

Florida Five-Year Plan Evaluation

Needs Assessment

December 9, 2011

Nancy Bolt & Associates



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Focus Group Reports	4
• Florida Electronic Library	4
• E-Government	8
• Ask a Librarian	13
• Leadership Development	15
• Competitive Grants	16
• Florida Statewide Resource Sharing and Collection Development	17
• Division of Library and Information Services and Bureau of Library Development	18
• Priorities for LSTA-Funded Statewide Programs	19
• Trends and Observations	20
• Table of Focus Group Location and Attendees	23
Report of Library Director Needs Assessment	24
Annex A: Focus Group Questions	28
Annex B: Division Handout for Focus Groups	30

Introduction

Nancy Bolt & Associates is pleased to present this report as part of the evaluation of Florida's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Five-Year Plan. The report includes three sections: library focus groups, Public Library Directors' Meeting, and the survey of the Florida library community.

Seven focus groups were conducted with representatives of the library community. This report summarizes the findings from those focus groups organized into the major programs offered and managed by the Division of Library and Information Services. It also includes a ranking of the priority placed on these services by focus group participants and observations on major trends identified that will be further explored in the discussion of the next LSTA Five-Year Plan. Focus groups were also conducted with community representatives. The results of the focus groups sessions will inform the next Five-Year Plan. The information collected in the focus groups is qualitative and anecdotal. The word "impact" reports the opinions of the participants on Division statewide programs and services.

The Division sponsors an annual Public Library Directors' Meeting as part of their library leadership initiative. In October 2011 Liz Bishoff facilitated two sessions at this meeting to identify major issues facing Florida communities and the role that libraries can play in addressing these issues. These issues will be further explored in the development of the next LSTA Five-Year Plan.

Finally, this report includes the results of a survey conducted in October 2011. The survey received 559 survey responses of which 352 were completed.

In this report there has been no attempt to integrate the findings or to interpret them. This integration will occur in the current Plan's evaluation.

FOCUS GROUPS

Seven focus groups were conducted with representatives of the library community. This report summarizes the findings from those focus groups organized into the major programs offered and managed by the Division of Library and Information Services, a ranking of the priority placed on these services by focus group participants, and observations on major trends identified that will be further explored in the discussion of the next LSTA Five-Year Plan. Focus groups were also conducted with community representatives and the Multitype Library Cooperatives. The sessions with these groups focused on future needs. The results of those sessions will be incorporated into the Five-Year Plan for 2012-2017.

The information collected in the focus groups is qualitative and anecdotal. The word “impact” reports the opinions of the participants on Division statewide programs and services. The agenda used with the Focus Groups and the handout about the Division services are in Annex A and B.

Florida Electronic Library

The discussion began with each group defining the Florida Electronic Library (FEL). In all cases, participants responded “databases or the Gale and OCLC databases.” After probing, participants universally said that they believed that FloridaCat, Florida on Florida, Florida Memory, and Ask a Librarian were separate programs. All seven focus groups discussed FEL at length. Thirty-seven databases are available to Florida libraries. FloridaCat, the statewide union catalog, is also part of the FEL. FloridaCat includes the holdings of 400 Florida libraries. The Division of Library and Information Services along with the Florida Library Network Council are responsible for planning for library resource sharing programs.

Findings:

Impact

All focus groups found value in FEL. Identified key values included equitable access to electronic content; allowing local libraries to redirect their electronic resource funding to databases that would meet local need; supplementing their own collections with FEL; and saving Florida libraries money. Focus group comments included:

- “FEL provides equitable access – (it) says to the public that anyone with a library card gets access to (electronic resources).”
- “There is value in that we can provide more access; also allows us to cut print journals.”
- Save money.
- “There is no going back – we have to get used to using it (Web-based training).”
- Librarians make a lot of use of FEL.

The responses have been divided into several topics. The comments below focus on the financial impact, equitable access and research value, and the impact of FEL training. For Florida’s libraries, the financial

benefit of FEL is incalculable. One participant stated, "For our city, they are the only databases we have."

Impact: Financial

One of the major impacts of LSTA funding the FEL databases is the financial savings for local libraries. For some libraries, the state databases are the only databases available. For others, the state databases allow them to change their own collection development policies to purchase electronic resources that otherwise would be unaffordable. Many of the participants indicated that a significant impact of FEL was it allowed them to weed print collections, freeing up space for other uses without having to build new libraries. It did raise the issue of the need to redesign newly opened space.

- Saves the library money.
- Reference books are replaced by electronic books; this frees up shelf space allowing the library to reallocate space without new construction.
- Opens up space, due to collection weeding.
- "We were able to buy other databases, e-books, and nonfiction books. The savings really filled a need."
- Increasingly getting reference books only in electronic format, some items are no longer available in print, this impacts collection development at the local level.
- "There is value in that we can provide more access; also allows us to cut print journals."
- Allowed them to reallocate their resources to meet local needs.

Impact: Equitable Access and Research Value

A second major benefit of FEL databases is the availability to all Florida libraries and Floridians. Access to databases does not depend on the individual library's ability to fund them. In addition to equitable access, focus group participants noted that the databases support the research needs of a broad range of users, from students and their teachers to undergraduate and graduate students. Additionally, the general public's research needs are met by the FEL databases.

- "FEL provides equitable access; (it) says to the public that anyone with a library card gets access."
- "Everyone uses the same interface whether a public, school or academic library."
- Supports lifelong learning, skills are transferrable K-20 and beyond.
- "Compliments our collections, fills gaps; FEL is a major backup for our collections."
- FEL would be missed. "We know that there are people who use it from home and there would be uproar."
- "FEL is cited as an important means of accessing resources as part of our K-12 accreditation process."
- Ask a Librarian depends on FEL to answer questions.
- "The literacy help centers use the databases with K-12 students; after training, students use it on their own."

- Public generally underutilizes FEL. “These are better resources than Google, but (you) get a sense that it’s too cumbersome to navigate through, you need to know what you’re looking for before you can find it. Somehow it seems like too much work for people to go through.”
- (FEL) supported the research needs of their users.

Impact: Training

The Division has made available Web-based training on the use of FEL, focused on specific databases, and how to incorporate FEL into the library’s services.

- Staff members have taken the webinars on FEL.
- “Staffs take the webinars, but it doesn’t stick with them, so FEL doesn’t automatically come to mind to use it.”
- Webinars on subjects would be helpful. We like the webinars, but they are very general.
- “We designed a staff training program. Each month staff is asked to answer three questions (and then we discuss the approach each staff member took).”
- “Library is underutilizing the FEL because staffs aren’t comfortable with it...even with free webinars it’s too much for an already-stretched staff.”
- “We have no other choices but to use webinars, due to the economy. Most staffs are comfortable with webinars. Quality of webinars varies greatly; good ones work.”

