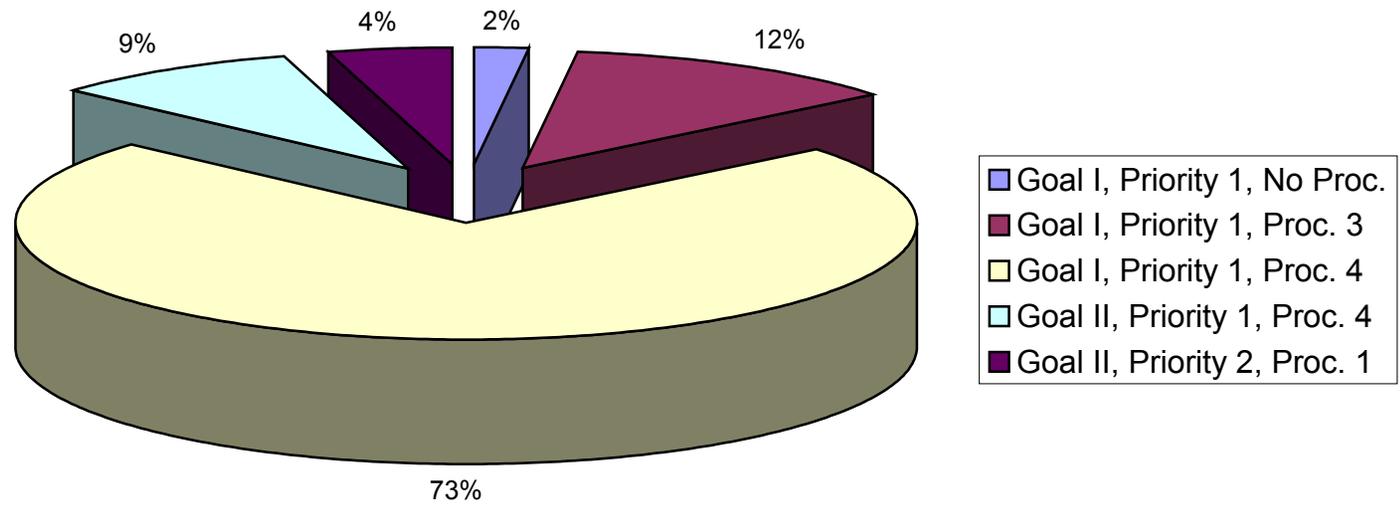


Chart 10: Competitive Grant Projects Allocation by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001

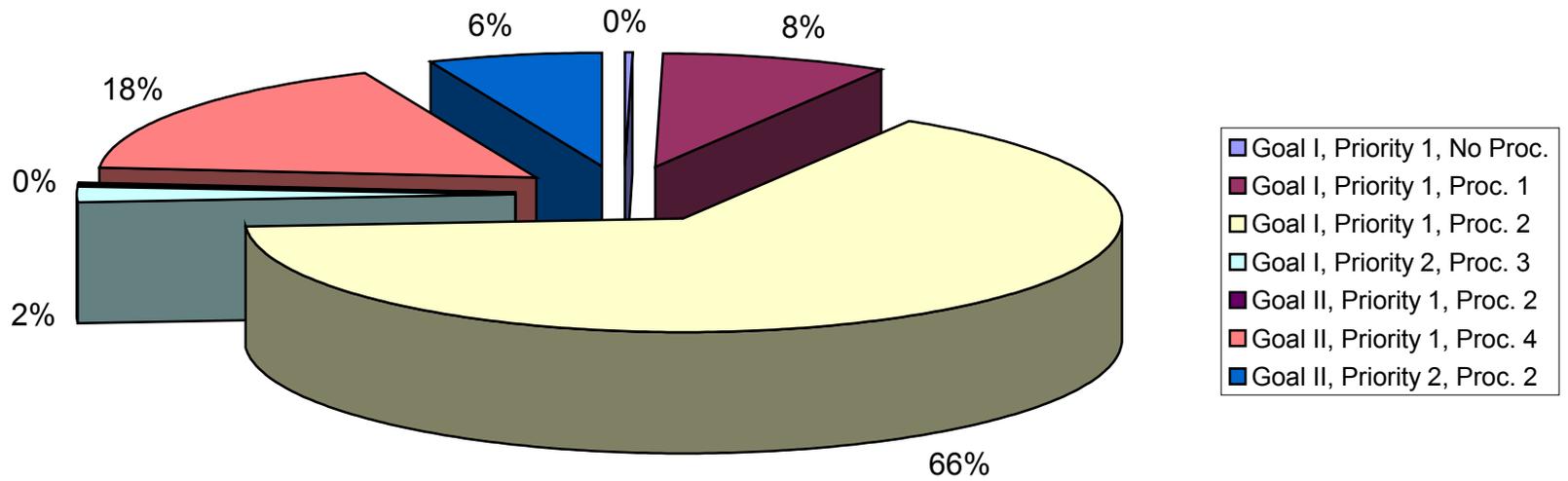


Chart 11: Centralized Continuing Services and Operations by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001

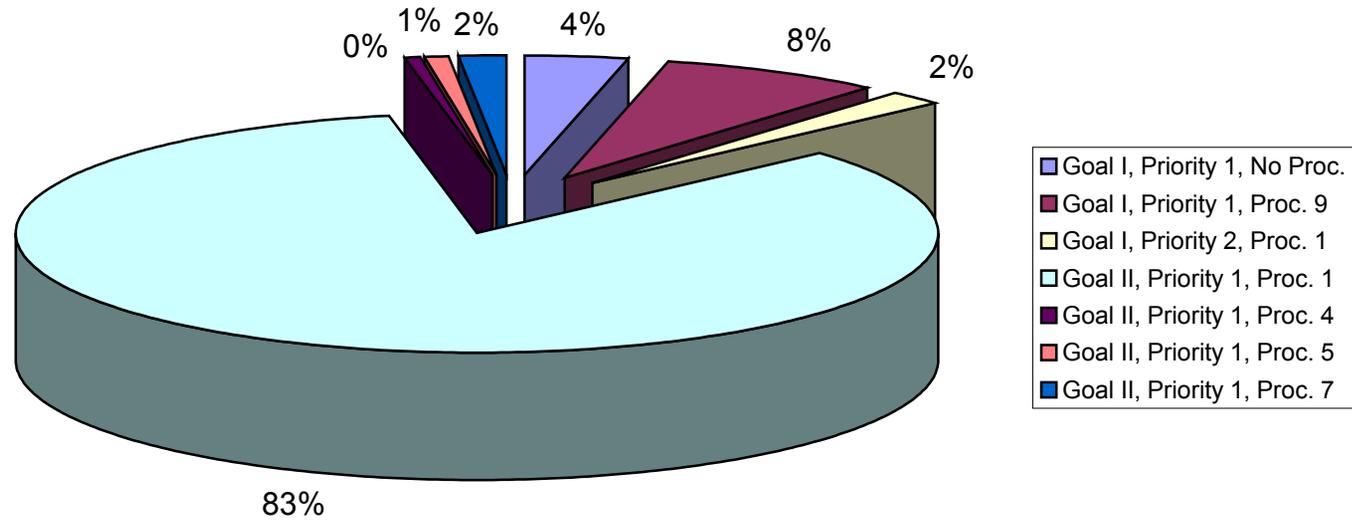


Chart 12: Competitive Institutional Grant Projects Allocation by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001

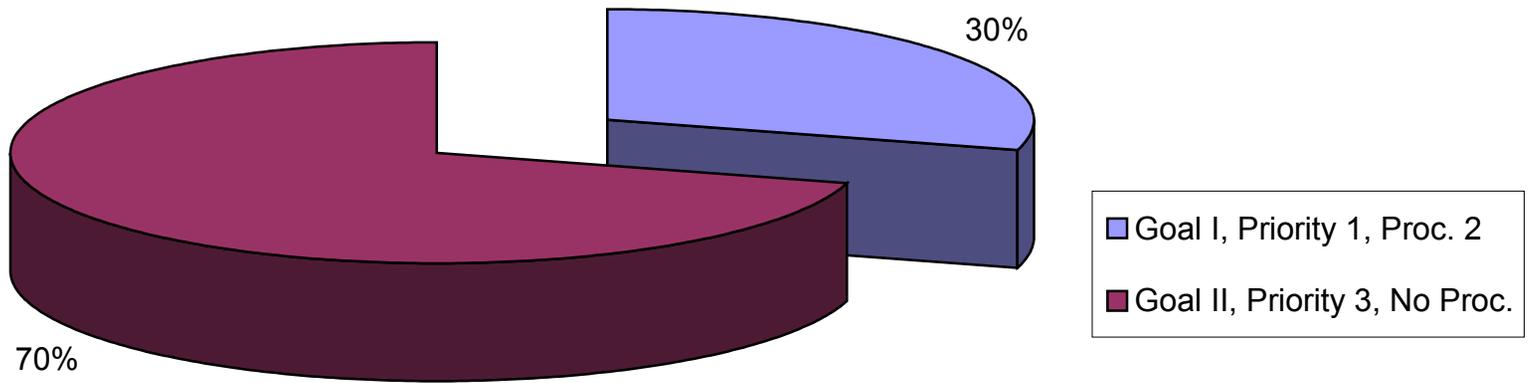


Chart 13: Statewide Innovative Projects Grant Allocation by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001

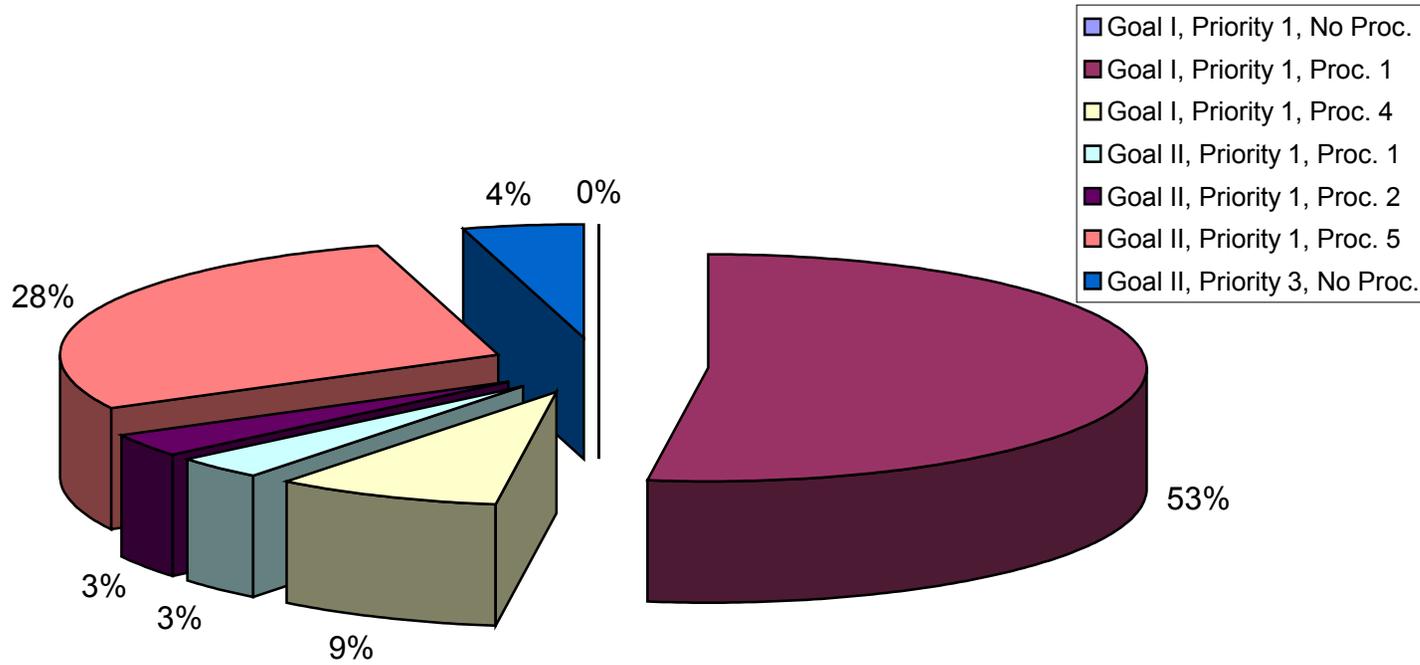
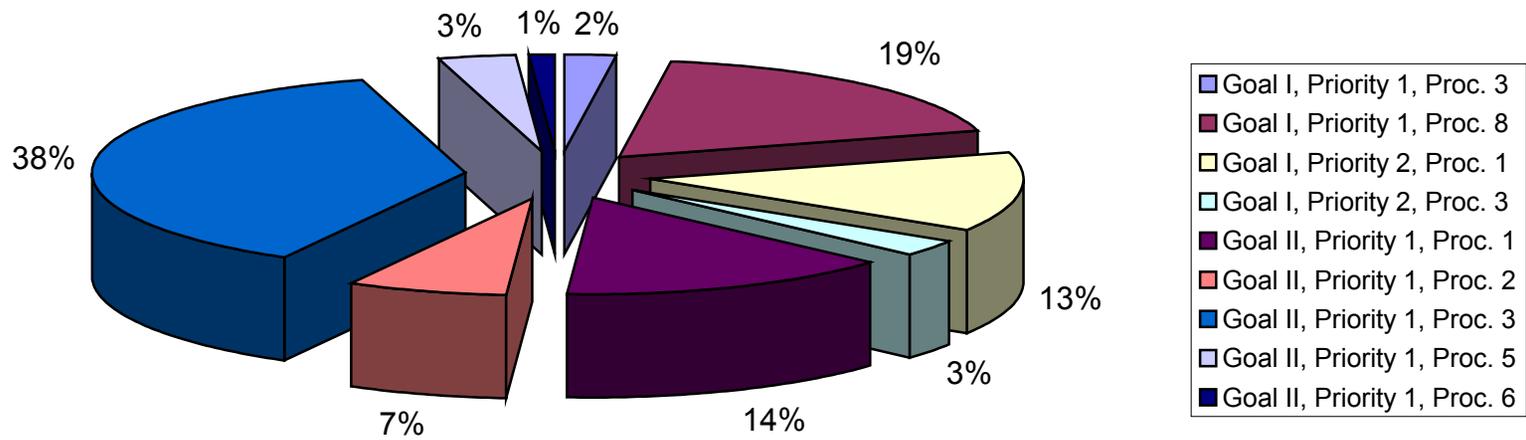


Chart 14: Centralized Services and Operations One-time Projects Grant Allocation by Priority and Procedure, 1998-2001



and information sources to find current, relevant and accurate information for their customers," the project has brought ODL into a leadership role in fostering cooperation with types of libraries previously not directly served by the Department. A major task identified for ODL by the Steering Committee in the 1995-1996 planning process was to "ensure equity of access."²² As shown in Part II, the libraries of the state are now, through the statewide information database program, moving closer to this ideal.

