

**Library Services and Technology Act:
Five-Year State Plan**

**For Federal Fiscal Years
2013 - 2017**

State of Vermont



Vermont Department of Libraries

LSTA FIVE-YEAR PLAN, 2013-2017

In compliance with the federal
Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)

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INTRODUCTION

This Five-Year LSTA Plan (Library Services and Technology Act) sets forth the needs, goals, activities and measures for administering Vermont's LSTA Program during federal fiscal years 2013-2017. The Plan has been developed according to the specific purposes of the LSTA Grants to States Library Program as stated in 20 U.S.C. 9121 (1-9).

These LSTA purposes provide the foundation for the Vermont Plan:

- (1) to enhance coordination among Federal programs that relate to library and information services;
- (2) to promote continuous improvement in library services in all types of libraries in order to better serve the people of the United States;
- (3) to facilitate access to resources in all types of libraries for the purpose of cultivating an educated and informed citizenry;
- (4) to encourage resource sharing among all types of libraries for the purpose of achieving economical and efficient delivery of library services to the public;
- (5) to promote literacy, education, and lifelong learning and to enhance and expand the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, 21st century skills, and digital literacy skills;
- (6) to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and to recruit future professionals to the field of library and information services;
- (7) to ensure the preservation of knowledge and library collections in all formats and to enable libraries to serve their communities during disasters;
- (8) to enhance the role of libraries within the information infrastructure of the United States in order to support research, education, and innovation; and
- (9) to promote library services that provide users with access to information through national, State, local, regional, and international collaborations and networks.

Activities are aligned with the LSTA Grants to States Priorities:

- 1) expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, and digital literacy skills;
- 2) establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services;
- 3) (a) provide training and professional development, including continuing education, to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership, and advance the delivery of library and information services, and (b) enhance efforts to recruit future professionals to the field of library and information services;
- 4) develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
- 5) target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills;
- 6) target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 9902(2)) applicable to a family of the size involved;
- 7) develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks; and

- 8) carry out other activities consistent with the purposes set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 9121, as described in the SLAA's plan. 20 U.S.C. § 9141(a)(1-8).

Activities in Vermont's Five-Year Plan are funded with a combination of state and federal monies, with state funds used to fulfill mandates for "Maintenance of Effort," and state and other non-state funds for the required "Match" of federal LSTA State Program funds.

VISION STATEMENT

Vermont libraries will be for all Vermonters a hub of lifelong learning, 21st century information, citizen engagement and personal enrichment, offering free, universal, and convenient access that will improve quality of life and strengthen our communities.

MISSION

Guided by [22 V.S.A. §601-635](#), the mission of the Department of Libraries (VDOL) is to collect, organize, and disseminate information and library materials in a variety of formats to the three branches of State government, libraries statewide, the general public, and Vermonters with special needs; to support and strengthen local libraries; to foster new means for statewide cooperation and resource sharing among all types of libraries; and to increase public awareness of libraries and their services and to act as an advocate on their behalf.

- We provide access to information in a variety of formats to the three branches of Vermont State Government in order to contribute to effective and efficient government;
- We provide consultation, training and other services to librarians, public library board members and elected officials and offer resources, services and grants to qualifying libraries in order to strengthen their capacity to deliver quality library service;
- We enable resource sharing between all types of libraries;
- We provide all Vermonters with qualifying visual and physical disabilities access to quality library services and the special format materials they need in order to enjoy recreational reading, to engage in lifelong learning and to improve their economic self-sufficiency.

Inherent in this mission is the Department's advocacy of the right of Vermont citizens to read and have full access to information by ensuring that libraries and their resources are readily accessible to all Vermonters regardless of their geographic location, their level of income, access to technology or disability, and, as the official depository for Vermont state publications, the preservation of the record of Vermont state government for public scrutiny.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In their independent evaluation of Vermont's implementation of the LSTA Grants to States Program for 2008-2012, Library Consultants Himmel & Wilson wrote that "Vermont's next five-year LSTA Plan may be the most important ever written and the selection of strategies that will enable success will be critical."¹ The LSTA State Program provides funding that is absolutely essential to the success and viability of public library service in Vermont and the goals set forth in this plan have been developed with the idea that Vermont libraries are at a crossroads. What programs and services must the Department of Libraries provide to ensure that libraries are able to meet the information and lifelong learning needs of Vermonters? We are in a time of accelerating change when libraries are faced with budget cuts and other economic challenges, an explosion of new and

¹ Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, *An Independent Evaluation of Vermont's Implementation of the Library Services and Technology Act Grants to States Program 2008 – 2012*. p.26 <http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/VTLSTAEvaluation2008-2012.pdf>

emerging technologies, the transition from print to digital media, increased globalization and changing citizen needs and demands. The Department of Libraries recognizes both the challenges and the opportunities inherent in these trends.