Other Comments on FEL Other Than Licensed Databases

- FloridaCat is used for ILL by librarians; patrons use it to find books.
- The State, not the Division, is working on integrating the two college and university online catalogs. There is a proposal to expand this catalog to include holdings from school and public libraries. This program is outside the state library’s responsibility, but it could replace or build on FloridaCat.
- “Florida Memory is used by school and academic history department staff.”

It would be useful to integrate Ask a Librarian with the databases. “If searching databases and need help there would be a button to push to ask for it or a pop-up question that asks if you need help via online chat.”

Issues and Concerns

The biggest issues and concerns for focus group participants included:

FEL Interface

Participants in all focus groups reported that FEL and its interface was not user friendly. Both users and librarians desire change to the interface. Several participants commented, “The Google interface is what works for the users.” The interface design provides a list of databases in response to their search, but “People want the answer, not the database.” Additionally, several focus groups recommended implementing a federated search. They did describe which databases should be federated.

FEL Database Offering

Participants indicated that there were many databases of limited usefulness to library users. While all groups supported ongoing funding of FEL, they qualified that with recommendation that FEL be re-envisioned. Participants recommended the Division evaluate the aggregated collection and keep only the heavily-used databases.

FEL Administration

None of the focus group participants understood how decisions are made regarding FEL. One suggested that the Florida Library Network Council was involved in the decisions, but they no longer are.

Comments included:

Focus group participants almost universally felt that the vendors were in control of the content. "Vendors provide what they want to provide. We need to tell them what WE want them to provide." Focus group participants saw the Division as an advocate for libraries. They recommended unbundling the databases, removing the non-useful databases. Participants said that they needed data for decision-making. Few of the participants reported making use of the FEL reports; others didn't know the reports were available to them. The focus group participants suggested that the Division develop a statewide marketing campaign. Participants stated that all librarians know about FEL, but "(we) need a marketing campaign to increase public awareness and use."

FEL Future

In several sessions participants posed the following questions regarding the future of FEL:

- "What will we need in five years?"
- "Are the Gale and OCLC databases the right ones for the future?"
- "Is there another model that we should consider?"

Other Comments

- "People don't have time to explore FEL content, as the internet access/computer time is restricted. Also not enough computers to meet needs."
- "Surprised that no one really knows about it (FEL databases)."
- "Not a lot of folks are coming to the reference desk for help."
- "People want the answer, not the database."
- Some libraries, both urban and rural, reported that limited bandwidth is a real problem that results in slow downloads of articles.

Suggestions for Improvement

Focus group participants offered several suggestions for improvement to FEL. The major suggestion was a redefinition of what databases are included in FEL. Most felt that there were a number of minimally-used databases which should be eliminated. Having more databases available doesn't equate with a

better product. A second suggestion was that the interface be redesigned to be more user-friendly. Frequent reference was made to the search engine interface approach with an advanced search for those who use sophisticated search strategies. Lastly too much library jargon was used, making it difficult for the public to use the databases.

- There are too many databases with similar descriptions. Hard to eliminate dataset.
- “There is no going back; we have to get use to using it (Web-based training).”
- “State Library should advocate for libraries.”
- “Libraries are forced to purchase from an aggregator and they bundle in non-useful databases with the ones libraries want. Libraries should request the bundle they want.”
- Need a statewide discovery system for the databases.
- You can search across Gale and non-Gale databases using PowerSearch, but then whittling down the choices takes too many steps.
- Public generally underutilizes FEL. “There are better resources than Google, but get a sense that it’s too cumbersome to navigate through; you need to know what you’re looking for before you can find it. Somehow it seems like too much work for people to go through.”

Florida’s libraries find the FEL databases are a significant component of their digital library program and strongly support continued use of LSTA funding for the FEL databases. The FEL program expands access to content that individual libraries could not provide on their own; it supports a wide range of Florida library user information needs including the K-12 students, graduate and undergraduate students, and lifelong learners. One participant said it all, “FEL provides equitable access; (it) says to the public that anyone with a library card gets access.” The focus group participants offered recommendations for improving FEL for users and for expanding use, including recommending revision of the database content and the interface. Several participants stated, “We need statewide discovery system for the databases.” Lastly participants recommended development of a statewide promotional program.

E-Government

In recent years, Florida state government social service agencies closed their offices and implemented an online benefits program. To gain access to the online forms, the agencies directed applicants to the local public library for assistance. As a result, public librarians report that many people are using the library for government services never before offered by public libraries. This package of services is called “E-Government.” The Division supports E-Government several ways. During the past five years, the Division awarded grants to libraries to develop access to E-Government services, including one to Orange County Library System that has become the platform for other Florida public libraries. The Division asked Orange County to develop this model for statewide use and provided the funds to do so. The Division has provided training to library staffs about state rules and regulations that govern social service programs and provided expert advice on its website. Pasco County Public Library Cooperative also received an LSTA grant to provide information on E-Government statewide. The Division has also formed a state E-Government task force that meets regularly to share practices including how best to work with state and local social service agencies.

Findings:Impact

All library focus groups discussed this program in depth because of the impact E-Government has on public library service. Key findings are:

- E-Government services have a significant impact on people's lives, as well as public libraries.
- Public libraries are swamped with requests for assistance, providing computer training, access to sites via library computers, and support in preparing for completion of the online forms.
- Librarians expressed the need for more training on the various social service programs to meet users' needs.
- Librarians recommended developing partnerships with social service agencies on all levels: local, regional and state.
- A model project developed by the Division would be useful for Florida's public libraries.
- These new services require a change in the role of public librarians and, potentially, in public library policy.

All librarians that participated in the focus groups reported E-Government activity and felt that library services had an extremely positive impact on the users of online social services. However, most of this information is anecdotal and there is yet no systematic statewide evaluation of the impact of the E-Government program. Some libraries with an identified user audience that they regularly work with indicated they are considering an evaluation of the impact of E-Government services. Focus group participants made the following comments about impact.

- "WorkForce (the regional Board affiliated with the state agency) has worked with the Library's E-Government program. They reported that of the 600 clients who found jobs, 400 were from the library program."
- Transportation to WorkForce centers is a problem. One resident said, "I can't ride my bike 30 miles," indicating why he used the public library.
- "Fifty – 70 of our adult learners have gotten jobs" because of help from the public library's literacy program that includes job skills.
- "When the computers were down in a branch, an individual was panicked because he needed to apply for his unemployment insurance; he was really stressed out."
- "We are impacting real life by doing this. One woman told me 'You helped me so much – I got a job.'"
- "I helped someone with their resume and one day they showed up in their uniform for their new job."
- One job seeker told a librarian, "You are the only people giving me hope, you're friendly and helpful."
- "Someone who took our very first class (on job hunting) and told us he got a job from taking the class."