Another major focus in use of LSTA funds over the four years has been to enable libraries to participate in use of electronic networks and information sources by provision of grants

- to purchase new or upgrade existing equipment,
- to establish or upgrade telecommunications capabilities, and
- to convert or upgrade library functions and operations.

The following sustained strand of competitive projects for public and institutional libraries addressed these needs (Goal I Priority 1 Procedures 1 and 2).

FY 1998

Computer Hardware Matching Grants

Computer hardware 50/50 matching grants (\$1250) to 66 public libraries and library systems (a total of 118 public library locations) provided computers for patron access to the Internet. For some libraries, this grant enabled their first Internet access for patrons, a significant advance in use of electronic networks and information sources.²³ Others noted that they could now, as a result of the grant, provide patron access to the statewide information databases. Other libraries used the grant to upgrade an existing computer or to expand the number of patron access stations. Peripherals such as printers, scanners, and appropriate furniture were also included in the purchases under the grant, enhancing the use of Internet information sources. The grants coincided with the initiation of e-rate funding and served as a complementary project to expand the utility of this separate federal funding in enabling patron access.²⁴ The matching funds came from a variety of sources, including, in a few cases, state aid funds. One long-term impact of the project was the projected inclusion in the local library budgets of funding for maintenance, future upgrades, and expansion.

Technology Grants for Institution Libraries

A parallel grant project provided opportunity for state institution libraries to improve the technology available for access to information services for their patrons. While the grant was not restricted to purchase of computer equipment or systems, 14 of the 20 grant recipients used the funding to purchase or upgrade computer equipment or peripherals, to upgrade operating systems, to purchase automated circulation/catalog systems, or to purchase Internet access.

Telecommunications Equipment 56K or Higher Line

For 35 public libraries and library systems (72 locations), these grants, ranging from \$720 to \$17,280 (for 12 branches), provided funding for connection costs for Internet access at 56K or higher. The project, designed to be complementary to the e-rate discount program, covered connection costs not covered by that program. As with the computer hardware matching grants program, it enabled libraries to take advantage of the state and federal universal service e-rate discounts and to make it possible for libraries to participate in the statewide information databases program.

Data Protection and Recovery

This project provided means to ensure ongoing access to individual libraries' computer data through grants of up to \$850 to 59 public libraries and library systems (96 locations) for purchase of equipment to protect computer hardware and data from adverse electrical environmental conditions, natural catastrophe, or other harmful conditions and to provide for restoration of data if needed. In addition to providing an immediate level of protection, the project was successful in raising awareness of the need to provide for data protection and recovery as evidenced by plans to fund future items for these purposes from the individual library budgets. This project worked in concert with the other similar FY98 projects to increase the abilities of Oklahoma public libraries to use electronic networks and sources to provide information to their patrons.

FY 1999

Automated Circulation/Catalog System Grants for Small Population Libraries

Thirty-nine public libraries serving populations of 4000 or below were able to purchase or upgrade automated circulation/catalog systems and/or carry out retrospective conversion through \$5000 grants.²⁵ This project, targeted to the smallest public libraries, addressed equity of access to electronic information and provided the funding for those libraries to install systems that would enhance their ability to contribute their holdings to the statewide catalog and participate in statewide interlibrary loan.

Interlibrary Loan Computer Workstation Grants

To further facilitate participation in the online statewide interlibrary loan program, \$2000 grants were awarded for 106 public and institution libraries to purchase dedicated interlibrary loan computer workstations.²⁶ In some cases, staff had been doing ILL on a computer shared with patrons; others had to perform ILL activities on a workstation shared with cataloging functions. In instances where there was an ILL-dedicated computer, some were as much as 8 years old. The project provided both for upgraded equipment and enhanced resource sharing among the state's libraries.

FY 2000

Automated Circulation System Grant for Public Libraries Serving Population 10,000 or Less

Following the FY 1999 project targeted to libraries serving populations under 4,000, this project assisted the next level of public libraries with grants of up to \$5000 to purchase their first automated circulation/catalog system (7 libraries), add the catalog function to an installed circulation system (2 libraries), upgrade an existing system to a web-based version (10 libraries), and purchase needed peripheral equipment or service agreements to enhance the functioning of existing systems (4 libraries).

Automate Circulation/Catalog System Grant for State Institution Libraries

In a similar project for institution libraries, seven grants of up to \$7000 each were made to state institution libraries for the purchase of an automated circulation/catalog system, a computer workstation, and related peripherals and supplies. For five of the recipients, the grant funded their initial automated system; the other two upgraded existing systems.²⁷

Retrospective Conversion Assistance for Libraries Initiating an Automation Project

This project was a companion project to the automated circulation system grant for independent public libraries serving 10,000 or less. Funding enabled 36 libraries serving a population of 10,000 or less that received an automation grant in FY 1999 or FY 2000 to purchase software to download Internet MARC records from their system vendor for use in the automated system and, in addition, 32 of the libraries received funds for personnel to search and download the records. Grants ranged from \$249 to \$5429. This project enabled libraries to complete the automation of their circulation and cataloging functions and to contribute their catalog records to the statewide catalog, which will enhance resource sharing in the state.²⁸

Videoconferencing

\$5000 grants were awarded to three public libraries to purchase videoconferencing equipment for use by the library staff and patrons. Providing videoconferencing capability was projected to be particularly useful in enabling participation in meetings held around the state without driving long distances.

FY 2001

LAN Grant for Public Libraries Serving 10,000 Population or Less

This project is again targeted to those libraries not yet fully networked in order to provide access to the automated catalog system from public computer workstations. Thirty libraries have received grants (28 for \$3000, one for \$2772, one for \$2985) for the purchase of hardware and software needed for a LAN.²⁹

Automation for Public Libraries with Populations under 4,000

In an effort to bring all public libraries qualifying for state aid to a basic level of library automation, this project provided grants to the small libraries in the state that have begun but not completed an online catalog funds to purchase automation software, retrospective conversion software, multi-user licenses, or a local area network, or to hire cataloging personnel. Ten libraries, all but one of which serve populations under 2,000, received grants ranging from \$155 to \$8000. As with the FY 2000 Retrospective Conversion project, funded libraries are required to submit their catalog records to the statewide catalog for resource sharing.³⁰

Other LSTA Projects

Other LSTA-funded projects that have supported these efforts to assist libraries in providing access to electronic information resources over the four years have included the following:

- local technology training for library staff (FY 1998 competitive grants to 30 public libraries, library systems, and institutional libraries)
- purchase of additional ILL/cataloging site licenses for participation in the statewide online catalog (projects funded in FY 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, administered through ODL)
- electronic books pilot project (FY 2001, administered by ODL).

Some of the projects funding centralized services and operations through which ODL provides assistance to public and institutional libraries on an ongoing or one-time basis have also been instrumental in supporting progress toward the achievement of Goal I.

The following highlights three such projects:

- ODL Technology Training Lab equipment and instructional materials (FY 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001)
- Advanced Internet Training Workshop (FY 1998)
- Foundation Database for Public Library Training (FY 2001).

Goal II

As can be observed in the charts above, the largest percentage of overall funding for the four years has supported Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 1, assistance to local public and institutional libraries with library development issues. However, there are three other parts of Goal II that have received substantial sustained attention throughout the four years (listed in order of total funding):

- assistance to local librarians in developing services to children and youth (Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 4, total funding \$403,350)
- service to disadvantaged segments of the population (Goal II Priority 3, total funding \$197,000)
- coordination, facilitation, and implementation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program (Goal II, Priority 2, total funding \$165,719).

Development of services to children and youth

Grant projects supporting development of services to children and youth, with special emphasis on children-at-risk, have included competitive grants, statewide projects, and ODL services and operations that provide assistance in this area. The following list of competitive grant projects illustrates this focus.

FY 1999

Children At Risk Special Purpose Grants

Twelve public libraries were awarded grants ranging from \$2006 to \$20,000 to fund projects targeted to library services to children at risk as a result of poverty, abuse or neglect, or teen pregnancy. Each project was cosponsored by a local child advocacy group. Agencies cooperating in the project included Headstart, local Department of Human Services offices, county health departments, local Youth Volunteer Corps, a substance abuse treatment center, and a local teen pregnancy prevention task force. Projects included provision of "emergency kits" to abused and neglected children removed from their homes to assist the children in transition to foster care; establishment of an ongoing, multifaceted, multi-formatted, bilingual project addressing children at risk due to poverty and teen births; and training sessions for teens on disadvantages of teen parenthood. Indications were that some of the programs would be continued with funding from local sources.³¹

Children's Programming Mini-Grants

Grants of \$500 were provided to 72 public libraries to encourage cooperative programming between libraries and museums, in conjunction with the Western theme of the summer reading program. The resulting cooperative projects, involving 58 local museums and historical societies, provided 213 summer programs in 54 counties, focused in many cases on aspects of local life during pioneer days or on local Native American culture.

FY 2000

Children at Risk Grants

The 1999 project was repeated in 2000 with 7 grants to public libraries. Libraries again partnered with local child advocacy groups including a county teen pregnancy task force, a local alternative school, the extension services, Head Start, county child welfare unit, and a county health department. As in the prior year, several libraries anticipated continuing the projects with local sources of funding.

FY 2001

Programs and Books for Preschoolers

Book grants of \$500 each were made to 85 libraries serving populations of 10,000 or less for purchase of preschool books from an ODL-approved list. Eligibility requirements

included attendance by grantees at a workshop on preschool children presented by ODL in connection with the project.

Other LSTA Projects

Two statewide ongoing projects have provided assistance in developing services to children and youth each of the four years:

Summer Reading Program. This project annually provides to public libraries (and to additional sites without public libraries) an organized, thematic approach to summer reading programs for children. Included in the supporting resources provided to individual libraries are promotional materials, manuals for conducting the program, and various library-related items for distribution to children participating (e.g., bookmarks, book bags). In addition, targeted workshops are offered around the state to assist librarians in planning and preparation for the implementation of the program.

*Youth Services Programming Kits.*³² Sixteen theme kits and twenty-one author/illustrator kits are updated, promoted, and provided on loan to public libraries to assist in children's programming.

Other projects that have been funded annually through LSTA that assist libraries to provide services to children and youth are two in the continuing centralized services and operations category:

Youth Services Workshop, held each fall for public library children's services personnel
Books for Young Readers/"Terrific Titles." Bimonthly thematic booklists of new titles for children and young people are compiled and distributed.

Service to disadvantaged segments of the population

Projects to provide service to disadvantaged population have focused on grants to state institutional libraries, primarily through competitive grants.

FY 1998

Programming Grants for Institution Libraries

Grants of \$1500 were provided to three institution libraries to implement special programs or services focused on reading, library services, or self-education in partnership with an outside agency.

FY 1999

Grants for Institution Libraries

Matching grants of \$1200 to \$3500 for purchasing library materials or equipment or providing library programs or services were made to 19 libraries in state supported institutions. Five of the grant recipients purchased computers and related peripherals, one

purchased sound equipment, and the remainder used the grants to buy fiction, non-fiction, reference, and periodical titles to address collection deficiencies.

FY 2000

Grants for Institution Libraries

This project repeated the FY 1999 project of the same title, awarding 19 grants ranging from \$1500 to \$6000. Fifteen libraries purchased print materials, four used the funding for an automated circulation/catalog system, four purchased a computer and/or related equipment, two bought shelving, one purchased software, and one a wide-screen television.

FY 2001

Grants for Institution Libraries

Continuing for the third year in identical form, this project awarded grants to 15 institutional libraries of \$1800 to \$15,000. Fourteen libraries purchased print materials (including reference materials), four purchased media, five used funding for a computer and/or related equipment, five purchased furnishings (shelving, tables, chairs), two bought copiers, and one each a fax machine and a TV/VCR. In addition, six used part of the funding to support the librarian's attendance at the OLA annual conference.

Other LSTA Projects

Although included in other categories, the following projects also were supportive of provision of services to the disadvantaged:

- Workshop for Institution Librarians, FY 1998 and FY 1999
- Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled project to send three staff members to a Library of Congress National Library Service Conference, FY 1999
- Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled project to purchase 10 computer workstations to use with the automated circulation system, FY 1999
- Automated Circulation/Catalog System Grant for State Institution Libraries, FY 2000 (discussed above).