The goals and strategies in this LSTA Five-Year Plan have been informed by the research and findings in the Himmel and Wilson Evaluation as well as by the planning process conducted by the State of Vermont which resulted in the *Department of Libraries Strategic Plan, 2012-2015*.² As we examine such issues as workforce development, digital literacy and broadband expansion we know that our libraries have an important role to play in the life of Vermont's rural communities and libraries must be able to deliver the resources and services necessary to support personal enrichment, learning and quality of life for Vermonters of all ages.

Over the next five years we will work closely with Vermont libraries and our partners to develop and implement programs and services designed to meet the 21st century needs of citizens for information access and lifelong learning. But we will need to implement new strategies for advancing and sustaining quality library service in Vermont, particularly in our public libraries. In writing this Plan we had to ask ourselves the tough questions. Is the current system of 183 independent local public libraries sustainable as we move more deeply into the digital age? How do we build strong library leadership in Vermont when there is a desperate need for basic levels of training for library staff? Where do we put our limited resources to get the best return on investment? What do Vermont citizens want and need from their libraries? How does our state library agency make the transition from providing traditional services focused on local libraries to statewide projects with a committed focus on advancing library service on a broad scale? How do we keep our state library agency staff – and the Vermont library community as a whole – digitally literate? And how do we help our libraries incorporate new services and resources such as digital literacy training, early literacy programs, e-government, e-books, and new electronic resources when they are already understaffed and struggling with small and aging buildings?

To keep on track, the Department of Libraries will pay particular attention over the next five years to assessment and evaluation, using surveys, focus groups and other tools to make sure we are reaching the intended audiences and targeted outcomes. Such assessments must include Vermont citizens. As the end users of library services and programs, it is the citizens who will need to show the value of our work and the return on the investment of LSTA federal dollars.

Vermont Overview

Vermont is the 2nd smallest state in the nation with a 2010 population of 625,741³ Demographic projections show that in 2015 Vermont will have a population of 673,169 (at which point it will be ranked the 3rd smallest state, switching places with North Dakota) and in 2030 a population of 711,867⁴ Like other states in the northeast Vermont is growing at a slower pace than the nation as a whole; the U.S. saw a 9.7% increase in population for 2000-2010, in comparison to a growth rate of just 2.8% for Vermont.⁵ According to some criteria Vermont is the most rural state in the U.S.⁶ There is, however, a range of population density. The largest city of Burlington (population 42,417) saw a 9.1% growth rate in 2000-2010. Chittenden County, which includes Burlington, has a population density of 292 persons per square mile, similar to that of Pennsylvania (284); yet Essex County has a population density of only 10 persons per square mile, similar to North Dakota (10). The average density of the remaining 12 Vermont counties is 60 persons per square mile.⁷

² *Vermont Department of Libraries Strategic Plan 2012-2015* <http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/finaldolstrategicplan062012.pdf>

³ <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/popmap/ipmtext.php?fl=50>

⁴ <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/SummaryTabA1.pdf>

⁵ <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/>

⁶ http://www.uvm.edu/crs/reports/2010/vt_small_rural_2010.pdf

⁷ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/50000.html>

The demographics show that age will have a significant impact on the future of Vermont in terms of education, workforce development, health care and the state’s economy. Vermont is an aging state, ranking 7th in the U.S. in the percentage of residents aged 65 and over (2010)⁸ The median age is 41.5 and 14.6% of Vermonters are aged 65 or older. 79.3% of Vermonters are aged 18 years and over and 5.2% of the population is under age 5.⁹

Another significant demographic feature of Vermont is its lack of racial and cultural diversity. 95% percent of the population is white, and though Vermont has had an influx of immigrants from such countries as Nepal, Somalia, Bosnia and Vietnam and 1,676 students (k-12) are enrolled in Title III language programs for non-native English speakers,¹⁰ Vermont is largely homogeneous. The greatest degree of diversity is in Chittenden County, especially in the towns of Burlington (89% white) and Winooski (83% white.) The Fletcher Free Library in Burlington provides computer classes in several languages and offers English language classes.

Tourism is an important part of Vermont’s economy bringing skiiers and others who have seasonal/second homes in the state. Viewing Vermont at a distance through the “tourist” lens, the “look and feel” of Vermont is all wealth and leisure. But the real picture is something different. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the median income of households in Vermont is \$51,841, but 13% of Vermont families earn less than \$25,000.¹¹ (The 2012 U.S. poverty level is \$23,050 for a family of four.) In 2005, 41% of female-headed households in Vermont with children under the age of 5 fell below the poverty level. If that number still holds, the discrepancy between 13% for all families and 41% for single mothers with young children is significant. The Vermont General Assembly's Joint Fiscal Office prepares a report on a biennial basis called: *Basic Needs Budgets and the Livable Wage*. The 2011 report estimates that a family of four with two wage earners living in a rural area needs an annual income of \$76,481 to maintain a "basic needs" budget.¹²