- “I helped a released prisoner in creating resumes, filling out forms to get a hearing aid, and submit job applications. Within six weeks the individual had a job.”
- From the provider side, a small foundation offered funds to support payment of utility bills and had difficulty publicizing this service. The library included this information on its website and the foundation found participants for its program.

Issues and Concerns

Libraries are Swamped with Requests

Almost every public librarian in the focus groups said libraries are swamped with people needing help. The major exception – some librarians from the more affluent branches of large library systems reported that they do not have as much demand. The social service assistance included applying for food stamps, medical benefits, housing, jobs, unemployment insurance, and training. People received training in how to write a resume, how to use a computer, and how to become a citizen. Librarians report frustration at the size and intensity of this demand; their inability to provide more help; the need of some people for the most basic help because they are unfamiliar with computer use; and not having enough computers or bandwidth to meet users’ needs. A lawyer who specializes in library law advises librarians not to complete the forms for individuals because of the potential liability if the information is wrong. The inability to assist the user to do so is frustrating for librarians although they understand the reason for this policy. The increase in demand also raises policy issues for libraries. Most library computers automatically limit the time that a person can use a computer (usually between 30-45 minutes). This time limit is particularly frustrating for both the librarian and the user when the user is in the middle of completing the application form. Some libraries have addressed this issue by designating an E-Government workstation, with longer time limits. Focus groups comments included:

- “Library’s computers time out so they aren’t useful for E-Government.”
- “The current workstations set up in most places have limited time use, due to the heavy use of the workstations. Thirty minutes isn’t long enough to complete the forms, especially when the patron doesn’t know how to use the computer.”
- “What’s changed? Everyone is sending people to the library; it’s overwhelming.”
- “The public library is the only place people can come – we are it. WorkForce doesn’t come out and help our users.”
- “Our literacy center has walk-in hours and our labs don’t time out. People are so unprepared to complete the forms. It takes a long time to get them ready to complete the forms; we sit at their elbow, as they don’t know a zero from an o, we sometimes have to take their hand and move the mouse.”
- “People have immediate need, if we cannot help them, for example if we have lines at the reference desk, then we tell them to come back with a friend who knows how to use the computer.”
- “People who need to retrain come in to take online classes; these classes are longer than the amount of time available on the computers. We can extend the time, but it’s against the rules.”
- “Spanish speakers need help; luckily we have a staff member who speaks Spanish.”
- “Our main library has a Book a Librarian service for extra help. We tell customers to go there.”

- “The computers are in use all day. We don’t know social service resources; we’re not experts in social services.”
- “People are coming in emotionally broken; they are at the worst point in their lives.”
- “Things changed without warning.”
- “It’s frustrating for staff, the time it takes and knowledge, and users who don’t know how to use computers. We need to back up and provide basic computer use training before they can complete the forms.”
- “They expect us to do it for them because they can’t do it for themselves.”
- “There was p-poor planning on implementation. Libraries could have been better prepared to take this on.”
- “There is a sense of entitlement among some of the users. This (is) aggravated by agencies that are telling the people to go to the library; they will do X, Y, and Z and the libraries are not prepared or able to do some of these things. This can cause conflict between users and staff.”
- “Seniors are overwhelmed with some things, such as social security; or if re-entering the workforce they don’t know how to do a resume and have limited use of computers.”

Training

- Librarians expressed the need for more training in newer technology to better help users; to better understand the resources available to users; and help in planning technology training sessions for users. Some libraries receive assistance from community members or groups to teach courses or assist applicants.
- One library offered 1,200 workshops per month throughout all of its branches. They have a special core of trainers, Technical Customer Support Specialists, who conducted the training.
- One library hired three instructional technology specialists to develop a curriculum (this was funded by a national IMLS Leadership Grant). The specialists developed the curriculum and taught library staff how to teach it.
- SWFLN provided training on helping people who are unemployed
- “Our staff trains one another.”
- Five of the staff took the state library training in E-Government and came back and implemented the program. This group thought that the state training was very useful.
- “We could use more webinars on E-Government, up to 45 minutes long, with a focus on enhancements and new services.”
- One librarian in Broward County created a PowerPoint on E-Government that explained the government services and a handout explaining different state agencies and services. Participants said they would like help from the state with these types of items. They would like these to come from the state.

A Model Project: The Right Service at the Right Time

The Orange County Library System received an LSTA grant to develop an online service to aid library users in finding resources. The service, *The Right Service at the Right Time*, is a hosted service designed

to be used by libraries and social service agencies and can be implemented by public libraries in Florida. The project encourages libraries to participate by adding their information about local social service agencies to the central database. To date, five counties are participating- Orange, Seminole, Okaloosa, Palm Beach and Manatee. Each Orange County branch library has a dedicated computer for people wanting to use *Right Service*, which is described as a “decision-making engine populated with agenda information on food, housing, jobs, health, and computer training.” There is also a separate business development database. Focus groups comments included:

- “*Right Service* is designed to be very user friendly and walks people through questions and then picks resources that would be useful.”
- “We (Orange County) exhibit at FLA, Florida League of Cities, and Florida League of Counties and hope they will go back and talk to their library about participating.”

Changing Role of Librarians

The focus group participants shared information about the new types of services that libraries offer and the different types of services that users requested. Librarians said that E-Government services raised the issue of a new role for librarians in community service. The librarians readily acknowledged this change and said they accepted this new role, which was confirmed by managers participating in the focus group, but librarians reported the frustration described above. Some additional comments include:

- “Users are stressed and librarians calm them down to help them.”
- “This is less a new role and rather a more intensive role. We used to provide this service with paper resources.”
- “People want more; they want personal help like they used to get at the agency.”
- “We are serving more social service needs than ever before.”
- One manager said, “We have to have staff buy-in to them to use resources and help users.”
- “We have never had to give social service advice before.”
- “This is a new role for librarians – they generally feel very supportive of doing E-Government but need training and tools.”
- “How it’s changed is that it’s all technology focused, no longer just answering a question.”
- “Staff got very excited about helping people get a job. It’s a big focus at reference desks these days. We are now promoting the service.”
- “The library’s culture is to help, yet it’s hard.”