Coordination, facilitation, and implementation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program

Although funding used over the four years to address the need for a systematic program of training for public library staff who do not hold the MLIS degree has constituted only a very small percentage (2.3 percent) of the total, this program has been one of the most influential and well received of any funded with LSTA money.³³ The ODL Steering Committee highlighted this area as a priority in the recommendations emanating from the 1995-96 planning process.³⁴ This project will be discussed in more detail in Part II of this report, but in summary, it has successfully addressed the stated priority and has recently been revised in response to a separate evaluation undertaken by the Certification Board.

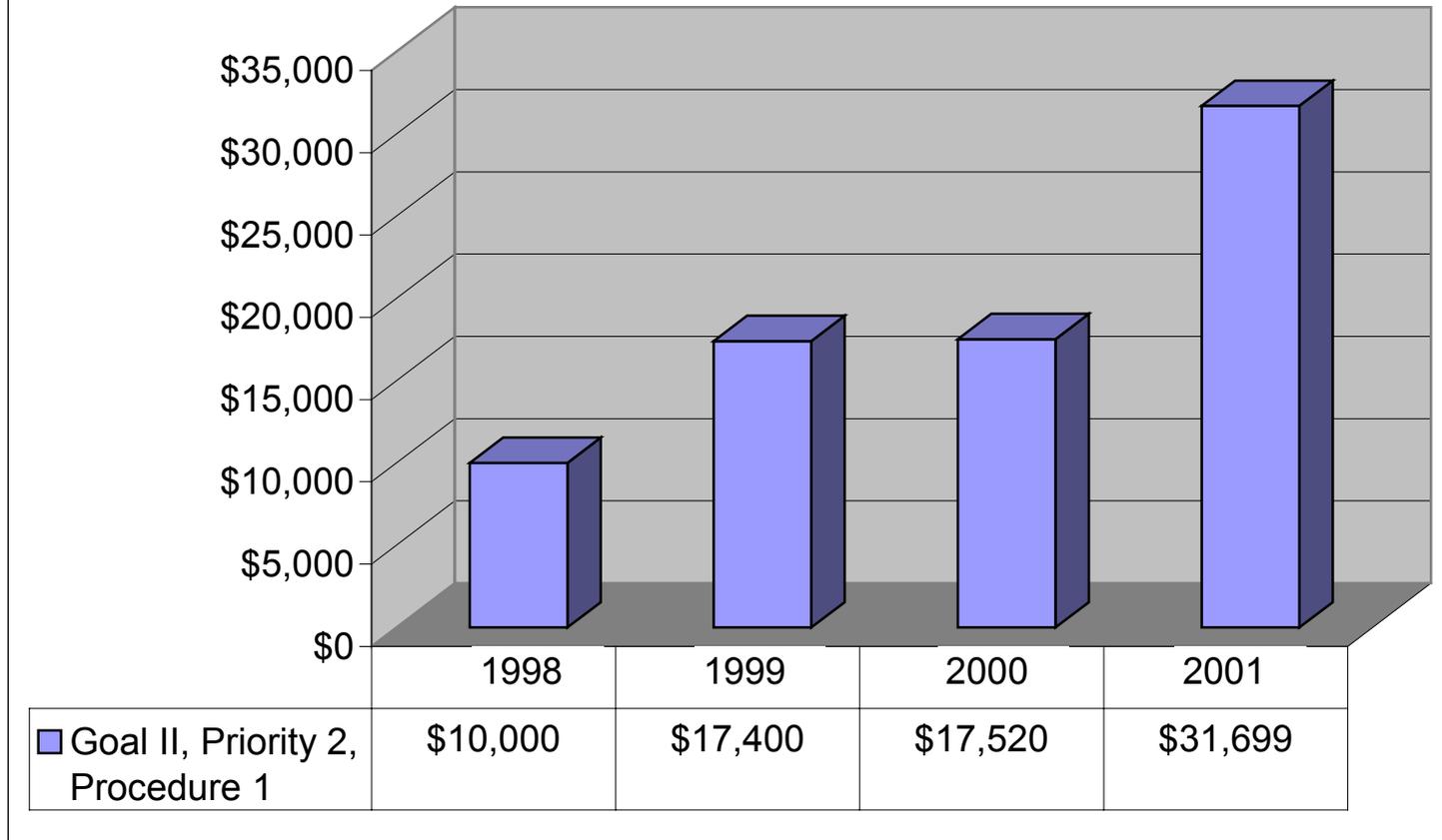
Projects addressing this priority have included a series of competitive conference grants as well as a statewide project providing the Public Library Institute classes in locations around the state. Funding by year for the Institute show yearly increases (see “Chart 15: Public Library Institute Allocations, 1998-2001”). Funding for the competitive conference grants has varied from year to year (see “Chart 16: Conference Grants Program Allocations, 1998-2001”).

Status of libraries in Oklahoma in 2001

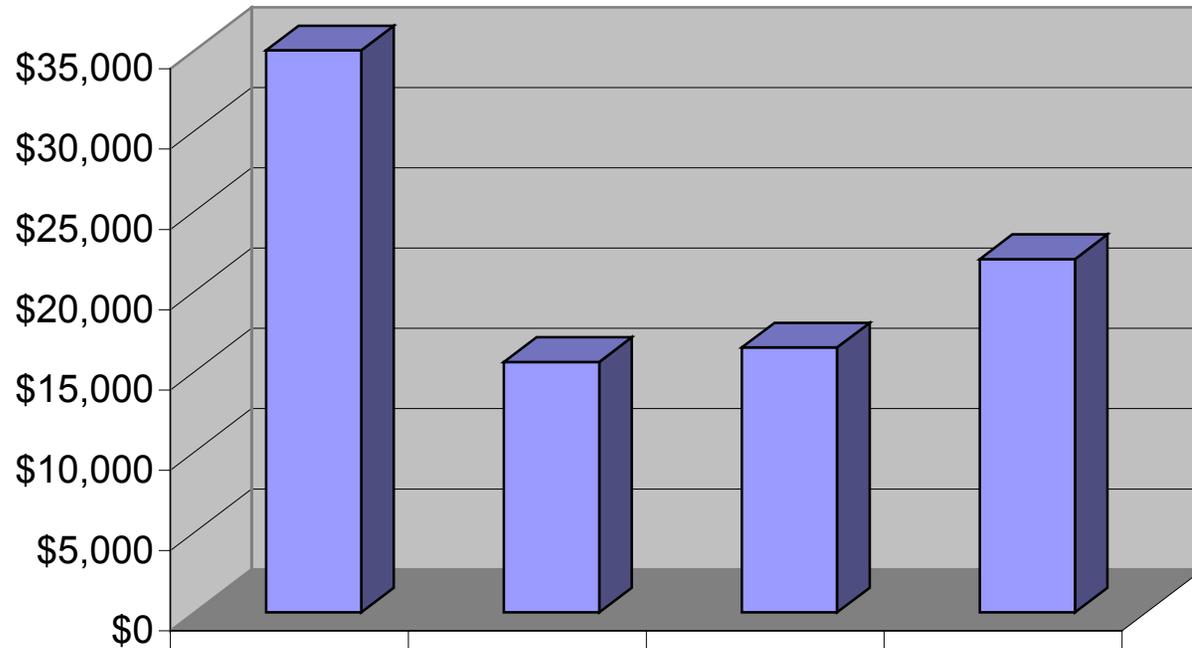
At the end of the time period examined, the distribution of libraries in the state had not changed in any major ways. Public libraries had shifted in terms of numbers in each category of population served and increased slightly (from 23 to 27.5 percent) in the percentage of libraries with at least one MLS degree librarian on staff.³⁵ One change that is noticeable is the shift in average federal grant funding dollars from the larger libraries and library systems to those serving populations under 5,000. Federal grant funding for libraries serving 2,000-4,999 was over four and a half times what it was in 1997; for those serving fewer than 2,000, federal grant funding was more than 37 times the 1997 amount.

Population served	Number in category	Average per capita support	Average % local income	Average amount of federal grant funding
Library systems	8	\$18.75	87	\$21,539
25,000 or more	5	21.20	92	2,004
10,000-24,999	17	17.11	90	693
5,000-9,999	16	18.21	92	313
2,000-4,999	33	20.29	87	1,626
Less than 2,000	30	25.67	77	1,574

Table based on analysis of 2001 annual report data from Oklahoma public libraries provided by Cathy Van Hoy, Consultant, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, January 2002.

Chart 15: Public Library Institute Allocations, 1998-2001

**Chart 16: Conference Grants Program Allocations,
1998-2001**



Goal II, Priority 2,
Procedure 2

\$35,000

\$15,600

\$16,500

\$22,000

Special libraries had decreased in number (to 98).³⁶ Academic libraries were relatively unchanged. The number of public schools (which by State Department of Education accreditation standards must have libraries) had increased (1602 to 1691), and the total number of accredited private schools was relatively stable (155 in 2001), although unlike public schools, not all of these accredited private schools were required by accreditation standards to have libraries.³⁷

	Public Schools
High schools	470
Junior high schools	99
Middle schools	206
Elementary schools	916

Progress in meeting needs identified in the state plan

Overall the use of LSTA funding has made it possible for the public and institution libraries of the state to use "electronic networks and information sources to find current, relevant and accurate information for their customers" (Goal I) through grants to automate library functions, to gain effective levels of Internet access, and provide patron workstations and through grants to provide the training needed to use the equipment and communications made available.

For libraries of all types in the state, LSTA funding has expanded access to electronic information via the statewide information databases to sources that only a select few would have had without the database project.

There are still projects underway in some of the smaller libraries that will complete the realization of this Goal, but by the end of 2002, the goal should have been achieved.

Progress made toward the needs articulated in Goal II is less definitive, in part due to the ongoing nature of the goal. The procedures specified in Priority 1 have been followed, and ODL has clearly provided "statewide services to local librarians and trustees."

Priority 2, the implementation of a Certification for Public Librarians Program, has been accomplished. The program has become an institutionalized part of the training programs provided by ODL, although in the current structure it is still entirely dependent on the availability of federal LSTA funds. As indicated in Part II of this report, this program is highly praised by those who participate in it and is valued both by public library directors and by the ODL consultants who work with those for whom the program was designed.

Progress on Priority 3 (special purpose grants for service to segments of the population disadvantaged through poverty, illiteracy, age, or geography), except as directed toward

state institution libraries, has not been achieved at a level similar to the success in Priorities 1 and 2. There has been less attention given to this Priority in terms of numbers of grant projects (except for those for institution libraries). The priority does, in fact, somewhat overlap with Procedures 4 and 5 of Goal II Priority 1 (assistance to local librarians for development of services to children and youth, with special emphasis on those at risk and promotion of literacy services, including literacy for the homeless, institutionalized, and non-English speaking). The lack of attention to Priority 3 may be attributable to this overlap factor.

Effect of other programs operating in concert with LSTA funded projects

During the time period considered in this evaluation, there were two programs that provided important support in areas addressed by LSTA projects: the state and federal universal service e-rate program (begun in 1998) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation library program that provided computer hardware, software, technology training, and technical assistance for public libraries in low income areas in the state (announced in 1999, carried out in 1999-2000).³⁸ Although it is outside the scope of this study to evaluate the impact of these two programs or even to provide detail on their operation, they need to be mentioned for the synergistic effect that occurred with the three programs operating simultaneously, each involving ODL as key player. As noted above, LSTA funding was used in projects that would make it possible for the smaller public libraries to take advantage of the e-rate program, an investment that extended the impact of the LSTA funds beyond what could be done with the LSTA dollars available. In a similar manner, the addition of new public access computers, related software, and appropriate training for library staff provided through the Gates program worked in concert with efforts made with LSTA funds to bring all public libraries in the state to a minimum level of automation and public access to computers and the Internet. The availability of additional public access computers worked to enhance the value of the statewide database program, and the e-rate program made it possible for the smaller libraries to afford Internet access so that citizens could use the databases.

PART II: IN-DEPTH EVALUATIONS

This part of the report presents in-depth evaluations of two programs funded under LSTA. Considered are

- the impact and effectiveness of the statewide Certification Program, including the Institute in Public Librarianship and the Conference Grants Program, supported by LSTA funding; and
- the impact of the Statewide Information Databases Project, supported by LSTA funding, on public, academic, school, and special libraries participating in the project.

The Certification Program and the related Institute in Public Librarianship and the Conference Grants Program are projects funded under Goal II Priority 2 of the Long Range Plan:

“The ODL will coordinate, facilitate and implement the Certification for Public Librarians Program.”

This program includes both a statewide ongoing project (the Certification Program Institute) and competitive grants (the Conference Grants).

The Statewide Information Databases Project is funded under Goal I Priority 1 of the LRP:

“The Oklahoma Department of Libraries will facilitate access to electronic information resources.”

It is a statewide ongoing project.

Both of these projects have been very successful and well received in the state. While they are quite different in the total amounts of funding devoted to them and the percentage of total funding each represents (2.3 and 17.6 percent), each has had an important impact in addressing the information needs of the state and in improving the services provided.

PART IIA: CERTIFICATION FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIANS PROGRAM AND THE INSTITUTE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIANSHIP

The Certification for Public Librarians Program and its related Institute in Public Librarianship have directly addressed Priority 2 of Goal II of the Long Range Plan:

- The ODL will coordinate, facilitate and implement the Certification for Public Librarians Program.

Background and overview

The Program began in January 1997 under the joint auspices of the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) and the ODL, following an extensive planning period of more than four years.³⁹ The original structure of the Program was designed by the Certification Implementation Committee of OLA and ODL, whose members were appointed by the OLA and ODL executive boards. The twelve-member committee included broad representation from the Oklahoma public library community: from library systems, from independent libraries of varying size service areas, from the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies, and from both OLA and ODL.⁴⁰

The Program was designed to address the need for trained personnel in the public libraries of the state, the vast majority of which do not have (and are not likely to have in the foreseeable future) MLIS-degreed librarians on staff. The stated vision of the OLA and ODL in implementing the program was

that public libraries in Oklahoma be administered and staffed by trained personnel. Continuing education is necessary to assure that librarians keep abreast of developments in the information age. This, in turn, upgrades the library profession, enriches the individual librarians and promotes quality library services.