In 2010, 91% of Vermonters 25 years old and over had graduated from high school and 34% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Though high school graduation rates are very strong (the FY11 dropout rate for grades 9-12 was 2.5%), college completion rates are not nearly as favorable. In a report to the Vermont Legislature in 2011, the Vermont PreK-16 Council presented this data:

- “In Vermont, for every 100 ninth grade students:
- 85 will complete high school
- 44 will enter college the following fall
- 33 will return for their second year
- 26 will receive a degree within 150% of normal time
(6 years for a 4-year degree and 3 years for a 2-year degree)”

The PreK-16 Council Report calls for an emphasis on “career awareness and exploration” to underscore the need for post-secondary education.¹³

Education, of course, is critical to having a skilled workforce. Vermont has fared better than some other parts of the country. The Vermont Department of Labor reported in 2011 that “Vermont’s unemployment peaked at 7.3% in 2009. Since late 2009, employment has grown at a higher rate, decreasing the rate of unemployment. Over the last 12 months, both the state and the national unemployment rate have improved modestly with Vermont at 5.7% (July 2011), still considerably less than the national average (9.2%).”¹⁴

⁸ <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0016.pdf>

⁹ <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

¹⁰ Unpublished data from Jim McCobb, Coordinator, Title III Program, Vermont Department of Education

¹¹ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_5YR_DP03

¹² <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo/reports/2011%20Basic%20Needs%20Budget%20Report%202001-2011.pdf>

¹³ <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/reports/2011ExternalReports/265132.pdf>

¹⁴ Vermont Department of Labor, *Economic-Demographic Profile Series, 2011* <http://www.vtlni.info/profile2011.pdf>

STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education is a topic of interest that goes beyond the walls of Vermont schools and colleges. The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Economic Development sponsors an incentive program that gives financial awards to students who take on STEM-related jobs within Vermont, and in a listing of the top occupational short-term projections for Vermont, all but two of the top occupations are STEM-based.¹⁵

Broadband

The State of Vermont has, through strong partnerships and federal funding, planned an aggressive program to reach a goal of statewide high-speed broadband by the end of 2013. Among the partners involved are the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, the Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI), and the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS).¹⁶ As stated in the DPS document *Vermont Telecommunications Plan 2011: Broadband*,

“Vermont can and should pursue a path to achieve the following outcomes by year end 2013:

1. Universal availability of mass-market broadband
2. Universal availability of mobile service along roadways and near universal availability statewide
3. Universal first responder communications
4. Fiber broadband connectivity to all anchor institutions and large businesses
5. Universal adoption and use of broadband at home and work
6. Speeds and pricing for residential broadband on par with national urban areas
7. All customer locations support smart electric meters”

The State of Vermont initiates or encourages programs that increase broadband access and adoption, understanding the vital role high-speed broadband plays in the 21st century, whether in terms of economic and educational opportunities, health care or emergency responsiveness. Thanks to BTOP grants, the Department of Libraries has brought Vermont’s libraries into projects among the anchor institutions.

The Department of Libraries has partnered on two federal BTOP grant projects:

- The e-Vermont Community Broadband Project, under the leadership of the Vermont Council for Rural Development (VCRD) (ended June 2012), offered technology support, training and resources to 24 e-Vermont communities. The grant included \$96,000 for the purchase of computers and other equipment in libraries and provided free computer training for Vermont citizens. (Sustained Broadband Adoption)
- Vermont FiberConnect, under the direction of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (VTA), and in partnership with Sovernet Fiber Corporation, will result in a new 770 mile fiber optic network that will bring up to 1 Gbps of connectivity to over 300 “community anchor institutions,” including 42 public libraries, by mid 2013.
The Department of Libraries received a supporting Opportunity Online Broadband grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; part of this grant is being used to expand e-Rate participation by these 42 libraries.

¹⁵ <http://www.stemconnector.org/sites/default/files/sbs/ASTRA%20STEMEd%20Vermont%202011.pdf>

¹⁶ Vermont Telecommunications Plan: <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/telecom/2011TelecommunicationsPlan.pdf>

Tropical Storm Irene

In August 2011 Vermont was pummeled by Tropical Storm Irene causing much damage due to flooding and heavy winds. The storm affected 225 of the 251 municipalities in Vermont. More than 3,500 homes were affected and an estimated 1,405 households were temporarily or permanently displaced.

Vermont's libraries were remarkably lucky during the storm and most escaped any damage other than temporarily wet basements. The hardest hit was the West Hartford Library which sustained extensive damage and lost 60% of its book collection.

The Vermont Public Library Foundation created a "Library Emergency Relief Fund" for damaged public libraries and has received over \$11,000 in donations from across the country. Many libraries in affected towns stepped up quickly to assist their communities.