Collaboration

A theme throughout the discussion on E-Government was the necessity of collaborating with state and local agencies that provide services and resources for people. *Right Service* reaches out to all community agencies, endeavoring to obtain as much information as possible about services, eligibility, requirements, etc. In seeking additional counties to participate in *Right Service*, Orange County suggested that libraries gather extensive information about local agencies. Another suggested model for

collaboration involved having social service agency staff teach courses or consult with users at libraries. Focus group comments included:

- “WorkForce, a state agency, comes in twice a week and helps people complete forms. WorkForce brings in their laptops and uses the library’s meeting space. This is offered at six-eight of our 21 branches.”
- One county sought out county agencies and tried to explain to them the impact their referrals had on the library.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Another suggested model for collaboration involved having agency staff be available at the library on a regular basis to teach classes or consult with users.
- “We could use more webinars on E-Government, up to 45 minutes long, with a focus on enhancements and new services.”
- The Division needs to take a leadership role, working with state-level agencies; the information needs to filter down from the state level to the local level.

Ask a Librarian

Ask a Librarian (AaL) is an online reference service available to librarians and to Florida residents. It is part of the Florida Electronic Library and managed by the Tampa Bay Library Consortium. Users can access Ask a Librarian through live chat or through text messages.

Findings:

Impact

Focus group participants did not know of any studies on the impact of Ask a Librarian on users and none had conducted any studies. They did discuss the value of AaL for their library. Participants said AaL improved the image of the library and helped them to make reference service available during hours when the library is closed. Some librarians, particularly academic librarians, said that if AaL did not exist, they would have to find a way to offer reference chat after library hours. However, participants reported that users are not familiar with or expect the service. Focus group comments included:

- “AaL gives the library the ability to extend beyond open hours.”
- “Academic students are more likely to use if it is predominantly displayed on the library home page. Use doubled when we put it on the home page. One of the first things that students see.”
- “The idea/image of the service is more important than its actual use.”
- “Orange County Library System has its own chat service that switches to AaL when the library closes.”
- “AaL provides great bang for the buck. I can’t imagine anything better. We provide four hours of reference service to the state and our users get 90 hours of quality service.”
- “We tell local government that because of AaL, people can get reference help when the library is closed.”

- “If it didn’t exist, we would have to invent it.”
- “Having the state infrastructure provides a backup, sort of like an insurance policy.”
- “With cuts in library hours and staff, AaL provides service when our library is closed.”
- “It’s worth it; people know where the library is.”
- “The goal is increased convenience for library users – do it virtually anytime, anyplace.”
- “People like that there are late hours.”
- “Those who use it would be upset if it went away.”

Issues and Concerns

Staffing and Operational Issues

Focus group participants mentioned several staffing issues associated with AaL. Most frustrating of these issues was receiving questions about local libraries when answering statewide calls. People wanted to know local library hours, to renew a book, or find information about library programs. Other staffing issues revolved around the type of questions asked. Focus group comments included:

- “We get a lot of circulation-based questions. We tell people to go to their own library.”
- “Most of the questions at the (AaL) desk deal with local issues; these aren’t effectively answered through the AaL program.”
- “90% of the questions are people playing games, some try obscene chat with the librarians.”
- There is a problem with school assignments. “All 38 students contact AaL with the same question from their teacher.”
- “Used to be able to access the databases from the AaL patron’s home library but I don’t think that’s available anymore. It was useful in that you could do more than tell the user what database was available.”
- “It is important for our staff to interact with others in the state. (AaL) gives them a sense of what is happening around the state.”
- “Scheduling is a problem, to schedule on the local desk and the state desk. They can’t do this at the same time. It is hard to get people to volunteer for even two hours a month.”
- “Some staff are uncomfortable with the software used and don’t want to use it.”
- One library is trying to make the state service part of what is expected from all reference librarians.
- One library expected questions to be more sophisticated and not “when is the library open” type of questions.
- Academic librarians do not feel comfortable answering questions from school kids. They feel they are not using their skills as academic librarians.
- “Staff members say they enjoy it. They participate in about 50 chats a month.”

Suggestions for Improvement

Most of the libraries represented in the focus groups reported having library staff that answered AaL questions. Despite the problems mentioned above, most seem to enjoy answering questions. One participant recommended that new librarians “shadow” AaL librarians as part of the training program. A

TBLC representative in a focus group asked for reports of callers who abused the service. The issue mentioned most often was dealing with local calls. No one identified a solution for this issue.

Leadership Development

LSTA funds support three primary leadership development projects. The first is an annual meeting for public library directors featuring guest speakers who can discuss trends in the library profession. The second leadership project is an orientation session for new library directors so that they understand the programs and services provided by the Division and understand the political process in Florida. One librarian said she was inspired to apply for an LSTA grant after the Public Library Directors' meeting. Several participants mentioned attending leadership training through the MLCs.

The third project is the Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute (SSLLI) managed by Northeast Florida Library Information Network on behalf of the Division. The SSLLI program teaches leadership, communication and management skills to professional and paraprofessional librarians in management positions with at least two years of management experience. The program's content is taught through a combination of in-person and online sessions over 10 months and includes homework assignments. SSLLI also includes selection of a mentor to work with participants.

The focus group participants commented about SSLLI. There were no specific comments regarding the other programs.

Findings:

Impact

The focus group participants were not aware of any studies about the impact of SSLLI. During the focus groups, the highest praise for SSLLI came from its participants and managers of Institute participants. Most felt Institute participants had improved their communication and management skills and made a difference in the library. Networking opportunities were most frequently mentioned as a benefit of SSLLI. Focus group comments included:

- "The E-Government program came out of the SSLII leadership program."
- "I learned new communication skills, gained greater program support because of improved communication."
- SSLLI helped create a network among Florida librarians to share information.
- "I developed a long-range plan which led to a promotion."
- "I made a personal goal of a new position and it happened."
- "I am able to approach others who participated in the program to create new partnerships on projects."
- "I took the senior librarian exam and got a promotion."
- "It gave me confidence to take a management role."
- "I am now active in FLA and SSLLI was a stepping stone to the ALA CPLA program."
- "SSLLI helps me to think broader."

- “After Sunshine I was able to take further advanced workshops/fellowships.”
- One librarian said that after she had a staff member who attended SLLI, the staff member was “willing to accept more responsibility; able to facilitate change; improved her communication; and that discord in the library had been reduced because of her skills.”
- “Seeing directors retiring; middle management has declined in numbers; leadership training has cultivated a strata of young, energized librarians – ones that don’t ask for permission, young bright folks – environment provides a space for community, mutually supportive, help one another.”
- “Sunshine graduates are the ones stepping into leadership roles in one library.”