The original goals of the Program were as follows:

1. to improve library service throughout the state;
2. to motivate public librarians to acquire, maintain, and develop their skills through basic and continuing education;
3. to recognize public librarians who, on a continuing basis, update their knowledge and skills in order to provide better library services to their patrons;
4. to improve the public image of librarians and libraries;
5. to provide guidelines for public library boards and supervisors to use in selecting and retaining personnel; and
6. to aid in structuring library educational programs to better meet the educational needs of librarians.⁴¹

The Program operates under the oversight of a Certification Board, whose members include two OLA appointees, two ODL appointees, and the ODL Certification Specialist.⁴² Appointments to the Board are carefully managed to include members from both system and independent libraries, individuals who hold the MLS and those who do not but have been through the Institute for Public Librarianship, and representatives from both rural and urban libraries. Attention is also given to geographic balance. Administration and operation of the certification process is by the ODL Certification Specialist.

Certification for Public Librarians Program

The Certification Program is a voluntary program, although it is required by some public library boards for designated categories of library staff, and is coordinated with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries' minimum standards for library personnel. It consists of certification at seven levels, from the Level 1 Certificate, which may be achieved through successfully completing the Institute in Public Librarianship, to the Level VII Certificate, which requires an ALA-accredited master's degree and six years of post-MLS appropriate library experience (three must be administrative experience) or the MLS, a certificate of advanced study, and or five years experience (three administrative). The certification is good for three years and is renewed through the completion of 4 CEU's (using the national standard definition of ten contact hours per CEU), 3 hours of approved college course work, or the eight advanced level courses in the Institute for Public Librarianship.⁴³

In the initial implementation of the certification program, both the certificate and the requirements for completing certification through the Institute in Public Librarianship were differentiated between administrative and support staff. Beginning August 2001, this distinction between types of certificates was eliminated.

Institute in Public Librarianship

Certification may be obtained at the first three levels (differentiated by years of appropriate library experience) through completion of the basic Institute in Public Librarianship (IPL).⁴⁴ This institute is comprised of a series of seven classes that provide the basic knowledge and skills that serve as a foundation for the development of further expertise:

- Collection Development
- Computers and Connectivity for Public Libraries
- Current Trends and Legislation Affecting Public Libraries
- History and Philosophy of Public Library Service
- Interpersonal Skills
- Public Library Administration

- Services to the Public

Each class is six contact hours, with the exception of the History and Philosophy class, which is three, for a total of thirty-nine contact hours of required instructional hours. To facilitate participation, the classes are offered on a yearly schedule, approximately half in spring and half in fall, at various locations throughout the state, and, as appropriate, some classes are offered in digital format.⁴⁵ The classes, taught by individuals who are certified (most of whom hold the MLIS) and have expertise in the relevant area, follow a standard outline of topics and have a common set of educational outcome objectives.⁴⁶ Class developers, who work under the guidance of the ODL Certification Specialist, are compensated for their work using LSTA funding, as are those who deliver the instruction.⁴⁷ There is no charge to attendees for those classes supported through LSTA funds (currently all of the classes). From the beginning of the IPL in 1997 through December 2001 a total of 296 classes have been delivered, with the current annual number now in the 45-50 range. Each class usually is offered in 3 or 4 different geographical locations.

In August 2001, an Advanced Institute, comprised of eight advanced level classes, was added to the IPL and may be used for renewal of certification.⁴⁸

Conference Grants Program

As a companion to the certification and institute programs, ODL has since 1998 supported a conference grants program using LSTA funding. Recipients are provided support for professional association membership and attendance at a national, regional, or state level conference, as a means of promoting professional development and furthering participation in professional associations. To qualify for the grant, applicants must be employed in an Oklahoma public or institutional library, hold certification⁴⁹, and fall under a salary cap. Other requirements, related to conference attendance have varied: in 1998, applicants were required to be first time attendees at the designated conference, in 2000 those receiving a grant in 1999 were ineligible, and in 2001 preference was given to applicants who had not received a conference grant in the previous three years. From 1998 through 2001, 108 grants have been made to support attendance at OLA, ALA, MPLA (Mountain Plains Library Association), PLA (Public Library Association), and TLA (Texas Library Association) conferences.

CONFERENCE GRANTS PROGRAM, FY 1998-FY 2001

YEAR	CONFERENCE	NUMBER OF GRANTS AWARDED	AMOUNT OF GRANT
FY1998	OLA	41 (2 were half grants)	\$500
FY1998	PLA	20	750
FY1999	ALA or MPLA	12	1300
FY2000	PLA	15	1100
FY2001	TLA, MPLA, or ALA	20	1100

Participation in the Certification Program and the Institute

As of March 2001, 310 librarians had been certified, 221 of whom were certified through the Institute in Public Librarianship⁵⁰. These 221 came from four of the eight public library systems in the state (50%) and 31 of the 104 independent public libraries (30%). As might be predicted, participation has been greater in libraries serving larger population groups:

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC LIBRARIES WITH STAFF CERTIFIED THROUGH THE INSTITUTE

Population Served	Total Number of Libraries	Libraries with One or More Certified Staff	% of Libraries with One or More Certified Staff
>25,000	5	3	60%
10,000-24,999	16	7	44%
5,000-9,999	15	9	60%
2,000-4,999	30	5	17%
<2,000	38	7	18%

Of those certified long enough to require renewal, a high percentage have chosen to do so. Of librarians certified and still employed in public libraries in Oklahoma as March 2001, only 4 did not renew their certification, an effective retention rate in the certification program of 88%.

Participation in the Institute is more widespread than suggested by the numbers of libraries that have certified staff, indicating that with time the percentages of libraries with certified staff will grow. Six of the 8 public library systems (75%) and 80 of the 104 independent public libraries (77 %) have staff who are participating or who have participated in Institute classes, a total of 541 individuals.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES WITH ONE OR MORE STAFF ATTENDING INSTITUTE CLASSES (1 January 1997-2 February 2001)

Population Served	Total Number of Libraries	Libraries with One or More Staff Attending Classes	% of Libraries with One or More Staff Attending Classes
>25,000	5	4	80%
10,000-24,999	16	12	75%
5,000-9,999	15	13	87%
2,000-4,999	30	22	73%
<2,000	38	29	76%

These participating libraries are spread geographically across all areas of the state, from the westernmost county in the panhandle to the far southeast corner. Of the 77 counties in the state, only 8 do not have libraries with staff participating in the Institute.⁵¹

Assessment and change in the Certification Program and the Institute

The Certification Program and the Institute have been assessed on an ongoing basis since they were initiated, with surveys conducted in 1996 and 1999 and focus groups of participants held around the state in January 2001. Changes have been made in the institute classes in response to participant feedback. In spring 2001, the Certification Board, in conjunction with the ODL Certification Specialist and in consultation with program participants and others in the Oklahoma library community, revised the structure of the certification program and institute classes and added an advanced institute comprised of 8 advanced level classes. The new structure became effective in August 2001, following approval of the revised structure by the OLA and ODL Boards. The advanced level classes may be used for continuing education credits applied toward certification renewal or, if completed in total in three years, used to earn a designation of “with distinction” to Level I, II, and III Certificates.

Evaluation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program and the Institute in Public Librarianship

“It opens up a whole new world to you ...”

The in-depth evaluation of the Certification Program and the Institute was focused on four areas related to the original goals of the program. Following review of the available documentation, including extensive factual and statistical data prepared for this evaluation by the ODL Certification Specialist, data were gathered from Institute participants through a web-based survey, from both the participants and others in the library community in focus groups held in various areas of the state, and through interviews. The methodology of this part of the evaluation is described in Part IV of this report and further detailed in Appendix 6.

The evaluation data presented here concern effectiveness of the public librarian certification program, with emphasis on the Institute in Public Librarianship. The survey and focus group experiences were designed to assess impact of the program on individuals, educational activities, libraries, and patrons. Specifically, we explored changes in 1) individual philosophy and self-concept; 2) attitudes toward continuing education and professional organizations; 3) library administration and support; and 4) direct service to the library's constituents. The strongest testimony to the impact of the program is found in the words of the participants themselves. Their comments, taken from the comments on the survey and the transcripts of the focus group sessions, are quoted in italics in the sections below.

Impact on individual philosophy and self-concept

“Before coming into a public library to work I didn't give a thought one way or another to whether or not the people who worked there were professionals or clerks from the 7/11. It just hasn't been a consideration. I think this training gives anybody who doesn't come from a library science background a much better idea - a feeling that their job is more professional. It's more than just scanning books and putting books away. It's a whole lot more than that. And I think it [the certification program] helps you realize the importance of behaving as a professional. We can be friendly and we can know our patrons but we need to do our jobs in a professional manner if we want respect.”

Survey data suggested that the program has had a striking impact on how the participants think about themselves and their work. They consider themselves more knowledgeable (94.4%), more effective (83.2%), more confident (79.8%), more professional (78.7%), and more efficient (78.7%). These effects were repeated throughout the focus group sessions. Confidence and validation (reaffirming) were two outcomes that frequently were offered by focus group respondents. These were voiced either explicitly (“I have more confidence that I can find the answer.”) or implicitly (“I would never have done this before.”) “Comfortable” was also an adjective that was used, as well as “feeling of accomplishment.” “I feel more professional in my job” was a response that was repeated.

One especially strong effect of the increase in confidence has been growth in the quality and volume of communication activities at all levels. The participants appear to be much more aware of themselves as members of a professional community and network accordingly. They now know whom to call with a problem (84.3%), are more comfortable calling someone from another library (75.3%), and are more likely to call on ODL staff for assistance (68.5%) and to network with other librarians (68.5%). In addition, the participants reported being more comfortable dealing with the public (73%), with their supervisors and administrators (69.7%), and with their library boards (52.8%). Increased networking opportunities and the benefit of sharing ideas was mentioned most frequently in focus group sessions as a major impact of the certification program. In

addition, focus group participants also mentioned increased activity in grant writing and increased confidence in making presentations for community groups.

“I had to do a talk at the Head Start program a few weeks ago and some of the statistics I learned in that [an IPL class] helped me with my talk because I wasn’t aware that Oklahoma children were so behind other states. I don’t know if I would have got up and said anything in front of all of them. They started asking questions about the library...And so they volunteered the Head Start parents to start reviewing the books. And they said, this is the way to help your children. If I had not gone to the Head Start meeting they wouldn’t have known that. Everything kind of interacts, I think.”

In addition to affective outcomes, the majority of survey respondents (74%) indicated that their participation in the public librarian certification program has had a major impact on some aspect of their careers. As might be expected, the greatest impact on individual careers has been in the area of job satisfaction. Nearly half (48.3%) of the survey respondents indicate an increase in job satisfaction. For some, there have been salary increases (22.5%), additional planning responsibilities (18.0%), additional supervisory responsibilities (14.6%), and improved evaluations (13.5%). There has been negligible perceived effect on promotion (5.6%) or transferability (4.5% in the same library, 2.2% to a different library).

Focus group discussions in this area tended to bear out the survey findings. Certainly, the increase in job satisfaction and the enthusiasm for the profession resonated throughout these conversations. In these discussions, the career-related issue that arose most frequently and most negatively was lack of impact on salary. The groups were somewhat cynical about certification having any impact on salary scales. Some felt that certification would carry more weight if it were required, drawing parallels to electricians and plumbers who worked for their towns. Others, even those who felt very positively about their own experiences, were strongly opposed to mandatory certification. They did not feel the certification would have any effect on salaries and they specifically did not want to be in classes with people who were there under duress.

The impact on career may well be related to findings regarding perceptions of others. The survey findings indicated that the respondents feel that the certification process has made a difference in how others perceive them, either as more professional (77.6%) or as more knowledgeable (75.3%). ODL development consultants noted that they could discern a distinct difference in the nature of questions posed by certified librarians and those who had not attended the institute, with more basic procedural questions from non-certified librarians. Members of the Public Library Directors Council commented on the team-building effects of certification and noted that participation in certification by their staff “lifts their self-esteem and gives them better understanding of what we’re doing and it takes down that wall.” Further they observed that participants in certification “no longer felt like outsiders.” Focus group participants echoed these positive perceptions when speaking of colleagues and peers. But when asked specifically to comment on impact on the perceptions of external constituencies, however, most of the focus group

respondents felt that boards, city managers, and patrons were largely ignorant of the nature of certification. With a few notable exceptions, they did not feel that there was any change in perception. It should be pointed out that this problem of professional recognition extends to the Master of Library and Information Science as well. The profession's failure to inform external constituencies of the nature of librarianship and the knowledge base necessary for excellent service is not limited to certification.

"I think if you had your certificate hanging on the wall behind the circulation desk, I think it would show the patrons that come in that you were interested in your job and you did pursue further education toward that end. And maybe they would have more respect for the library and the personnel. It is just like going into a doctor's office. If he has his degree hanging up there on the wall, you feel a little more comfortable."

Attitudes toward continuing education and professional organizations

"I want to broaden my horizons. I want to learn more. There are better ways to do things and if you don't participate ...you are not going to learn this. The more you learn, the more you realize there is to learn."

The Institute in Public Librarianship appears to be a factor influencing plans for continuing education – 34.8% plan to attend workshops and classes for purposes not related to certification, whereas 75.3% plan to attend workshops and classes for purposes related to certification. The presence of the requirement for renewal of certification every three years provides incentive for continued growth and development. Records indicate that nearly 90% of certified librarians renew their certificates by completing continuing education credits. Focus group participants were enthusiastic about having completed the basic certification and eager to continue with other educational opportunities. There was considerable support for the new organized plan of advanced courses that build on the basic level courses offered for initial certification.