This spring the annual Town Officers Education Conference, organized by the UVM Extension office, focused on Irene and the state recovery. As participants in the program, the VDOL provided a workshop on Emergency Preparedness for libraries, looking at both preparing to protect collections and to reach out to their communities. The VDOL also held an Emergency Preparedness program this year as part of our Continuing Education program and will continue to find and implement effective training on preparing libraries for any and all emergencies.

State Strategic Planning

In 2011 Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin launched a strategic planning process for State Government. His goals are listed below; items *in italics* are those areas which have resonance with the work of the Department of Libraries and this LSTA Plan:

- The Economy: Create a brighter economic future for Vermonters by raising incomes, *growing jobs, improving job training*, and improving our quality of life.
- Environmental Conservation and Renewable Energy
- Vermont's Infrastructure: Support modernization and improvements to Vermont's infrastructures, including our electric grid, road network, *telecommunications system*, and waste and storm water systems, to ensure Vermont's long-term economic and environmental sustainability.
- Correctional Recidivism: Implement a sustained *interdepartmental approach to reduce recidivism* and the overall need for corrections resources. Invest corrections savings into *early childhood education*.
- State Government and Employees: Improve the effectiveness of state government through greater accountability, *performance measurement*, customer service, and support of a motivated and healthy workforce.
- Affordable Health Care: Ensure healthy Vermonters *through prevention* and through affordable quality health care for all in a manner that supports small employers and overall economic growth, and that gets us better care.
- Safe Communities/Strong Schools: Prioritize our resources to *ensure our children's future in safe, prosperous communities*, thereby *supporting improvement in the performance* and economic sustainability of our schools.

As part of the State of Vermont strategic planning, the Department of Libraries established goals to:

- Promote digital literacy for Vermont citizens
- Increase the capacity of the Vermont Public Library Foundation to support public libraries
- Position the Vermont State Library to meet the research and information needs of state government
- Increase the capacity of the VDOL to provide services and programs by improving its organizational framework and supporting a well-trained and empowered workforce
- Deploy fiber optic broadband in 42 public libraries and implement a state-funded Wide Area Network for internet service at these libraries
- Support automation projects in those public libraries which are not yet automated¹⁷

Vermont Libraries

Public Libraries

Vermont ranks first in the nation in the number of libraries per capita with 183 public libraries. About 18% of these libraries serve multiple towns and receive tax support from more than one community, but apart from three libraries that have single branches, Vermont libraries are independent and are not part of any system or regional structure. Nearly 100% of public library funding comes from local sources (local tax, fund-raising and endowments); there is no direct state funding for public libraries. Only 31 libraries serve populations of 5,000 or more. (12 of these serve populations greater than 10,000; and just 2 Vermont libraries serve populations greater than 20,000.) In November 2011, 166 libraries reported data to the Department of Libraries¹⁸ and 141 libraries met state minimum standards for public libraries. These standards are meant as a voluntary measure of the essential components of a basic level of library service. The Department of Libraries estimates that 97 % of Vermonters have public library service available to them in their communities or by contract (formal or informal) with another community.

The Department of Libraries offers a certification program for library workers but limited hours of operation and low salaries contribute to a troublesome turnover rate among library staff. 64% of the Vermont public librarians with MLS degrees (56 FTE) work in libraries serving over 5,000. Only 29 of the libraries serving populations under 5,000 have an MLS librarian on staff, and most of those are part-time employees. 42% of all public library staff work in the 31 libraries serving over 5,000 and 65% of all visits and 65% of the circulation occur in these libraries. The 131 libraries serve 53% of the state's population.

Trend data for FY2007-FY2011 shows general increases in library use. Across the state, circulation increased 11% and the use of public computers increased by 24%, but the number of visits declined slightly (-.03%). Tax support increased by 19%. These gains were reflected across the board but the biggest increases came in the smallest libraries (serving fewer than 1,000.) These 35 libraries, located in Vermont's smallest communities, collectively saw a 34% increase in library visits and a 50% increase in circulation.

At the same time, Vermont public libraries have felt the impact of the struggling economy and the devastation from Tropical Storm Irene in communities across the southern part of the state. Libraries report reductions in materials and postage budgets, hours and staffing when library use is increasing (circulation increased by 3% in FY2011, though library visits and the number of registered borrowers decreased slightly.)

¹⁷ Vermont Department of Libraries Strategic Plan 2012-2015 <http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/finaldolstrategicplan062012.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://libraries.vermont.gov/libraries/stats/plstats>

School Libraries/Media Centers

Vermont schools serve 89,428 students Pre-K through Grade 12.¹⁹ This number has been declining since 1997 and given population estimates in the under-18 categories, this is unlikely to change in the coming years. In 2011, Vermont's 346 public school districts²⁰ reported 222 FTE Librarians and 107 FTE school library support staff.²¹

As mentioned earlier, there is a wide discrepancy between Chittenden County (22,229 students) and other counties, with Chittenden making up almost 25% of the state's total student population. Essex County in contrast, has a total of 644 students and Grand Isle County 645. Given the following standards it is easy to see that the smaller school districts in the less populated regions are also less likely to have a school librarian or media specialist.