Issues and Concerns

Participants expressed only a few concerns. One person said she did not see a change in the people who attended. Another felt the SLLI registration fee, travel cost and the time away from work made it impossible to participate. Another said, “People who are already leaders are the ones who go.”

Suggestions for Improvement

Participants suggested improvements for SLLI. Some participants wanted advanced coursework on change management and facilitation or a supervision track. One librarian indicated SLLI had tried this but the track did not attract sufficient participants. Another participant suggested that an impact study of SLLI is needed. The current evaluation takes place immediately after training. Time needs to pass before the full impact can be measured.

Competitive Grants

One of the programs discussed in the focus groups was competitive grants. Overwhelmingly, focus group participants appreciated the opportunity to apply for competitive grants and saw value in them. Two participants who received a grant award said that they attempted to collect outcome-based evaluation. One of these programs involved student learning and tracked improvement in participants’ grades, with parent and teacher testimonials. *The Right Service at the Right Time* project collected extensive user data such as visits to the website, number of accounts opened, and time spent on the site, service quality immediately after the interaction, and a survey of social service providers to obtain their feedback. Project staffs feel that only now, three years after the end of the project, has enough time passed to successfully measure the success of the project.

Findings:

Impact

The discussion focused on the value of competitive grants to the individual library, particularly the opportunity to try out a new idea, take a risk, or demonstrate an idea’s value. Five librarians said they had begun a project with LSTA funds and that local funds now support these projects. Focus group comments included:

- “We can do things we wouldn’t do with local funds. We can assess the impact and decide whether to support going forward. We did this with the *Born to Read* program.”
- “Provides seed money for pilot experiments, to take a risk on something local government wouldn’t fund. Our literacy program now has ongoing funds. Didn’t continue Spanish outreach program due to economic changes.”
- “Good for one time projects where we don’t need ongoing effort, like digitization.”
- “We can target a project to local needs that statewide programs don’t address.”
- Supports innovation that may later be adopted statewide.
- Allows piloting of technology projects.
- “We can find information on successful projects by going online to the Division LSTA site. We can find successful projects and then adapt locally for a grant. We can read reports to see how they should be done.”

Issues and Concerns

The major concern was an impression that the same libraries received grants most often.

Suggestions for Improvement

One participant suggested that the Division reduce the amount of LSTA competitive grants to provide more funding for MLCs. Another suggested that the Division set aside LSTA funds for a statewide theme, such as E-Government, where the Division would establish a competitive grants program to fund grants to implement projects to meet the theme’s objectives.

Florida Statewide Resource Sharing and Collection Development

Through the sharing of resources, the State Library serves Florida’s library staffs and library users as well as other libraries in the nation and around the world. “The State Library is the library of first resort for interlibrary loan (ILL) requests received by mail and the library of last resort for ILL requests received through the state’s electronic ILL network. The library also serves the general public on a limited basis.”

The focus group participants evaluated the Statewide Resource Sharing program in terms of priority for LSTA funding. They rated this program as a low priority. Few if any of the participants indicated that they use the State Library to borrow materials to meet their library user or personal information needs. Instead, they reported that they borrow materials from libraries in Florida and nationwide via OCLC.

Findings:

Impact

One respondent spoke favorably about the Library’s continued role in collecting materials about Florida. Focus group participants indicated that purchasing materials to support ILL isn’t needed any longer. Many other participants said that the State Library of Florida no longer needed to serve as the last resort in the interlibrary loan process.

- “Never select the State Library for ILL—they have not been able to send the materials.”
- One participant, who worked in the records management arena, supported the State Library’s records management program, state documents and ILL service.
- “Need a statewide union catalog.”

Suggestions for Improvement

- Better for money to go to local libraries (competitive grants, FEL) rather than State Library. State Library serves fewer people.

Division of Library and Information Services and Bureau of Library Development

The Division describes the work of the Bureau of Library Development (BLD) as supporting “...the establishment, expansion and improvement of public library service in Florida within the context of the larger library community by working proactively with library staff, governing officials, trustees and community supporters. The Office provides leadership, grant funding, and technical assistance; promotes advocacy and cooperation among all types of libraries; supports continuing education and staff development activities; and plans and implements a dynamic program of statewide development.”

Comments from the focus groups primarily praised BLD for its leadership in establishing, managing and supporting statewide programs.

Findings

Impact

When asked to rank BLD as a high, medium, or low priority, all the focus groups ranked the help they get from BLD as high. Some comments from focus group participants included:

- “You can call them if you have a problem.”
- “As a director, the services offered by the Bureau are huge. I have used it to develop a friends group, budget, etc.”
- “I’d be much more bogged down without this assistance.”
- It is hard to think about programs such as AaL and databases without staff to play a leadership role.”
- “We need the library development office. There is a small staff now. We don’t need consultants in the field but we need them to manage the statewide programs like databases, SRP, etc.”

Summer Reading Program

Several groups recognized and appreciated the leadership of the State Library in putting together the summer reading program. Florida is part of a national Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), with all 50 states participating. CSLP provides a theme, publicity materials, handouts (bookmarks, stickers, etc.), and a manual on using the theme. Focus group participants described the summer reading program as “very important,” “beneficial,” and “critical.” Focus group comments included:

- The summer reading is very big and used as a springboard for summer programs. They encourage summer youth camps and other groups to participate in parts of it.
- The library involves children, teens, and adults in the program. She asks parents to participate and help facilitate the program. A teen group started as an outgrowth of the summer program. Now the teen group does one on one reading.
- "Parents feel part of the library and have new respect for the library. The library is part of the community and the community is part of the library."
- The summer reading program "motivates (children) to read different types of literature, as the theme changes each year. They learn to love literature in different formats and turn ... into library users."

Issues and Concerns

Some participants felt that the Division travel restrictions limited their ability to provide leadership in the state. One participant said that because BLD staff cannot travel "it makes it difficult for them to find out what's going on in the state." Participants suggested that the Division staff participate in meetings (FLA Board, CCLA/FCLA meetings and other statewide library meetings) by conference call.

Participants were also concerned about a lack of communication about state government issues and activities, especially in the area of E-Government. Librarians said they were caught off guard by decisions of state social service agencies to close county offices and want the State Library to keep them informed about these changes.

Another concern was that the State Library focused on public library needs and concerns at the expense of academic and school libraries. One academic librarian said "the State Library doesn't care about us."

Focus groups participants asked for the Division and BLD to take the lead in helping Florida libraries identify a new role, new services, and space configuration for libraries to accommodate new services. The Division should advocate for support at the state level with the Governor, the legislature, and state agencies. Participants called for the Division to expand efforts to collaborate with state social service agencies to obtain more support for local libraries service, these agencies' clients, and more recognition for this new role of public libraries. As libraries continue to struggle with continually emerging technology, they called for the Division to take the lead in developing training programs for library staff.