It is impressive that the Institute for Public Librarianship has been incorporated into an overall plan for education and training within the state and certification has clearly enhanced demand for continuing education opportunities. The program is a joint project of the state department of libraries (ODL) and the state library association (OLA). OLA continues to offer a variety of workshops. Ginny Dietrich, ODL Certification Specialist, reports that "not counting certification, we (ODL) are doing at least 40% more training in the past 5 years." The training that is offered is on more sophisticated and topical subjects. The ODL consultants have noted that the IPL can now handle basic skills training that used to be provided on a one-to-one basis. One remarked on this feeling of synergy: "I think with the certification I have the feeling that here is a whole big effort being put into it that is beyond my personal efforts. And it is a big help. And I think it [certification] is paying off in that respect."

Influence on participation in professional associations is mixed. Of those responding to the survey, 36% had attended a conference before participation in the IPL and 38.2% had never attended a conference. Only 14.6% of those who have not received one of the grants to support conference attendance have done so since participating in the IPL and 18% take a more active role in conferences. While 31.5% were members before participation, 40.4% still are not members of any professional associations. Only 11.2% who did not receive a grant to support membership have joined since participation. Of those who are members, 11.2% take a more active role since participating in the certification program.

The proportion of those participating in the survey who have not yet joined a professional association and the small group joining without financial support suggests that the program has not had the kind of effect on participating in the professional associations that might have been envisioned in the design of the grant program. Focus group responses suggest reasons. Some barriers are institutional. Smaller independent libraries may offer no support for staff to join associations or attend conferences, either in terms of money for registration and travel expenses or with time. In larger libraries and systems, conference travel funds are reserved primarily for higher ranking or MLIS librarians. In some small libraries, there is no one to keep the library open and no money to hire a substitute unless the librarian wishes to pay for such a substitute out of her own pocket. Some of the barriers are personal: library managers may be reluctant to travel or to spend time away from spouses or children. One librarian who had attended a national conference on grant funding thought that the experience was worthwhile, but specifically said that she would not spend family money or even take vacation time. Yet for some librarians, the experience of attending conference is profound. One librarian who had never traveled and had never spent the night away from her husband attended a national conference with another librarian, both of them supported by the grant. This year, they will attend another national conference and are taking extra time to visit other libraries and to see the ocean.

The conference and membership grant program has provided the participants with the opportunity to engage in these activities. Those who have taken advantage of the opportunity have remarked on the broader understanding and practical knowledge gained from conferences and membership journals. Nevertheless, professional organizations at both the state and national levels continue to be viewed as continuing education providers rather than professional representatives who shape policy, and participants continue to view themselves as audience rather than policy makers or planners. It may be that this emphasis is a result of the manner in which questions were asked in both the survey and the focus group sessions. There is some indication that the participants still worry about being regarded as second-class citizens in groups they perceive as dominated by MLIS librarians.

Regardless of interpretation of responses regarding professional organizations, there is certainly evidence that participants are thinking more broadly about their roles and about the context of library service. One consultant noted that “We had record attendance for

the last legislative day. I think that's directly attributable to certification." The increase in confidence as well as the increase in knowledge noted above as changes resulting from the certification program and the institute are likely factors that have contributed to increased willingness to participate in this kind of professional activity.

"You come out and say, I want to go home and do that. ... It inspired me to do something I had not done before."

The ODL Certification Specialist framed the changes from a long-term perspective: "It's going to spread. People now know people at OLA. They were shy and didn't meet people or speak to them there. This year --- is an OLA committee chair. It takes a while, but it's making a difference. Six years is not a very long time to see that kind of change."

Library administration and support

"I really appreciate the opportunity to become certified. It not only made me a better manager, it made me a better person. I understand how to do things better instead of just learning it by paper trail."

Survey results indicate that the perceived impact on library administrative processes in any one area is small. 19.1% of survey respondents noted changes in planning. Other processes in which survey results indicated change were budgeting (13.5%), staffing (10.1%), report writing (6.7%), evaluation (6.7%), and scheduling (5.6%). The aggregate changes (72.7% noted change in at least one category) and the comments of those who report change as a result of the program suggest importance beyond the numbers: better and more systematic planning, attention to staff development, evaluation and updating of library policies, and improved staff relationships. An analysis of the focus group comments may offer some additional insight. It is clear that participants with greater management responsibility, chiefly those from smaller independents, observed a greater impact on administrative processes than those who worked in larger systems and had less daily responsibility for administration. Interestingly, one focus group participant noted that her attitude and policies are framed more positively – a change she attributes directly to the IPL classes. Focus group comments relate specifically to greater emphasis on evaluation, assistance in budgeting and establishing priorities through the budget narrative, grant writing (particularly help in structure, wording, and documentation), and participatory management.

"Now we understand the importance of going about all the proper steps in order to take care of those things [planning an expansion]. Before I don't think we probably would have been as organized about it, but now we know we have to get a committee, stuff like that... That's why I said maybe before we might have even gone about it wrong, but having taken those classes you know the steps to take and everything to get this done."

The perceived impact on support for the library has also been small, whether in staff salaries (13.5%), benefits (0%), and working conditions (10.1%) or in collaboration with other agencies (19.1%), grant support (15.7%), or local funding (11.2%). However, for 46% of the respondents there was some perceived impact on support for the library. That the program has in some situations assisted in improving support is an indicator that there may be potential for this area of impact to grow. In regard to changes in support, a Public Library Directors Council member predicted that “five years down the road there will be a snowball effect.”

Direct service to the library’s constituents

“Prior to the certification program your workshops were sort of limited...very few on the basics of how and why we do things – and primarily the why. ... I think there is a greater appreciation of the entire picture of what the libraries are all about, particularly issues of censorship or nondiscrimination and ...confidentiality.”

“You know, it makes all the sense in the world, but until somebody points it out to you, it’s just not a logical assumption when you walk in the door that library patrons have confidentiality.”

There are two components to the service question: the *structural* element and the *qualitative* element. The structural element was addressed in the survey with questions regarding increases in the number of services or improvement in services. Changes in services reported included expansion of outreach programming, expansion of young adult programming, addition of baby lap time story hours, creation of web sites and initiation of web services, more professional service, and weeding to improve collection access. Focus groups also reported an increase in programming. There is a sense that they offer more services and that they feel they are more competent, especially in using electronic reference sources. Programming and Internet classes for patrons seem to be the most frequently mentioned specific differences. Outreach was mentioned – “*You are not just four walls anymore.*” Participation in certification was viewed by some focus group participants as a means of moving toward structural improvements – as one step in qualifying to join a library system and thus to broaden the service opportunities beyond that of an independent library.

While the focus group participants paralleled the survey findings in terms of structural differences, they were much more emphatic about the effect of the certification program and IPL classes on service philosophy, approaches, and qualitative impact. They evidenced a new appreciation for customer service and intellectual freedom principles.

“Probably the most important new idea is one in customer service, which is our first priority. And we always ask, can I help you? And now my staff does not say that. They approach the patrons with, how can I help you? And that has been such a wonderful change.”

“And then the other thing that I have learned from the certification classes was that in my opinion there shouldn’t be a customer that comes into your library and doesn’t go away with a full glass of information, the information that he came to find. That with the information that we have available through the computers that everybody should go away happy.”

Summary

The ODL Certification Specialist summarized the impact succinctly: “They’re networking...they’re learning...they’re getting a bigger perspective of library service.”

The certification program, comprised of the Institute for Public Librarianship and continuing education requirements, acts in a synergistic manner with other educational activities within the state, enhancing appreciation for continuing education, providing a strong foundation in basic skill areas, and allowing for more advanced and issue oriented programs offered in other venues. Beyond the direct impact of the actual certification program, there is evidence that the sponsorship of the program by ODL has assisted local public libraries in getting further support from their boards for staff training and continuing education expenses through the importance of such activities signified by ODL sponsorship.

The Institute for Public Librarianship has had a significant impact on individual knowledge levels, self-concept, and service attitudes. Institute participants have an enhanced sense of professional community grounded in shared experience and leading to active support and a lively exchange of ideas. Individual growth has translated into direct improvement in library service to the state’s citizens.

“I think that one thing the certification program does for people like me who are not library science degreed people is it gives you the idea about professionalism about your job. I think a lot of people don’t look at library staff as professionals; I think we all should be. It would be nice if everybody had a degree in library science but we don’t. It’s a step in between, I think. It makes people think more professionally about their jobs and maybe take it more seriously.”

In assessing the effectiveness of the Certification Program for Public Librarians and the Institute in Public Librarianship in moving toward the goal to

“stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries of diverse geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and to people with limited literacy or information skills,”

it is clear that these programs have had a positive impact on public library service in the state. It is also clear that the structure and implementation of the programs promise to continue progress toward excellence. The themes that permeated the survey data and the

focus groups -

- increased knowledge and confidence
- increased contacts and networking, with participants and Institute instructors, and
- changes in attitude and delivery -

all suggest not only improved service in the short term at the local level but also a potential for change in the library community overall, a cumulative raising of the level and quality of service throughout the state. The responsiveness of the Certification Board and the ODL Certification Specialist in the ongoing evaluation of the design and implementation of the programs and their recent revision further support this interpretation. Of all the uses of LSTA funds considered in this evaluation, one could argue that the investment in these related programs has been among the most effective in changing the overall quality of public library service, particularly in the small libraries of the state that constitute the great majority of delivery points for library service in Oklahoma.

PART IIB: THE STATEWIDE INFORMATION DATABASES PROJECT

Background of the Oklahoma Statewide Database Program

The need for statewide support for database services for Oklahoma libraries was recognized as early as 1996. In response to an Oklahoma Department of Libraries Steering Committee recommendation addressing equity of access, an explicit statement of support for a statewide database license was included in the ODL strategic plan.⁵² An amendment to the Fiscal Year 1996 Library Services and Construction Act recommended budget proposal for ODL included \$125,000 to support a statewide license for full-text magazine and journal databases.⁵³ The FY 1997 Oklahoma state legislature appropriated \$125,000 for a statewide license for full-text databases; the FY 1998 budget request asked for an increase of \$200,000 for a total of \$325,000. An initial site license for FirstSearch database services was approved through an agreement with the Oklahoma State Regents Higher Education for April 1997 through April 1998, with database services for February and March 1997 provided at no charge. Access was provided through OneNet, Oklahoma's telecommunications and information network for education and government. Total funding for the initial site license included \$125,000 in state funding and \$200,000 in LSCA funding.⁵⁴ Training in use of the databases began in April 1997.⁵⁵

The site license was renewed and expanded in 1998 with funds totaling \$575,000, including \$325,000 from the state and \$250,000 from Library Services and Technology Act funds.⁵⁶ The expanded site license agreement included both FirstSearch and SearchBank databases. SearchBank was renamed InfoTrac in 1999. An additional \$75,000 was allocated by the state in 2000 to address database cost increases.⁵⁷ The FY 2002 ODL budget request included \$750,000 for statewide database licenses.⁵⁸ Beginning in FY 2002, the funding for the statewide databases program approximately 65 percent of the funding (\$675,000) is provided through money appropriated by the state legislature and the remaining 35 percent (\$368,016) comes from LSTA funding.

Evaluation of the Statewide Database Program

The in-depth evaluation of the statewide database program was focused on issues of access to databases provided via the statewide site license, efforts by libraries to promote use of the databases and educate patrons in database use, patron demand for the databases, awareness of sources of funding for the database program, impact of the database program on local funding allocation, staff training in database use, and the overall impact of the statewide database program on database use. Data for the evaluation were gathered in a mail survey with follow-up focus groups. In addition to the areas of focus, the survey questionnaires requested general demographic data.

Differences in the nature of the demographic data sought from differing types of libraries resulted in a decision to distribute four separate questionnaires for 1) public libraries, 2) academic libraries, 3) special libraries, and 4) elementary and secondary school library media centers. Copies of the questionnaires and cover letters are provided in Appendix 7.

The target population for distribution of the survey questionnaires was those libraries identified as subscribers to the statewide database program site license. Questionnaires were distributed to all subscribing public, academic, and special libraries. The sheer volume of subscribing school library media centers led to a decision to distribute questionnaires to a random sample of approximately one-third of the participating school library media centers. Further details of the methodology are described in Part IV of this report.

Survey Results Summary

Response Rate

Questionnaires were distributed to 199 public libraries, 70 academic libraries, 85 special libraries, and 322 school library media centers. Usable responses were received from 125 public libraries, 43 academic libraries, 35 special libraries, and 61 school library media centers, for a total of 264 valid responses. Response rates are summarized in Appendix 8. Although the overall response rate of 39 percent is relatively low, the response rates for all types of libraries except school library media centers are substantial enough to support a sense of confidence in the representative nature of the results.

Demographic data for the 61 school library media centers from which questionnaires were received suggest that they are reasonably representative, although smaller school systems are less well represented than large or medium-sized school districts. The consistency of the results also lends credence to the assumption that the school library media centers from which questionnaires were received are reasonably representative. Any interpretation of the results for school library media centers should reflect the low rate of return for school library media centers.

Response Rates

Type of Library	Number of Questionnaires Sent	Number of Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate
Public	199	125	62.81%
Academic	70	43	61.43%
Special	85	35	41.18%
School	322	61	18.94%
Total	676	264	39.05%

Baseline Data

The first section of the questionnaire asked for demographic data, including the number of employees of the library, the year in which the library initially registered for the Statewide Information Databases, the size of the library's service population, the nature of the library's Internet connection, the number of workstations available for patron use, and whether home or office access is provided to library patrons. These data can be used to assess the extent to which the libraries for which data were provided are representative of libraries within each type-of-library group.