School librarians serve on the nominating committees, attend conferences and provide supportive programming for the Red Clover, Dorothy Canfield Fisher and Green Mountain book awards in their schools. They also promote the books and awards with teachers and students in their schools. Students read and vote on books and may attend the book award ceremonies.

According to the *State Board of Education Manual*,²² Standard "2120.8.11 Library"

"Each school shall adopt and maintain a written plan that:

- (a) provides for the planned growth of library media resources
- (b) ensures that students, teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals have access to an organized collection of print and non-print materials sufficient and appropriate to support all students in meeting or exceeding the Framework or comparable standards
- (c) provides students access to the library on a regular basis to use materials for reading, research and training in the skills needed to use the library effectively
- (d) ensures that the classroom curriculum is supported by necessary print and non-print materials
- (e) ensures that students are afforded the opportunity to learn the skills to locate, evaluate, synthesize and present information and ideas in the context of specific subject areas
- (f) addresses the selection of library materials and a process for handling complaints."

Further, Standard "2120.8.2(d) Staff" states that,

"The services of a library-media specialist shall be available to students. Schools with over 300 students shall employ a library-media specialist in at least an approximate proportion of the number of students in the school to 300."

The VDOL has asked school libraries to submit annual data reports in the past few years but because such a small number of schools responded, the data is insufficient. The Vermont School Library Association is a very strong organization with active participation by members and provides a variety of educational opportunities. School library personnel are also able to participate in VDOL continuing education programs.

¹⁹ *Elementary/Secondary Public School Enrollment 2011-2012 School Year* (ENRL-12): http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-Data_2011_2012_Public_School_Enrollment.pdf

²⁰ *Summary of the Annual Statistical Report of Schools*: http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-Data_FY2011_Summary_of_the_Annual_Statistical_Report_of_Schools.pdf

²¹ Unpublished data from Jim McCobb, Coordinator, Title III Program, Vermont Department of Education

²² Vermont Department of Education, *State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices* (section 2120) : <http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/rules/2000.pdf>

School libraries lack strong support at the Vermont Department of Education (DOE). The School Library consultant position was eliminated from DOE several years ago and the Department of Libraries does not have the capacity to provide the support that school libraries need and deserve. School librarians play a critical role in literacy and reading support, as well as digital literacy. Vermont's school libraries are strong supporters of the Vermont Online Library and students and faculty are heavy users of these databases. VDOL also offers to school libraries a discount for motion picture public performance rights with Movie Licensing, U.S.A.

Academic Libraries

Vermont has 24 post-secondary degree-granting institutions²³ (6 public, 17 independent and one proprietary culinary institute) with a student population of 44,079 as of 2008. Of these, 45% are Vermonters. Most Vermont academic libraries are members of the Vermont Consortium of Academic Libraries and share resources and participate in collective purchasing projects. Many of the librarians and library directors also participate actively in the Vermont Library Association.

Vermont's academic libraries are strong supporters of the Vermont Online Library and students and faculty are heavy users of these databases.

The University of Vermont (UVM) Libraries' Center for Digital Initiatives (CDI) was established with grant funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). According to the UVM website, the "CDI serves as a resource for creating, preserving, and accessing digital collections by providing state-of-the-art digitization equipment, infrastructure, services, and support. Faculty and staff of the CDI participate in the development of international standards for the creation, description, and discovery of digital content. They research, create and share innovative applications for digital services in the library profession."

CDI has partnered with public libraries in Vermont to digitize local history collections and is a significant digitization center for the state. This Center, designed for "students, faculty, staff, scholars, and community members to participate as users and creators of digital resources in an open, collaborative environment" was forced to reduce staffing when grant funding ended. Though we have not included digitization projects or financial support for the CDI in this Plan, the Department of Libraries is interested in exploring possible collaborative projects and future funding to support the work of CDI.

The Department of Libraries has also worked with UVM on the National Digital Newspaper Project, funded with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize selected content from Vermont's historical newspapers. Both Bailey/Howe Library at UVM and the Vermont State Library house microfilm collections of Vermont's historical newspapers. VDOL staff has worked with the UVM team of librarians on this project and is pleased that so much Vermont newspaper content is now available on the Library of Congress "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers" website.

Interlibrary Loan

The Vermont Automated Library System (VALS) is the state's electronic network connecting public, school and academic libraries across the state to enable interlibrary loan of library materials. VALS includes the Web2 statewide union catalogs. In FY11 the VALS network handled over 49,000 library requests for books and articles for Vermont citizens. The Department of Libraries also maintains an Interlibrary Loan Office at the University of Vermont providing citizens with access to UVM materials via their local libraries. Vermont libraries depend upon the integrity of the Web2 electronic union catalogs (DOLcat, PUBcat, K-12 Cat) managed by the VDOL. As noted in the Himmel & Wilson Evaluation, VALS needs to be replaced with a new

²³ Vermont Higher Education 2009 Data Book: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/rules/2000.pdf>

system. This is a high priority in the Vermont library community and with the Department of Libraries and is a major part of this Five-Year Plan.