Priorities for LSTA-funded Statewide Programs

As part of the Florida LSTA Five-Year Evaluation focus groups, participants were asked to provide the Division guidance on continued funding of existing LSTA-funded statewide programs. The groups were asked to rate the importance of the program using categorization of High, Medium or Low priority. The programs with the highest priority include E-Government, Bureau of Library Development, and the Florida Electronic Library focusing on the databases. These three programs received a High rating at all focus group sessions. The Competitive Grant Program was rated high at all but one session, while

Leadership Development and Ask a Librarian received a mixed rating ranging from high to low. The Statewide Resource Sharing and Collection Development Program was rated low by all groups.

In some cases modifications to the existing programs were recommended.

Program	Broward County Librarians-a.m.	Broward County Librarians-p.m.	Ft. Myers Librarians	Tampa Librarians	Orlando Librarians	Blountstown Librarians	Jacksonville Librarians
Florida Electronic Library	High Revise and focus on database including FloridaCat only	High	High Database only	High Reconceived	High Database needs to be reconceived.	High Needs to be redesigned, include e-books	High Database needs to be reconceived
E-Government	High	High	High	High	High	High	High (If enhanced, training modules, computers, bandwidth, if not low)
Competitive Grants	High	Low	High	High	High	Medium	High
Ask a Librarian	Medium	Medium	High	Low	Low	Low	Medium
Leadership Development	Medium Revise and reinvent	High	High	High	Low	High	Medium
Statewide Resource Sharing and Collection Development	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Bureau of Library Development	High	High	High	High	High	High	High

Trends and Observations

In meeting with more than 72 representatives from the Florida library community as part of the LSTA Five-Year evaluation, a number of trends emerged. These trends cross a range of topics, including:

- Continued expansion of library's role in E-Government services.

- Technology.
- Changing role of librarians and library facilities.
- Staff training.
- Collaboration.
- Marketing and promotion of libraries.
- Role of the Division.

E-Government: The introduction of E-Government across a range of Florida social services has had a significant impact on Florida's public libraries. Public libraries reported that E-Government is changing the role of the public library in the community and the role of librarians. It is raising questions related to how library facilities are used, including expansion of computing facilities; child care while parents are applying for services; and providing space for client consultation with social service agency representatives. The technology required to support E-Government has stressed existing technology infrastructure, from workstation availability to bandwidth availability. Participants felt that future success of E-Government is dependent on libraries, including the Division, developing and expanding partnerships with government and non-governmental organizations that provide social services. They recommended that the Division take a leadership role with state-level agencies, advocating and promoting the role libraries can play; being involved in creation and dissemination of promotional materials that reference libraries; and promoting funding of new initiatives libraries are asked to undertake. At the local level, libraries should work with local government and non-governmental organizations to develop partnerships that support E-Government initiatives.

Technology: Living and working in a digital environment requires technology. Libraries are not immune. Technology supports the work of the library staff and library users. Computer labs, readers and mobile devices are all commonplace tools. Libraries are challenged to have both a sufficient number of computers, and also by the continuous change in computing devices. Libraries and library conferences offer "petting zoos," sessions that provide training and allow experimentation with the diversity of digital devices owned by today's library users. In this environment libraries must have bandwidth to support all the digital activities that today's communities require.

Changing Role of Libraries/Librarians: Librarians from all types of libraries acknowledge that their role is changing. The digital library environment has changed the way users seek information and how libraries deliver it. "We see our library being 50% digital in five years," noted one public librarian. The development of digital libraries has changed the Florida library landscape. Books and periodicals are being removed from shelves as digital versions become available. Libraries must configure the newly found space, designing libraries that provide E-Government services, serve as a workplace for telecommuters and distance learners, and accommodate the ever-growing, technology-based environment.

Library users expect the library staff to assist them with the new technology that supports digital content, such as e-book readers and mobile applications. Librarians are seeing a shift in how users interact with the library. "We don't have visitors to our reference desk." We need to "...work where our users are, and that's the Web."

Staff Training Issues: To effectively respond, the library must adopt a continuous learning mode driven largely by the new technology and by diverse ways that their users seek and make use of information. Florida librarians accept the new role, understanding that they must take advantage of continuing education and training opportunities to remain current.

Collaboration at Local, Regional, and State Level: Librarians continue to support the importance of collaboration to meet user needs. Collaborations to meet future community needs must expand beyond the library community to include social service agencies and organizations, E-Government and business development programs, and other cultural heritage organizations.

Collaboration and partnerships need to be at all levels. Florida libraries need a framework for future collaboration involving library and non-library partners. The Division should be a leader in this effort.

Marketing, Promotion, and Branding: The marketing and promotion of the library is critical as the role of libraries changes. Developing messages that can be utilized statewide, along with tools for local customization, will help libraries communicate the new messages. The messages need to be conveyed through a diverse range of communication media, including social media (Facebook and Twitter) and traditional media (TV and radio). Economies of scale can be realized through a statewide campaign.

The Division Role: Along with other libraries, the role of the Division and its units is also changing. Libraries view the Division as a leader, an organization that can monitor state, national and international events and translate the impacts for the local library. The Division can also be an advocate for libraries, working across state government units and state-based organizations. The Division convenes groups to address issues key to libraries and their constituents.

These trends will be explored in more depth in the next Five-Year Plan.

The Community Focus Groups identified key issues facing Florida Communities. These will be explored in more detail in the development of the next Five-Year Plan.

- Economy/Employment/Underemployment
- Technology
- Transportation
- Diversity/Language Diversity
- Water
- Health
- Ethics Among Elected Officials
- Housing
- Perception that My Life will be Better if I Move to Florida

Table of Focus Group Location and Number of Participants

Florida LSTA Evaluation Focus Groups	Library Focus Groups	Community Focus Groups
Location	Number of attendees	Number of attendees
Broward County-Morning	9	None held
Broward County Afternoon	5	None held
Fort Myers	13	5
Tampa	13	5
Orlando	7	1
Blountstown	7	None held
Jacksonville	19	None held
Tallahassee	None held	8
Total	72	19

REPORT OF LIBRARY DIRECTOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 13-14, 2011

Methodology:

The Florida Public Library Directors meet annually as part of the Division of Library and Information Services Leadership Development program. More than 90 Florida public library directors, directors from the Florida multitype library cooperatives, and the Division staff assembled in Tallahassee on October 13-14, 2011, for a day and half meeting (<http://info.florida.gov/bld/leadership/annual-meeting.cfm>). As part of the meeting the participants discussed the role of the public library in modern Florida. This discussion was based on the presentations heard at the meeting, along with the participants' knowledge of their communities. Working in small groups, the participants identified nine major issues facing Floridians. The following morning, the directors formed discussion groups around the topics of the key issues. Within these groups, the library directors identified current and future strategies. Each group identified three or more responses.