Year of Registration

Most of the libraries from which data were gathered registered for the Statewide Information Database program in 1997, the initial year of the program. Overall, 64 percent of the respondents registered in 1997, 15 percent registered in 1998, 13 percent registered in 1999, 6 percent registered in 2000, and 2 percent registered in 2001. The only type of library for which a majority of respondents registered later than 1997 was school library media centers; 42 percent of reporting school library media centers registered in 1997, 20 percent registered in 1998, 20 percent registered in 1999, 14 percent registered in 2000, and 4 percent registered in 2001.

Internet Access

An overwhelming majority (83 percent) of respondents gain access to the Statewide Information Databases via a fixed IP address. There was no systematic difference in type of Internet connection among types of libraries.

Home or Office Access

Although a decisive majority of respondents provide home or office access to the Statewide Information Databases, there are systematic differences among types of

libraries. While 85 percent of public libraries and 91 percent of academic libraries provide home or office access, 54 percent of special libraries and 45 percent of school library media centers provide home or office access. Respondents were not asked to explain their provision of home or office access. The lower home or office access rates for special libraries and school library media centers may reflect differences in mission but may also be a result of differences in technological capacity.

Promotion, Education, and Demand

Questions 6, 7, and 8 addressed issues of promotion of the Statewide Information Database program, approaches to patron education, and the impact of the databases on patron demand for staff assistance.

Promotion

A clear majority of respondents reported use of one or more methods of promoting use of the Statewide Information Databases. Special libraries were somewhat less involved in promotional activities than were public libraries, academic libraries, and school library media centers. The most prominent forms of promotion were Web pages (136 libraries), bibliographic instruction or information literacy sessions (119 libraries), bookmarks (114 libraries), local media (110 libraries), and signage (92 libraries).

Instruction

Most respondents reported one or more approaches to providing patron instruction in the use of the Statewide Information Databases. One-on-one sessions were overwhelmingly the most frequently employed instruction method; 214 libraries reported use of one-on-one sessions. Other frequently reported methods included training sessions (115 libraries), handouts (96 libraries), and Web pages (60 libraries).

Patron Demand

A slight majority of respondents (52 percent) reported that patron demand for staff assistance had increased since implementation of the Statewide Information Databases. There was a systematic distinction between public and academic libraries, in which clear majorities reported increases in demand, and special libraries and school library media centers, in which majorities reported that demand for staff assistance had not changed. Only 3 three percent of respondents reported that patron demand for staff assistance had declined since implementation of the Statewide Information Databases.

Funding

Questions 10, 11, and 12 addressed assessment of respondent knowledge of the funding base for the Statewide Information Databases program and the impact of the program on local fund allocation.

Funding for the Statewide Information Databases Program

Funding for the Statewide Information Database is provided through a combination of allocations from the state legislature and support from the Library Services and Technology Act, which is administered by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education plays an administrative role but provides no funding for the program. A distinct majority of respondents (204 libraries) recognized the role of ODL in funding the Statewide Information Database program, but only a small minority (38 libraries) explicitly identified the role of LSTA; public library respondents were substantially more aware of the role of LSTA than were respondents in other categories. The contribution of the Oklahoma state legislature was recognized by 70 libraries. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was identified as a funding source by more than half of the academic library respondents (22 libraries). The Oklahoma State Department of Education, which has no role in funding the program, was identified as a funding source by more than a third of the school library media center respondents (21 libraries). These systematic misconceptions on the part of respondents from academic libraries and school library media centers suggest a need for an expanded informational process. Local support was reported by 33 libraries; this may be a matter of confusion regarding sources of funding in libraries that provide access to databases other than those funded by the Statewide Information Database program.

Impact of the Statewide Information Database Program on Local Reallocation

A substantial number of respondents (105 libraries) indicated that the Statewide Information Database program has resulted in no reallocation of funds previously expended on access to databases. The probable interpretation is that those respondents provided no database access prior to implementation of the Statewide Information Databases. Of those respondents who reported reallocation of funds, 99 used the reallocation to purchase additional print resources, 91 provided access to additional databases, 31 provided additional patron-access computers, 8 provided extended library hours, and 7 increased the number of library staff members assisting patrons.

Role of the Statewide Information Databases in Obtaining Additional Funding

The results of this study indicate that the Statewide Information Database program has had a variable impact on library success in obtaining additional funding. A positive impact on additional funding was reported by 8 percent of public libraries, 5 percent of academic libraries, 12.5 percent of special libraries, and 20 percent of school library media centers.

Staff Training and Use of the Statewide Information Databases

Questions 14 and 15 addressed the number of staff who had received training in the use of the Statewide Information Databases and the number of staff who use the databases on a regular basis. A majority of public library, special library, and school library media center respondents indicated that fewer than 5 staff members had received training, while 57 percent of academic library respondents indicated that 5 or more staff members had been trained. The same pattern was observed for the number of staff members using the databases on a regular basis: 66 percent of academic library respondents reported that 5 or more staff members use the databases on a regular basis, but a majority of respondents in the other library categories indicated regular use by fewer than 5 staff members.

Database Use

Respondents were asked to rate their libraries' rate of use of databases prior to and subsequent to registering for the Statewide Information Database program. The results indicate that 47.5 percent of public libraries, 21 percent of academic libraries, 45.7 percent of special libraries, and 51.7 percent of school library media centers made no use of databases prior to implementation of the Statewide Information Databases. Use prior to implementation of the Statewide Information Database program was categorized as heavy or moderate in 22.5 percent of public libraries, 53.5 percent of academic libraries, 28.6 percent of special libraries, and 17.2 percent of school library media centers (no school library media center reported heavy use).

Only 6 respondents reported no database use subsequent to implementation of the Statewide Information Databases. Heavy or moderate use was reported by 70.2 percent of public libraries, 90.6 percent of academic libraries, 57.1 percent of special libraries, and 63.8 percent of school library media centers. Reported heavy or moderate use increased by 47.7 percentage points for public libraries, 37.1 percentage points for academic libraries, 28.5 percentage points for special libraries, and 46.6 percentage points for school library media specialists.

Database Use and Importance

Question 18 provided a grid in which respondents were asked to assess each of the databases provided by the Statewide Information Database program in terms of forms of use prior to registering for the Statewide Information Database program, volume of use prior to the Statewide Information Database program, volume of use subsequent to registering for the Statewide Information Database program, and the usefulness of the database. For most databases a majority of respondents reported no use of any kind prior to the Statewide Information Database program. The only databases for which a

majority of respondents reported some form of use prior to the Statewide Information Database program were *Books in Print* and *World Almanac*, both of which were used primarily in their print form prior to the Statewide Information Database program. A substantial number of respondents, accounting for 25 percent of those who reported use of *Books in Print* prior to the Statewide Information Database program, reported use on CD-ROM. A small number of databases were in use frequently enough prior to the Statewide Information Database program to merit mention. Access to *ERIC* was provided in CD-ROM or on-line form in 63 percent of responding academic libraries, 34 percent of public libraries, and 23 percent of special libraries. Access to *Expanded Academic ASAP* was provided in 35 percent of academic libraries and 17 percent of special libraries. Digital access to the *GPO Monthly Catalog* was provided in 36 percent of academic libraries. *Health Reference Center Academic* was available in 16.5 percent of public libraries and in 22.5 percent of special libraries. *MEDLINE* access was provided in 33 percent of public libraries, 60 percent of academic libraries, and 54 percent of special libraries. *Periodicals Abstracts* was available in 31 percent of public libraries, 20 percent of academic libraries, and 14.5 percent of school library media centers. The *Union List of Periodicals* was available via CD-ROM or on-line in 32 percent of public libraries, 32.5 percent of academic libraries, and 14 percent of special libraries. *WorldCat* access was provided in 22.6 percent of public libraries, 51 percent of academic libraries, and 30 percent of special libraries.

Databases receiving heavy or moderate use by a majority of libraries subsequent to implementation of the Statewide Information Database program include *Books in Print* (52 percent of libraries), *General Reference Center* (58 percent), *Health Reference Center Academic* (52.7 percent), and *WorldCat* (51.5 percent).

Other databases were used more heavily by certain types of libraries than by others. *Electric Library* received heavy or moderate use in 55 percent of public libraries and 62 percent of school library media centers. *ERIC* received heavy or moderate use in 73.7 percent of academic libraries. *Expanded Academic ASAP* received heavy or moderate use in 68.4 percent of academic libraries. *General Business File ASAP* received heavy or moderate use in 63.9 percent of academic libraries. *Kid's Edition* received heavy or moderate use in 59.3 percent of public libraries. Databases rated useful or essential by a majority of respondents included *Books in Print* (77.7 percent of responding libraries), *Electric Library* (67.5 percent), *ERIC* (60.8 percent), *Expanded Academic ASAP* (72.3 percent), *General Reference Center* (74.6 percent), *General Business File ASAP* (51.6 percent), *Health Reference Center Academic* (68.7 percent), *Kid's Edition* (50.9 percent), *MEDLINE* (65.3 percent), *National Newspaper Index* (54 percent), *World Almanac* (64.3 percent), and *WorldCat* (67.4 percent).

Some databases were rated as highly useful in certain types of libraries but not in the aggregate. *ArticleFirst* was considered essential or useful in a majority of public libraries (56.7 percent). *LegalTrac* was rated essential or useful by 57 percent of public libraries. *Periodicals Abstracts* was considered essential or useful by 53 percent of public libraries and 55.9 percent of academic libraries.

Question 19 asked respondents to identify one additional database that should be added to the program if funding were available. Some respondents listed specific databases; others described target areas of need without specific titles. It is worth noting that *Books in Print*, one of the databases provided in the program at the time the survey was developed, was listed by a number of respondents. At the time the questionnaires were distributed, ODL was in the process of renegotiating the contract for the Statewide Information Database program. Some respondents were apparently aware that one of the vendor plans did not include *Books in Print* and used the survey as an opportunity to proactively state their desire for that database.

Perceptions of the Statewide Information Database Program

Section III of the questionnaire was designed to elicit respondent perceptions of various aspects of the Statewide Information Database program. Overall responses indicate a very positive assessment of the program. The program was viewed as enhancing the public image of the library by 94.9 percent of public library respondents, 97.6 percent of academic libraries, 77.4 percent of special libraries, and 82.1 percent of school library media centers. A positive role in decision-making was ascribed to the database program by 87.4 percent of public libraries, 90.5 percent of academic libraries, 82.9 percent of special libraries, and 77.4 percent of school library media centers. The Statewide Information Database program was considered an essential service by 92.4 percent of public libraries, 95.2 percent of academic libraries, 82.9 percent of special libraries, and 87.9 percent of school library media centers. An increase in overall library use was associated with the Statewide Information Database program in 83.5 percent of public libraries, 88 percent of academic libraries, 72.7 percent of special libraries, and 65.7 percent of school library media centers.

Reactions to the role of ODL training in the use of the Statewide Information Databases were varied. A substantial majority (82.8 percent) of public library respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “ODL training in use of the Statewide Information Databases has been critical to our use of the databases,” but only 41.5 percent of academic libraries agreed with the statement. The statement met with agreement from 67.7 percent of special libraries and 66 percent of school library media centers.

Survey results suggest that the Statewide Information Database program plays at least a limited role in support of institutional decision-making. In academic libraries, 44.7 percent of respondents agreed with the statement “Institution administrators use the Statewide Information Databases to support their planning and decision-making.” In the special libraries context, 54.5 percent agreed with the statement “Organization/company administrators use the Statewide Information Databases to support their planning and decision-making.” In school library media centers, 48.2 percent of respondents agreed

with the statement “School administrators use the Statewide Information Databases to locate and identify current information on educational theory and practice.”

Contributions and insights from the focus group discussions

Focus groups were conducted by study team members and were held by type of library: one with the Public Library Directors Council, one with the Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors, one with members of the Oklahoma Health Sciences Library Association, and one with school library media specialists. Further information on the focus groups and the questions pursued with them is in Appendix 7. The discussions in the groups uniformly underscored the assessment the statewide databases program is highly valued by all of the types of libraries.

School media specialists

The school media specialists commented that the databases have improved effectiveness and efficiency in administration of library media programs, particularly through provision of *Books in Print*, which offers them significant support for collection development, and through access to online MARC records, especially for nonprint media, which reduces the technical support needed for in-house cataloging and enables reduced budget allocations for purchased records. Further, they noted that the databases have improved access to information for the school learning community, especially because individual libraries or systems could not afford the range of databases provided through the statewide program. The availability of the statewide databases is helping release local dollars that would have gone to purchase CDs and online access. These reallocated funds allow acquisition of other formats of information, a benefit recognized by local administrators.

The school media specialists also highlighted the improvement in the quality of students’ research enabled by access to databases where information located can be that targeted for specific reading/age/developmental levels. They commented that parents who would deny their children access to general searching on the Internet often allow their children to search the online databases.

Problems cited that impede use of the databases included technical problems (causes of which they could not distinguish as being local or with the database vendors); need for more, in-depth, and local training for school media specialists and for teachers; and lack of awareness and use of the databases resulting from changes in school personnel from year to year. There is also some perception in the elementary schools, among both librarians and teachers, that the databases are resources only for students in secondary education.

The lack of awareness of and confusion about the funding and management of the state database program identified in the survey was strongly underscored in the discussion with the school media specialist group.