Public libraries report that they are struggling to keep up with the postage costs of interlibrary loan. In 2011 an Interlibrary Loan Task Force, appointed by the State Librarian, issued a report²⁴ on interlibrary loan delivery in Vermont and recommended that the State explore implementing a statewide courier service. As more libraries join shared ILS/catalogs, (e.g. the VOKAL Koha and Catamount Evergreen open source networks), we anticipate a steady increase in Interlibrary Loan activity.

Workforce Development and Digital Literacy

Local libraries report increased use of library resources, computers, and staff assistance by citizens looking for jobs, career change, job training, distance education, small business development, and other workforce and economic development activities. The Department of Libraries has partnered with the Department of Labor and the Vermont Small Business Development Center to provide training for public librarians so they are better prepared to help citizens. As a partner in the federal BTOP e-Vermont Community Broadband Project, the VDOL worked with Vermont State Colleges and Community College of Vermont to develop a digital literacy curriculum for trainers, a first step in a larger digital literacy initiative.

Catamount Library Network

The Catamount Library Network is a project begun under the leadership of the Department of Libraries in partnership with five Vermont public libraries. This project was established as the first step toward a statewide shared ILS and is being developed as an open source Evergreen system. Phase I of the project will see the first five libraries go “live” by the end of 2013. The Himmel & Wilson Evaluation showed strong support among the Vermont library community for a statewide shared ILS. The vision of the VDOL is to develop a statewide ILS and a statewide library card, but it will not be easy to move libraries to a consortial environment and overcome the financial challenges of reciprocal borrowing when many public libraries currently charge out-of-town borrowing fees. VDOL hopes that the Catamount Library Network will eventually include all types of libraries. VDOL contracted with the Galecia Group consultants to evaluate both the Koha and Evergreen ILS software programs before choosing Evergreen.

Green Mountain Library Consortium (GMLC) / VOKAL

The Green Mountain Library Consortium, founded in 2007, provides access to goods and services to member school and public libraries, leveraging collective purchasing power. The services and products offered to member libraries currently include Overdrive downloadable audio and e-books, and Mango Languages. VDOL recently awarded the GMLC with a grant of \$10,000 (state general funds) for the purchase of e-books.

The Consortium also sponsors the VOKAL project, a shared Koha ILS with some 30 participating school and public libraries. Because of the success of the VOKAL program, the Catamount Library Network looked closely at both the Koha and Evergreen open source options before settling on Evergreen.

²⁴ <http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/VT-ILL-TF-Report.pdf>

GOALS OF THE VERMONT FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The goals of this Plan were written to be in alignment with the LSTA Purposes.

1. GOAL ONE

Vermont citizens will have access to a wide array of library and information resources made available through networks and other linkages and via resource sharing among all types of libraries.

Aligned with [LSTA Purposes](#) 3, 4, 9 (see page 3)

Addressing Identified Needs:

Given the overwhelming feedback from the Vermont library community in the statewide evaluation produced by Himmel & Wilson, this Goal is given top priority by the Department of Libraries. Both users and the evaluators highlighted the need to upgrade the tools that allow the libraries to effectively locate and share resources.

“ Innovative mechanisms and strategies need to be employed ; move with all deliberate speed to the development of a statewide open-source catalog; Focus consultant work on support for local libraries’ conversion to the statewide ILS and the implementation of digital download initiatives.” Himmel & Wilson

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Complete Phases I, II and III of the Catamount Library Network, the open source Evergreen project	2, 3(a), 6, 7	2013-2017
Replace the Vermont Automated Library System (VALS) with an open source system	3(a), 5,6,7	2013-2017
Explore the viability of a courier delivery system for ILL in Vermont based upon the report of the 2011 Task Force	1	2013-2017
Implement a state-supported Wide Area Network (WAN) to carry Internet service for 42 libraries in the Vermont FiberConnect BTOP grant program	2	2013
Enhance citizen access to the University of Vermont (UVM) collection via the ILL Access Office	5,6,7	2013-2017
Continue to support local and consortial cataloging	2, 3	2013-2017
Study the effectiveness of the Resource Sharing Supplemental Grants and explore alternative uses for that funding	1	2013-2014

Outcome Measures:

- Implement the Catamount Evergreen ILS in the 5 pilot libraries by the end of 2013 (Phase I), add 28 libraries to the system by 2015 (Phase II) and 17 more libraries and the VDOL (Phase III) by the end of 2017.
- Identify and implement a replacement for the current statewide electronic ILL system (VALS) by 2017.