Findings:

The major issues facing Floridians, identified by Florida Public Library Directors included:

- Unemployment/underemployment, including workforce training
- Education
- Technology access and training
- Transportation
- Diversity—diverse population
- Health issues/services/insurance
- Funding local and state government services
- Water resources
- Population decline

Group participants identified unemployment and underemployment as a major issue for Floridians, because of the economic meltdown of 2008 and associated collapse of the housing market. Participants reported that even when the long term unemployed find jobs, they are frequently underemployed and receiving significantly lower salaries. Furthermore, as sales tax receipts have declined, the government sector has reduced the workforce.

The state has implemented a multi-phased process of shifting social services previously offered through staffed offices to an online environment, resulting in mandatory online applications for unemployment, food stamps and children and family services. Libraries play a major role in supporting the online program, providing access to computers, instruction in use of technology, and instruction in completing applications.

Participants indicated that education, whether formal or informal learning, is a major concern for Floridians. With the 2008 recession, many long-term unemployed are looking for training in new skills. K-

12 is moving increasingly to online learning. Beginning in 2011-2012 students entering ninth grade must take at least one online course to meet graduation requirements. Computer literacy is a key need across the learning continuum. Public libraries are becoming the media center for K-12 programs that don't have a library or have a library with reduced funding. Libraries are working with lifelong learners by supporting distance learning and proctoring tests.

Technology access is increasingly important to all Floridians. Knowledge of and access to modern computing is required for more and more of daily activities. Demand for public access computing grows as social services are pushed to the online environment. Training in use of computing technology covers basic skills, such as how to operate a mouse, to more complex skills, the latest mobile devices and apps. As use of online technology increases the need for greater bandwidth capacity grows.

The diversity of Florida's residents continues to grow. Florida's residents speak and read many different languages including, but not limited to, Haitian Creole, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, etc. At the same time Florida is culturally diverse with a wide range of nationalities, races, religions and ethnicities.

Meeting participants said that health issues impact business growth in Florida, due to the uncertainty of the impact of the federal legislation; additionally the issue of uninsured residents continues to have a major impact on Florida due to the unemployment and underemployment rates.

Funding of state and local government is an issue in large part due to the decline in sales tax revenue, which is a major source of government revenue. Florida does not have an income tax, and relies on sales tax revenue. The downturn in sales tax revenue is in part due to the decline in Florida tourism. This decline has numerous ripple effects, including staff layoffs and shuttering of small business associated with tourism. The decline in housing values has also impacted local government revenue.

Water resources are an issue for those in Southern Florida, while Northern Florida is a provider of water.

Participants identified population decline as a change for Floridians after decades of in-migration. Retirees who have previously moved to the South are remaining in their home states due to uncertainty of retirement resources.

Library Responses:

Public libraries are currently addressing these issues in a variety of ways including:

- **E-Government:** As social services have moved to the online environment, public libraries have become a hub for E-Government support. Public libraries with their public access computing facilities have been a primary location for online filing for unemployment, food stamps and children and family services. Public libraries have developed online services that aggregate and organize the governmental and non-governmental organization sites, facilitating E-Government. Libraries are providing customer support on everything from what information the resident must enter into different online systems, training in computer use, workforce development training such as resume creation, and interviewing skills. Additionally libraries are partnering with local and county agencies to facilitate the use of E-Government.
- **Information Literacy/Technology Literacy:** Public libraries across Florida are offering access to the internet; additionally many libraries offer a range of computer training from basic introduction to

technology to workshops on applying technology, such as searching the internet, using specific software applications, and how to use technology for specific tasks such as resume development.

- Collaboration with Public and Private Agencies: Many of Florida’s public libraries collaborate with local and regional public and private agencies. The growth in partnerships with local social service agencies has been spurred by the E-Government initiatives. The libraries are continuing to collaborate with other libraries and are expanding their partnerships with their community’s cultural heritage organizations, including museums and historical societies.
- Summer Reading Program: Supported by the Division of Library and Information Services’ Florida Library Youth Program, public libraries are active participants in the Summer Reading Program. Working with their local schools, the public libraries work to ensure continued reading through the summer. The program includes both elementary, middle and high school students, where the older students assist the younger students in reading activities.
- Outreach Programs to Schools and Community Centers: Public libraries reported that they currently offer a variety of programs, particularly youth programs, in partnership with schools and community centers.

Future Responses:

Meeting participants identified the following strategies for addressing these issues:

- Library as Place: Florida’s public libraries view themselves as community gathering spaces. Libraries offer their residents places for group meetings and group study; with more telecommuting, the library is increasingly a workplace.
 - “Be open more hours and flexible hours—hours when users can actually use the library.”
 - “Enhance outreach activities to underserved communities using ambassadors from targeted communities.”
 - Reconfigure space to provide more and diverse meeting spaces.
- Collaboration with Non-Library Public and Private Agencies and Organizations: To better serve the Floridians’ social service needs Florida public libraries will increase collaboration with local agencies. Libraries can provide a range of programs and services including:
 - Technology skills training.
 - E-Government services, assistance, and access.
 - Small business development assistance.
 - Job interview skills.
 - Job broadcast letters.
 - Resume writing skills.
 - Business plan development assistance.
 - “Collaboration with schools—VISTA volunteers and AmeriCorps volunteers.”
 - Expanding partnerships to form outreach, One-Stop centers bringing providers, including local and state agencies, non-governmental agencies together in one location.
 - “Providing childcare so parent/guardian can attend classes/training.”
 - “Offer combo day care/job help/E-Government help.”