Public Library Directors Council

The discussion with the public library directors reflected some of the same issues that were noted in the school media specialist group in regard to lack of awareness of and confusion about the sources of funding for the program. The directors generally agreed that lack of understanding about sources of funding was not specific to the statewide databases program, but rather that it was a more generalized condition among library staff. They further agreed that it was important, not only for staff but also for the end users of the databases, to know the sources of funding in order to foster ongoing communication with decision makers at federal and state levels about the importance of the program to services provided. Suggestions to address this issue ranged from required thank you letters to the appropriate policy makers to more standardized notices concerning funding support on the local interface used by library customers to access the databases. One director noted the importance of stressing to database users that “this is your tax dollars at work.”

In regard to uses of the databases, there was discussion that one frequent use observed was to explore and address personal problems (not a category used in the survey instrument). Others commented on the need to increase awareness among library users that the databases are available, and particularly that (for most public libraries) the databases are accessible from home, reflecting somewhat the observation in the school media group concerning lack of awareness. Need for more staff training in modes that would not require absence from the library was also mentioned, although there was not as much concern regarding training as occurred in the school group.

The directors applauded the statewide databases as “a great equalizer” in ability of public libraries in the state to provide information service.

Oklahoma Health Sciences Library Association members

The participants in this group explained that the generally held perception that ODL is a major funding source for the databases derives from the fact that ODL manages the program and is the point of contact about it; hence, ODL must be paying for the program. However, as was the case with the public library directors, they thought it was important both for library staff and for library users to know the sources of funding. It was further observed that in the health sciences library setting it was especially important for users to be aware that the funding for the databases was not local money, so as to ward off possible criticism of purchase of access to databases that are not related to health care topics.

In the survey results, ranking of importance patterns for health sciences libraries identified high importance for some databases that were assessed as having usage patterns that did not reflect their value assessment. This group explained the differences as relating to the essential nature of some of the databases (*WorldCat*, *Books in Print*, and *Union Lists of Periodicals*) to the operations of the library. This assessment was similar to comments offered in the school media specialist group.

The health science librarians assessed their end users of the databases as likely more independent and needing less assistance than in other types of libraries, primarily because their users have had more access to databases over a longer period of time than in other types of libraries and access databases from a variety of sources. For these same reasons, and because health sciences libraries have had access to critical databases, often at less of a burden on the library budget than in other types of libraries, the statewide databases program was not perceived of as as highly valued as in other types. Due to the restricted nature of their target population and their long experience in training users in database use, training (for users or for staff) was not perceived of as the issue that it was with school and public groups.

The health sciences group would welcome further leadership in database provision by the ODL as a coordinator of the potential for adding on databases, beyond the current program, at local expense but at a negotiated price, as is now done by the academic libraries through the Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors.

Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors

This group, which in the survey reflected the general lack of understanding of the sources of funding for the statewide databases program, attributed their lack of knowledge about funding sources to several factors. First, accurate information on the costs and sources of funding is not clearly explained and easily obtained. Second, the focus on expressing thanks to the state legislature for their support and the request for additional state funding that comes from participation in the Oklahoma Library Association's Legislative Day emphasizes the state portion of the funding, without, for most librarians, a comparable focus on thanking members of the Congressional delegation. Third, the role of the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education as fiscal agent for the database contracts adds to the confusion. Finally, the database program is the first substantial use of federal funds by ODL to support academic library services, and there is not prior experience with use of federal funds administered through ODL for the benefit of this type of library.

Despite the confusion surrounding the sources of support, the group was in agreement that it was vital for the librarians and the library users to be knowledgeable about the funding and to maintain communication with the appropriate state and federal representatives. They noted the need for users to understand "that this is their government at work." Awareness of the role of federal funding is important because "the money may not always be there or be reduced..." Members of the group also noted the need for users to understand that the resources provided are not free (as many think anything available through the Internet is free) but that they are paying for them through the investment of the state and federal government.

As with other types of libraries, in the survey of academic libraries some of the databases were more highly rated in importance than was reflected in the assessment of use. The explanation of the group was similar to that heard elsewhere: some of the databases (*WorldCat* was particularly mentioned) are essential to the functioning of the library although they may not be frequently used by library patrons.

In their assessment of use of the databases in the survey, the academic respondents overall had assessed student use for assignments as outpacing faculty use in instruction or research. This group attributed that pattern to the preference of students for online sources, the availability to faculty of other database resources, and the general pattern of faculty information behavior.

The absence of increased demand for staff assistance commensurate with the increased availability and use of the databases that was reflected in the survey was accounted for by the OCALD members as a result of incorporation of database use into the library instruction program, the increased computer literacy of students, the peer instruction that occurs among students, and the possibility that those needing assistance are not actually using the databases (but doing general Internet searching). One participant also commented on the lag in recasting the concept of service to incorporate the increased need to create web help pages, which at present are not thought of as increased demand for assistance.

The participants interpreted the lower level of concern for additional training that was reflected in the survey comments from academic libraries as resulting from the longer period of experience with databases in academic libraries.

As indicated in the results of the database survey, the academic librarians found the statewide databases program essential to their services. This attitude was summarized in the comment of a member of the OCALD group: "Without this, we'd all be in a world of hurt."

Summary

The statewide information databases program has, without doubt, enabled all types of libraries in the state to move toward the goal of efficiently utilizing "electronic networks and information sources to find current, relevant and accurate information for their customers." As one special librarian noted in her survey comments, "The ODL databases have been incredibly valuable....The library has more to offer, many more kinds of questions can be answered, [users] can avail themselves of more tools, and I, the librarian, look really good!" As noted by the Public Library Directors Council, one of the major benefits has been to the very small public libraries in the state, which have not had the resources needed to provide the information their customers need and would likely never have such access without the statewide databases. A story reported by one of the public library systems directors best illustrates this point:

When customers came in looking for research for college classes, the library manager used to cringe and refer them to a larger library. She would patiently explain how academic libraries are geared to support

curriculum. Recently a woman came in and made that same request, and this time [the librarian] took her over to the computer and right into the electronic databases. The woman found exactly what she needed for her college class. The online databases have equalized information. Now [the librarian] feels her small library is rich in resources!

PART III: OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The observations in this section reflect both the assessments and analysis presented in the overview and those that are separately addressed in Part II of this report.

The most important observation—which is also a lesson learned—is that the federal funding provided through the Library Services and Technology Act has made it possible for the state of Oklahoma, under the leadership of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, to make significant progress in improving the access to information provided to citizens of Oklahoma through libraries, and particularly the access available through public libraries. The consistent effort to bring even the smallest public library (those serving under 2000 people) to a standard level of access to current, relevant, and accurate information through the various automation and Internet access projects and the statewide databases demonstrates a number of lessons:

- It is possible through incremental steps to make substantial progress.
- It may take repeated efforts and projects continued over several years.
- Not every project will be immediately successful.
- Synthesis of projects funded from various public and private sources produces better results than projects that are not mutually supportive.
- Ongoing training projects must accompany projects funding hardware and software improvements.

In regard to the efforts made with LSTA funding to stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries, the assessment of projects directed toward this goal suggest another set of observations.

- In a primarily rural state with a predominance of very small public libraries that will likely never have MLS degree holders as their librarians, it is possible to make an impact on the level and quality of service provided through appropriate and well-designed training. The investment of LSTA funds in the Public Library Certification Program and its associated Institute in Public Librarianship will likely continue to reap benefits beyond the immediate term. The program also enhances the effectiveness of the ODL training and consulting role, in that it raises the assistance and training needed to more sophisticated and professional levels.
- Changing the organizational culture within a community, which is one aspect of the certification program (and related to the conference grants program), requires a longer time frame than an LSTA-funded project, even when it is continued over an entire cycle of authorization.
- Projects that are successful in one year may not be as successful when repeated. For example, the Children At Risk grant project of FY 1999, when repeated in FY 2000, did not garner proposals as ambitious and creative or as numerous in the second year as had occurred in the first, and the resulting expenditure on the

- project was less than half that of the first iteration, although similar amounts were allocated.
- The nature of the reporting structure for competitive grant projects does not provide long term (beyond the duration of the project) impact assessment information that could be useful in overall assessment of the changes effected by LSTA funded projects and in determining the extent to which LSTA funds assist in leveraging local funds. For example, the Children At Risk projects anticipated continuing the projects with local funding, but no reporting structure is required that provides information on whether that occurred.
 - The popularity of some projects that are continued long term (such as the Summer Reading Program) and that public libraries come to expect and rely on (especially the smaller libraries) may militate against flexibility in refocusing efforts in other areas of need or in redirecting funds into new projects addressed to the same area.

As noted in Part II, the Statewide Databases Project provided some very important lessons that can be used effectively in the next five-year cycle.

- It is possible to use LSTA funding to leverage and build state funding for programs that are considered critical (or that become critical once implemented) to provision of information services. State support of statewide databases has increased to 65 percent of the cost of the program, and it has more than doubled in the past two years.
- LSTA funds provide opportunity for a leadership role for ODL for all types of libraries, when such funds are deployed for the benefit of all libraries. To more effectively use this opportunity, however, it is critical that all the types of libraries understand the key role that ODL plays in making LSTA funds available, which suggests attention to how funding sources are recognized at the service delivery point.

Overall, the use of LSTA funding, particularly that directed toward such statewide projects as the Public Library Certification Program and its associated Institute in Public Librarianship and the Statewide Information Databases Program, can be effective in empowering libraries at the local level. The combination of these statewide programs and the grants directed toward raising the capacity of the very small libraries to participate on a more equal level in the provision of information services has woven a successful approach to accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Oklahoma Long Range Plan. There is more that can be done in the next planning and funding cycle of the Library Services and Technology Act, but the direction taken and the proven effectiveness of consistent and coordinated use of funds available hold promise for continued success and progress.

PART IV: REVIEW OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

As indicated in the introduction, this evaluation of the use of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding has been conducted by faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL) during March 2001-January 2002. Faculty members participating in the study were Dr. Kathy Latrobe, Dr. June Lester, Dr. Robert Swisher, Dr. Connie Van Fleet, and Dr. Danny Wallace. Dr. Lester served as coordinator for the study.

The methodologies used in conducting the study are outlined in this section. The details of the methodologies used in the two in-depth evaluations, together with the evaluation instruments, are included in the Appendices.

Overview and Progress in Meeting Goals of the LSTA Long-Range Plan 1997-2002

Background information on the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and the agency's functions and planning and evaluation processes were derived from examination of Oklahoma state statutes and the following key planning documents:

Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan, 1997-2002, submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, March 25, 1997
ODL Process, Executive Summary, A Plan to Redesign Oklahoma's State Library for the Information Age; Adopted by the ODL Board November 1, 1996
 George D'Elia, *Survey of Public Libraries in the State of Oklahoma, Part I. Results by Type of Library and Part II. Results by Size of Population, Final Report*, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, May 1996

To provide an overview of the use of LSTA funding and an assessment of the progress made in meeting goals set in the LSTA Long-Range Plan for 1997-2002, the following categories of documents, made available to the study coordinator in the files of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries or from the ODL web site (addresses noted), were examined and analyzed.

Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board materials

Minutes of meetings and attached documents, including recommended proposals for the annual program under LSTA and the recommended fallback proposals (minutes from 1997 forward available at <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/agency/minutes/boardmin.htm>)

LSTA files, 1998-2001

Oklahoma Department of Libraries FY Blackbook P.L. 104-208 CFDA 45.310

Project proposals from ODL staff
 Program Review Panel evaluations (of proposals) and related memoranda and emails (printed out)
 Announcements and application forms issued for competitive grant proposals (letters sent to eligible libraries and announcement sent to the *Oklahoma Register* for publication)
 Competitive grant proposals submitted
 Evaluations of competitive grant proposals and related memoranda and emails (printed out)
 Contracts issued for competitive grants
 Internal lists of competitive grants awarded with contract numbers and amounts
 General correspondence related to the grants
 Interim and final project reports submitted by grantees receiving LSTA grants and any related communication from ODL consultants
 Oklahoma Department of Libraries Annual Financial and Performance Report
 The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) State Administered Program⁵⁹

In addition, internal ODL budget documents were made available to assist in clarification of the use of LSTA funds.

The following ODL staff members individually provided clarification of materials from the files and assisted in interpretation of various processes and procedures related to the use of LSTA funds:

Susan McVey, Director, Oklahoma Department of Libraries
 Donna Skvarla, Director, ODL Office of Library Development
 Ginny Dietrich, ODL Certification Specialist
 Joe McCree, ODL Business Manager (LSTA Administrator to December 2001)
 Gary Phillips, LSTA Coordinator (beginning December 2001)
 Bill Smart, ODL Accountant.

Analysis of public library annual report data, included in the overview of libraries in Oklahoma, was provided by Cathy Van Hoy, ODL Consultant.

The analysis of use of the LSTA funds by goal, priority, and procedure in general used the designations assigned in the recommended proposal documents submitted to the ODL Board or provided on the project proposals. In instances where there were discrepancies or inconsistencies, the study coordinator made an assignment. The final assignments of projects by goal, priority, and procedure were reviewed by the ODL Director and the Director of the ODL Office of Library Development and are included in Appendix 2.

The categories used for analysis of the extent to which LSTA funds were allocated to competitive grant projects awarded to individual libraries, to statewide projects conducted centrally by ODL, or to centralized services and operation in support of

libraries were derived from the data by the study coordinator. These categories and the assignment of projects to the categories were also reviewed by the ODL Director and the Director of the ODL Office of Library Development and are indicated in Appendix 2.

The initial draft of the overview was submitted to the ODL Director and the Director of the ODL Office of Library Development for their review and suggestions.