- Deploy the Wide Area Network (WAN) for the 42 libraries in the FiberConnect BTOP grant in 2013.
- Study recommendations from the Task Force and if a statewide courier service is recommended, create a plan and begin to seek funding by 2014.

Partners:

- Vermont Department of Information and Innovation
- Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont
- Vermont Telecommunications Authority
- Sovernet Fiber Corporation

2. GOAL TWO

Libraries will have opportunities to strengthen their capacity to provide quality services and resources to all citizens.

Aligned with [LSTA Purposes](#) 2, 4, 5, 6(see page 3)

Addressing Identified Needs:

We have ranked this goal as our second priority because so many other initiatives depend on having a well-trained library workforce and well-run libraries. The current VDOL continuing education/certification program is respected and appreciated in Vermont and in the coming 5 years we will address the need to develop strong library leadership.

“Continue CE, focused on three areas:

- 1. Capacity to convert to, use and maintain statewide ILS, cataloguing, ILL;*
- 2. Certification requirements.*
- 3. Innovations - e-books, e-government, digital creativity centers, succession planning, market research, etc. to stimulate thinking and attract librarians with more education and [from] larger libraries.” Himmel & Wilson*

Outcome 1: Vermont libraries will have access to a current, purposeful and forward-thinking Continuing Education program through the Department of Libraries.

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Review and redesign the Continuing Education and Librarian Certification programs. Identify alternative tracks by role and multiple learning methods where appropriate.	1,3,4	2013
Implement new training for library staff to enhance skills in emerging technologies, including e-content, e-government and technology management.	3, 8	2013-2017
Implement training and assistance needed to automate all public libraries in Vermont.	2,6,7	2013-2015
Create and implement advanced Leadership training to assure professional leadership in Vermont libraries.	3 (a&b), 8	2013-2017

Provide ongoing training to library trustees and other town officials on governing, managing and promoting libraries.	3a	2013-2017
Maintain a professional library science collection at the Vermont State Library.	3	2013-2017

Outcome Measures:

- Review and redesign of the VDOL Continuing Education program, and include a strong focus on technology and e-resource training for Vermont libraries. (2013-2017).
- Support 90% of Vermont public libraries that meet standards to automate or prepare to migrate to the Catamount ILS by the end of 2015.
- Provide leadership training for 50 library directors/managers (public, school and academic) by 2017.

Outcome 2: The Department of Libraries will move forward with partnerships to increase the number of public librarians in the state with the Master’s level library degree.

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Identify partnerships, determine criteria for students, look for matching funds/grants for initial pilot project.	3,4,8	2013-2014
Support five students in Library Science Master’s degree program.	3,4,8	2014-2017

Outcome Measures:

- Support five Vermont public librarians in Master’s degree level education in library science by the end of 2017.

Outcome 3: VDOL will work to strengthen the capacity of Vermont libraries to assess and evaluate their programs and services.

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Identify, evaluate and adopt methods for outcome-based evaluations, working with partners in library and government organizations.	4,8	2013
Integrate training on the assessment framework into the Continuing Education curriculum.	4,8	2014-2017
Write and implement new standards for Vermont public libraries.	8	2013-2017
Offer training and encouragement adoption of Edge Benchmarks for public computing in public libraries.	4,8	2013-2017

Outcome Measures:

- Train 20 public library directors in the assessment framework by the end of 2015. Train an additional 20 public library directors by 2017.
- Adopt new public library standards by 2015.
- Offer Edge Benchmarks training within first year after launch.
- 15 public libraries adopt Edge Benchmarks by 2017.

Partners:

- Vermont Library Association and other professional associations with similar goals or missions
- Vermont Department of Labor
- Vermont Agency of Human Services
- Common Good Vermont

Outcome 4: VDOL will continue to strengthen the capacity of local libraries to implement best practices, effective management, sound fiscal procedures, and current policies.

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Target the VDOL library consulting program to help meet strategic goals for improved library service in Vermont.	3	2013-2017
Create an informational portal on the VDOL website to include sample library policies and other resources for local libraries and trustees.	8	2014-2017

Outcome Measure:

- Implement a website portal with content to support libraries by the end of 2013.

3. GOAL THREE

All Vermonters will have access to a wide range of high quality library resources and services to meet their lifelong learning, informational, recreational, and occupational needs and interests.

Aligned with [LSTA Purposes](#) 3, 5, 6 (see page 3)

Identified Need:

21st century libraries must provide resources in a wide variety of formats (and increasingly in electronic formats) and must address the needs of constituents who are not able to get to a library, who need specialized formats or services, are in underserved populations, who are children and teens, job-seekers, entrepreneurs or who need accurate and current health information.