- **Mobile Design/Mobile Applications:** To respond to growth in mobile computing, libraries will increase their offering of apps, increase presence on social media, making services available 24/7.
- **Continuous Training for Staff and Public:** To meet the work and life needs in the information age, libraries will respond to the continuous learning needs of both staff and the public.
- **Support Small Business Development:**
 - Educational forums on how to start a new business—partner with SCORE, Chamber of Commerce, offer assistance in funding, writing a business plan.
 - Assist in identifying funding options and development of business plans.
 - Create a business center with dedicated PC for job information.
- **Public Library Outsources Service to Schools Where There is No School Library:** In communities across the country, public libraries are expanding their support for K-12 learning. More formal arrangements are seen as school librarians and school libraries are shuttered due to the economy.
- **Hiring Staff Who Can Identify with Community Being Served:** To meet the diverse needs of Florida residents, libraries will be hiring staff who can respond proactively to the language and cultural makeup of their communities.
- **Promote Tolerance:** As part of E-Government, public libraries offer a range of programs, including citizenship classes, and provide venues for community engagement. Future responses include:
 - Citizenship class preparation.
 - Diverse collections.
 - Language discussions (Spanish/English).
 - Community dialogue/forums.
 - Facilitate collaboration—virtual and physical; space for folks to come together; more outreach/partnerships.
 - Cultural programming.
 - Issue programming .
 - Intergenerational forum –what do 30-somethings want?
- **Virtual Library:** The virtual library has been developing in Florida’s public libraries for more than a decade. Responses to the future environment include:
 - Become more of a direct education facility—e.g., digital literacy.
 - Enable communication via social networking tools – e-books, Foursquare, twitter, etc.
- **Research and Development:** Provide funding for larger libraries to enable smaller libraries to participate in projects like Orange County Library System’s *The Right Service at the Right time*.
- **Collaborative Library Strategies:** Continue to expand service to Floridians through library collaboration. Suggestions included creation of a statewide Integrated Library System, development of a statewide card program, implementation of a statewide e-book program, etc.

Annex A



Agenda for Librarian Focus Groups Evaluation of LSTA Five-Year Plan Florida Division of Library and Information Services

1. Introductory Information
Introductions: Participants and Facilitators
Background Information on Purpose of Focus Groups
Objectives
 - Obtain impact data on key statewide programs funded with LSTA funds.
 - Obtain input on needs of Florida libraries in the next five years to better serve their users.
 - Obtain input on priorities for the use of LSTA funds in the next five years.Process Agreement

2. Evaluation of Key LSTA Statewide Programs
For each of the statewide LSTA programs below we will be asking:
 - a. Impact of this project on Florida residents and libraries, including both training of librarians and delivery of the service.
 - b. Improvements that could help this project have more impact.
 - c. Perceived value of continuing the program.
Programs chosen for discussion are:
 - Florida Electronic Library
 - E-Government
 - Ask a Librarian
 - Leadership Development
 - Competitive Grants

3. Of the statewide projects that the Division is currently funding with LSTA funds, which is so valuable that statewide funding should be continued until major circumstances change?

4. What do libraries need in the next five years to meet the needs of your library's current and future users?

5. Which of these needs are so important they should become statewide projects with long-term LSTA funding?

Two potential models:

- Statewide direct funding such as Ask a Librarian and databases
- Statewide focus on a topic for competitive grants such as E-Government

6. What did you come here today to tell us that you didn't get to say?

Nancy Bolt
Liz Bishoff
Nancy Bolt & Associates
9018 Ute Drive
Golden, CO 80493
303 642 0338
nancybolt@earthlink.net

Annex B

Division of Library and Information Services

The Division of Library and Information Services is the designated information resource provider for the Florida Legislature and all state agencies. The Division:

- Coordinates and helps to fund the activities of public libraries.
- Provides a framework for statewide library initiatives.
- Provides archival and records management services.
- Preserves, collects, and makes available the published and unpublished documentary history of the state.

State Library

The **State Library** has two locations: on the second floor of the R.A. Gray Building and the seventh floor of the Capitol. It provides priority information and research services to the members and staff of the Florida Legislature, as well as other state departments and agencies, and assists the general public with legislative research.

State Archives

The **State Archives** is the central repository for the archives of Florida's state government. It is mandated by law to collect, preserve, and make available for research the historically significant records of the state, as well as private manuscripts, local government records, photographs, and other materials that complement the official state records.

State Records Center

The **State Records Center** offers state and local government agencies low-cost; secure storage, reference service, and disposal of inactive paper records; security microfilm and electronic records storage; and microfilming services. The Florida Records Storage Center is a state-of-the-art facility with a storage capacity of over 250,000 cubic feet (equivalent to 16 football fields) and two climate controlled vaults for secure storage of microfilm and magnetic media.

Library Development

The **Bureau of Library Development** supports the establishment, expansion and improvement of public library service in Florida within the context of the larger library community by working proactively with library staff, governing officials, trustees and community supporters.

The Bureau provides leadership, grant funding, and technical assistance; promotes advocacy and cooperation among all types of libraries; supports continuing education and staff development activities; and plans and implements a dynamic program of statewide development.

Florida Administrative Code/Florida Administrative Weekly

The **Administrative Code, Weekly and Laws Section** is the filing point for rules made public by state regulatory agencies. Rules are published in the *Florida Administrative Code*. The program is also responsible for publishing the *Florida Administrative Weekly*.

The mission of this section is to file, preserve and make available to the public the rules and other public records it receives. To guide state agencies, staff members provide training and consultation on the requirements for filing rules and publishing rules, meetings and other notices.

Florida Electronic Library

The **Florida Electronic Library (FEL)** provides statewide access and resource sharing of electronic resources and services to all residents of the state of Florida. A Web-based portal allows users to retrieve information from multiple sources using a single search engine and a single query. From the same website, FEL users have statewide access to:

A set of licensed databases which offer access to comprehensive, accurate, and reliable information on current events, education, business, technology, and health, including:

- Electronic magazines, newspapers, almanacs, encyclopedias, and books.
- The Virtual Union Catalog of holdings of Florida libraries.
- Interlibrary loan service.
- Local digital content.
- Homework help and resources for teachers.

FloridaCat Group Catalog

FloridaCat Group Catalog is an electronic catalog of books and other materials in Florida libraries available through OCLC.



All Florida libraries that are members of the Florida Library Information Network are eligible to participate in the **Florida Library Network Statewide Ground Delivery** program, which provides pickup and delivery of interlibrary loan materials among over 200 libraries throughout Florida.

Florida on Florida



Florida on Florida is a catalog of digital materials related to Florida. It includes all sorts of items, including maps, photographs, postcards, books, and manuscripts. The materials in Florida on Florida come from digital collections held by libraries, archives, museums and historical societies throughout Florida.

Ask a Librarian

Ask a Librarian provides Florida residents with live virtual reference services via local library customized websites from 10 a.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday (EST) and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday (EST). An email form is available to residents 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Virtual reference service, online information and research assistance to the public is provided by volunteer librarians.

Florida Memory Project



The **Florida Memory Project** Web initiative presents a selection of historical records that illustrate significant moments in Florida history, educational

resources for students of all ages, and archival collections for historical research. The Project utilizes selected original records, photographs and other materials from the collections of the State Library and Archives of Florida.