In-depth Evaluation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program and the Institute in Public Librarianship

The in-depth evaluation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program and the Institute in Public Librarianship used four methodologies: document analysis, survey, focus groups, and interviews. Background information on this program was gathered from the following documents:

Oklahoma Certification Manual for Public Librarians, November 1995 Approved by the Oklahoma Library Association, February 1996 Approved by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Oklahoma Certification Manual for Public Librarians, Revised Edition, Approved August, 2001 by the Oklahoma Library Association and the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (available at <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/servlibs/certman/index.htm>)

Extensive documentation on the program, including the following information, was prepared for the study group by Ginny Dietrich, ODL Certification Specialist:

- Certificates earned by level
- Certification retention rate
- Institute in Public Librarianship (IPL) participation (complete and class enrollment) by type and size of library and geographic location
- Conference grants by conference, year, recipient, and recipient level
- Lists of all certified librarians and IPL participants by library system and library, categorized by size of population served
- Lists of all libraries with staff participating in the IPL by name and geographic location
- Lists of IPL classes and presenters

Other documents provided to the study team included the following:

- Results of survey of IPL participants in 1996
- Results and analysis of Institute in Public Librarianship Survey conducted Spring 1999
- Results of Certification Survey conducted Summer 1999
- Summary and analysis of focus group comments for focus groups held January 2001 for the review of the structure and content of the certification program and the IPL

Additional information on possible changes in the certification program and the institute was gathered through attendance by study team members at the 3 March 2001 meeting of Certification Board members and past members for the purpose of evaluation of the certification program and at the 19 April 2001 Public Librarians Certification Reception during the Oklahoma Library Association Conference, at which proposed changes were presented and discussed.

Based on the analysis of the available documents and information, a questionnaire to be sent to all Institute participants was constructed. The ODL Certification Specialist and the ODL Certification Associate reviewed the questionnaire and revisions were made based on their suggestions. The questionnaire was administered through a web site. Information about the questionnaire and invitation to complete it were sent via email to all Institute participants or to their library directors with a request to forward the information. The questionnaire and further details are in Appendix 6.

Individuals completing the questionnaire were invited to volunteer to participate in follow-up focus groups. Based on the geographic dispersion of the volunteers, five focus groups were held around the state to pursue issues identified in the questionnaire, to clarify results, and to gather further information. In addition, a focus group of members of the Public Library Directors Council also was asked to comment on the Certification Program and the Institute. Details of the focus group locations and the general questions pursued are in Appendix 6. Following the analysis of the comments from the participant focus groups, a focus group interview was held with the ODL consultants who work directly with the public libraries.

One individual interview of an IPL completer who subsequently had entered an MLIS program was held.

After the information gathered was further analyzed, an in-depth interview was conducted with the ODL Certification Specialist.

The categories used in the evaluation presented above emerged both from the questionnaire and from the comments made in the focus groups. Prior to the preparation of the final report, the ODL Director and the Director of the ODL Office of Library Development reviewed the initial draft of the evaluation of the Certification for Public Librarians Program and the Institute in Public Librarianship to identify any possible misinterpretations or factual misstatements.

Evaluation of the Statewide Information Databases Project

The in-depth evaluation of the Statewide Information Databases Project used three methodologies: document analysis, survey, and focus groups. Background information on this program was gathered from the following documents and document categories:

Materials used by the ODL staff in providing training to library staffs in use of the databases

Contracts for the grants for the databases in the ODL LSTA files

Database of names, locations, contact information of all libraries (and other entities) registered as users of the statewide databases

Susan McVey, ODL Director, provided additional information as requested to help clarify and interpret information in the LSTA files and in the Statewide Information Databases database file.

Survey instruments for each of the four types of libraries (academic, public, school, and special), designed to elicit both factual information about the use of the databases and evaluative information about the importance of the statewide program to the libraries and to their users, were constructed. Each of the four survey instruments was reviewed by individuals with expert knowledge of the conditions and environment of that type of library for clarity of questions, accuracy of predicted time for completion, and appropriateness of terminology used for the specific type of library. The surveys were then revised based on the comments of these experts.

The surveys were sent to all academic, public, and special libraries or similar entities (such as state agency departments) registered for use of the databases. A random sample of approximately one-third of the school libraries registered was drawn and the school library survey was sent to those. Cover letters accompanied the surveys. Those sent to academic libraries were signed by the ODL Director and the Chair of the Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors,⁶⁰ and those to school libraries were jointly signed by the ODL Director and the Head of Library Media for the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Cover letters to public libraries and special libraries were sent from the ODL Director. Copies of the surveys and the letters are in Appendix 7.

After initial analysis of the surveys, focus groups were held with members of the Public Library Directors Council, the Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors, the Oklahoma Health Sciences Library Association,⁶¹ and a select group of school library media specialists. Discussions with these focus groups pursued clarification and interpretation of the findings from the surveys and also solicited additional information and comments. Further information on the focus groups and the issues pursued is located in Appendix 7.

¹ *Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan, 1997-2002*, submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, March 25, 1997.

² Demographic information is based on 2000 census figures reported in U.S. Census Bureau, *American FactFinder* at <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet> and *State and County Quick Facts* at <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet> (accessed 7 January 2002).

³ "Public Libraries and Library Systems, Table 3-Collection and Staff," *Statistics of Oklahoma Public and Institutional Libraries, July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997), 19-23.

⁴ "Institutional Libraries, Table 1-Income," *Statistics of Oklahoma Public and Institutional Libraries, July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997*, 29-30.

⁵ It could not be verified that all of these institutions had libraries, but the majority did.

⁶ This number of special libraries is based on the listings in *American Library Directory, 1997-98*, 50th ed., vol. 1 (New Providence, NJ: Bowker, 1997). Included in this count are armed forces libraries, government libraries, law libraries, medical libraries (not in academic institutions), and religious libraries.

⁷ "Special libraries" are defined as "any library, whether open to the general public or not, that is supported in whole or in part by public funds and which ... are operated within or as an integral part of a publicly supported institution, ... that cater to a special clientele...[or] that are concerned primarily with materials on a special subject that are not "operated as a part of any university, college, school, museum, the Oklahoma Historical Society and county law libraries." Oklahoma State Statutes, §65-1-104.

⁸ Oklahoma State Statutes §65-3-105.

⁹ *Ibid.*, §65-42.

¹⁰ A description of the process, the list of participants, and the resulting recommendations and plans for change in the roles and structure of ODL are available in *ODL Process, Executive Summary, A Plan to Redesign Oklahoma's State Library for the Information Age; Adopted by the ODL Board November 1, 1996* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996).

¹¹ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, "ODL Board Minutes, March 25, 1997," accessed 24 April 2001. <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/agency/minutes/970325mn.htm>.

¹² *Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan, 1997-2002, Submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, March 25, 1997* ([Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997]), 13.

¹³ The complete text of the goals, priorities, and procedures is in Appendix 1.

¹⁴ The LSTA funds allocated in one fiscal year must be obligated by September 30 and expended by December 31 of the fiscal year following the year of receipt of the funds, unless special permission is received to extend.

¹⁵ ODL has sometimes used outside reviewers on the competitive grants proposals, although none have been used in the 1998-2001 time period.

¹⁶ The projects for 2001 (and the 2001 "Fallback" projects) are based on the allocations made or, where projects have been completed, on the adjusted expenditure amounts. It is possible that some of the projects will not be implemented, but as of this writing the allocated funds have not been released.

The cost of this evaluation study, which has been supported with LSTA funds, is not included in this analysis, inasmuch as it does not relate to the Long Range Plan and its goals, priorities, and procedures.

¹⁷ Not all procedures specified in the LRP had LSTA funded projects associated with them during the time period.

¹⁸ The term "statewide" here is not used with the same meaning as that sometimes used in ODL documents. When competitive grant opportunities are announced in the *Oklahoma Register*, these are considered "statewide" in that libraries throughout the state are eligible to apply. Should a grant opportunity be targeted to a specific location in the state, regulations require that notice be published in three local papers. All of the LSTA-funded competitive grants have been "statewide."

¹⁹ There were two projects, both in 1999, which were targeted to one eligible recipient and hence could not be placed in any of the six categories. These two accounted for only 0.3 percent of the total funding.

²⁰ 1332 was the number of libraries and agencies registered for use of the statewide information databases at the beginning of this evaluation, not the total number of libraries in the state.

²¹ The project began totally with LSTA funds. Funding of provision of the statewide databases is now approximately 65 percent state funding through legislative appropriations and 35 percent LSTA funding.

²² *ODL Process*, 11.

²³ It was not possible from the reports available to determine with any certainty for how many libraries this was the case.

²⁴ For some libraries Internet connections were delayed until the e-rate funds were available.

²⁵ Actual grant amounts ranged from \$530 to \$5000.

²⁶ Ten of the recipients were institution libraries.

²⁷ Although allocated in FY 2000, this project was implemented in FY 2001.

²⁸ Although this project was implemented in FY 2001, final results of the project are not available at this time (final reports are due May 2002).

²⁹ This project is currently underway. No results of the project are available at this time.

³⁰ This project is currently underway. No results of the project are available at this time.

³¹ The extent to which these intentions were carried out could not be determined from information available.

³² This project has also been called "Children's Program Packets (Kits)" and "Kids' Kits."

³³ Funding supporting this project does not include the salary of the certification specialist who plans and administers the program. Her salary is included in Goal II Priority 1 Procedure 1. If that salary is added to the funding directly supporting this project, the total percentage over the four years would be less than 5 percent, still a very small percentage of the overall funds.

³⁴ *ODL Process, 12 and Library Services and Technology Act Long Range Plan 1997-2002*, 4.

³⁵ Based on the information in public library annual reports in Oklahoma Department of Libraries, "Annual Report Data for Oklahoma Libraries - Fiscal Year: 2001," *ODL Online* at <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/servlibs/annualrep/index.asp>.

³⁶ Based on the listings in *American Library Directory, 2001-2002*, 50th ed., vol. 1 (New Providence, NJ: Bowker, 2001). Included in this count are armed forces libraries, government libraries, law libraries, medical libraries (not in academic institutions), and religious libraries.

³⁷ It is not clear from the information available exactly what a breakdown between private and parochial schools, comparable to the 1997 data, would be. These 155 are schools accredited by agencies other than the State Department of Education (SDE) but by agencies recognized by the SDE.

³⁸ Gates Foundation grants were received by 168 public libraries, including 92 independent libraries and libraries in 7 library systems. Additional information is available at Oklahoma Department of Libraries, "Gates Foundation Grants to Oklahoma Libraries," *ODL Online* <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/fyi/gates> (accessed 26 January 2002).

³⁹ The initial proposal for a state certification plan was approved by the ODL and OLA Boards in the spring of 1993. Information on the background of the Certification Program is drawn from Oklahoma Department of Libraries, "Public Librarian Certification," *ODL Online*, 2000 at <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/servlibs/certify.htm>. There is some difference between the dates in this publication and that reported in the ODL Board Minutes of 24 August 2001 (Oklahoma Department of Libraries, "ODL Board Minutes August 24, 2001," *ODL Online* <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/agency/minutes/010824mn.htm>). The minutes report that the first certification occurred in July 1996 and that classes began August 1996.

⁴⁰ The members of the Certification Implementation Committee and their affiliations are listed in Appendix 3.

⁴¹ *Oklahoma Certification Manual for Public Librarians*, November 1995 Approved by the Oklahoma Library Association, February 1996 Approved by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 3.

⁴² Current members are listed in Appendix 4.

⁴³ The advanced level courses were added in the 2001 revision of the Institute.

⁴⁴ The Certification Program also provides for other avenues to certification, for example at level II through holding of an LTA certificate or and associate's degree or six semester hours of library courses. The requirements for the various certification levels are in Appendix 5.

⁴⁵ In the original implementation of the Institute, some of the classes were offered in independent study mode. This delivery structure, which was problematic for many of the participants, was eliminated in the August 2001 revision.

⁴⁶ The current topical outlines and objectives for the classes are available from the ODL web site at <http://www.odl.state.ok.us/servlibs/certman/certdixa.htm>.

⁴⁷ Current compensations levels are \$600 for development of a class, except for the designing buildings class, which is entirely new, and for instruction, \$300 plus mileage for three-hour classes and \$600 plus mileage for six-hour classes.

⁴⁸ The advanced level classes are Advanced Collection Development Skills, Advanced Management Skills, Advanced Public Library Administration, Advanced Public Service Skills, Analyzing the Community, Designing Safe and Effective Library Buildings, Services to Children and Youth, and Technology Services in Public Libraries. Three are

six-contact-hour classes, five are three-contact-hour classes, for a total of 33 instructional contact hours.

⁴⁹ In the first years of the program the requirement was to be certified or attending Institute classes.

⁵⁰ All participation statistics were provided by Ginny Dietrich, ODL Certification Specialist.

⁵¹ The counties with libraries with no staff participating are Roger Mills, Dewey, Custer, Johnston, Pontotoc, Okfuskee, Okmulgee, and Oklahoma.

⁵² Oklahoma Department of Libraries, *ODL Process Executive Summary, A Plan to Redesign Oklahoma's State Library for the Information Age, September 17, 1996* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 11.

⁵³ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, September 17, 1996 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 2.

⁵⁴ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, January 31, 1997 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997), 2-3.

⁵⁵ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, May 2, 1997 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 2.

⁵⁶ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, February 27, 1988 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 2.

⁵⁷ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, July 28, 2000 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 1.

⁵⁸ Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board, Minutes of Meeting, September 29, 2000 (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1996), 1-2.

⁵⁹ The final report for 2001 was not available at the time of this analysis.

⁶⁰ The Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors includes the directors of libraries in both public and private higher education institutions in the state. The Council was established in December 1997 as a formal advisory body to the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education, with the first meeting held in January 1998. Additional information is available at the OCALD web site at <http://www.okhighered.org/ocald/ocald.html>.

⁶¹ Health sciences libraries constitute the largest group of special libraries using the statewide databases.