Activity	Priorities	Timeline
Continue to build services to the blind & physically handicapped and to State institutions with a special focus on promoting services to U.S. Veterans.	1,4,5,6	2013-2017
Through partnership with the Department of Corrections and its Vermont Community High School, explore ways to improve and promote literacy and reading for inmates and students.	1,5	2013-2017
Maintain the Vermont Online Library with regular reviews of electronic content and explore ways to make it universally available to all Vermonters.	1,5,6,7	2013-2017
Continue to build the reference collection at the Vermont State Library with an emphasis on electronic informational databases.	1, 2	2013-2017
Develop a program for public digital literacy training and individual assistance at Vermont libraries.	1,3a,4,5,6,7	2013-2017

Work with partners to develop programs and services for job seekers and others who need workforce development and entrepreneurial skills and information and for citizen access to good health information.	1, 4	2013-2015
Continue to support the Summer Reading program for children and teens in public libraries to foster literacy and the love of reading.	5,6, 8	2013-2017
Expand the reach of the Vermont Early Literacy Initiative (funded by the Vermont Public Library Foundation, in partnership with the Vermont Center for the Book) and incorporate STEM into library storytime programs	1,3, 5, 6	2013-2017
Continue to support the 1 st Wednesdays Lecture Series and explore potential programs that promote civic engagement.	1,4,5,6	2013-2017
Continue to support the three state book awards for youth (Red Clover Award, Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award and Green Mountain Book Award.)	1,5,6	2013-2017
Evaluate current use of and interest from school and public libraries in the circulating collections held at the Midstate Library Service Center and the Children’s Book Exhibit Center and make decisions about the future of these book collections.	1,5,6	2013-2015

Outcome Measures:

- 15 public libraries offer digital literacy training and assistance using a curriculum approved by the Department of Libraries by 2015.
- Working with the Department of Corrections, the VDOL creates a plan for improving the libraries at state correctional facilities and the Community High School. Once a plan is implemented, VDOL works with Corrections staff to measure the effectiveness of the program (by 2014) and implement improvements (2014-2017).
- Direct a Vermont Online Library (VOL) committee of librarians to meet annually to review use of VOL electronic databases and to conduct at least 2 surveys for: (1) for Vermont libraries and (2) Vermont citizens, to assess interests and needs (2013-2017).
- Implement a project based on lessons learned in Project COMPASS and other recent workforce development initiatives. Partner with the Department of Labor and other agencies/organizations and the libraries who participated in the 2012 COMPASS Convening to bring on-site and online assistance to job seekers and career changers in four public libraries by 2014.

Partners:

- National Library Service
- Vermont Department of Veterans Affairs
- Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Vermont Department of Corrections
- Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP)
- Vermont Humanities Council
- Vermont Department of Labor
- Vermont Small Business Development Center
- Vermont State Colleges / Community College of Vermont

- Vermont Department of Commerce and Economic Development
- Vermont Public Library Foundation
- Vermont Center for the Book
- Health Science Libraries of New Hampshire and Vermont

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The VDOL will conduct an annual review of this LSTA Plan with VDOL staff, the Vermont Board of Libraries and other appropriate stakeholders and submit requests to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for changes as needed. The Goals and Activities in this plan have associated outcomes and measures that will be implemented throughout the five-year period.

As noted in Goal 2 of this plan and by Himmel & Wilson, the VDOL needs internal training and expertise in assessment and evaluation. This training will take place in 2013 and 2014 and VDOL will implement appropriate methods and tools to improve performance and program effectiveness.

VDOL will also include training on assessment for the Vermont library community. To evaluate the success of activities related to this Plan, the VDOL will deploy at least one comprehensive survey to the Vermont library community. In addition, the VDOL will create and implement tools/widgets/surveys that libraries can use to collect data directly from library users.

VDOL staff will conduct periodic focus groups with the library community and with the general public to get feedback and input related to goals and activities in this plan.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

This Plan is informed by the data and recommendations in the Evaluation conducted by Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, as well as by the input from VDOL staff gathered during the State of Vermont strategic planning process in 2011. Himmel & Wilson, as part of their Evaluation, conducted focus groups, telephone interviews and a web survey, compiling feedback and suggestions from the Vermont library community and other stakeholders. Doing work in a small state, where we are able to develop relationships with partners and stakeholders alike, we have a huge advantage over state library agencies in more populous states. We recognize that the most important stakeholders are our libraries, our partners, and Vermont citizens.

The greatest challenge comes with getting direct feedback from Vermonters who use (or don't use) library services and resources. We look forward to the roll-out of the IMLS "Measuring for Success" program and will work with IMLS and local partners to develop effective tools and techniques so that we can better understand the needs and demands of our state's citizens.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

Once this Plan has been approved by the IMLS, the Department will post the new LSTA Five-Year Plan on the VDOL website and will send out a press release. The State Librarian will present the Plan to VDOL staff this summer (2012) and staff will develop a workplan and timeline.

We will also create a public "Dashboard" in order to track activities and will post this on the VDOL website. The VDOL will include news and updates about this Plan and related activities in the VDOL monthly e-newsletter and in an annual report.

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