

Alabama Public Library Service

**EVALUATION OF THE ALABAMA PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE  
STATE PLAN 2007-2012 AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
FUTURE PLANNING**

**JENNIFER CAMPBELL-MEIER**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

**ELIZABETH AVERSA**

PROFESSOR

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

**ELIZABETH LEVKOFF and GREG CARR**

MLIS STUDENT ASSISTANTS

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

February 27, 2012

Alabama Public Library Service  
6030 Monticello Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36177

## Contents

<b><i>Introduction .....</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Evaluation Summary .....</i></b>	<b>3</b>
Process Questions.....	3
Prospective Questions .....	4
Key Lessons .....	4
<b><i>Optional Prospective Questions .....</i></b>	<b>5</b>
Major Challenges and Opportunities.....	5
Recommendations .....	5
<b><i>Evaluation Methodology .....</i></b>	<b>7</b>
Evaluation and Interpretation .....	7
Dissemination and Communication of the Key Findings and Recommendations.....	7
IMLS Congressional Priorities .....	7
Key Recommendations .....	7
<b><i>Evaluation Report Narrative .....</i></b>	<b>9</b>
Background of the Study.....	9
Evaluation Plan.....	10
Direct Collection of Input.....	10
Indirect Collection of Input .....	11
Rationale .....	11
Findings from Review of Grant Awards, FY2008-FY2011 .....	12
Findings from Document Analysis of APLS Listserv Activity .....	13
Findings from Document Analysis of APLS Annual Reports and Directors' Survey.....	14
LSTA Priority 1 .....	14
LSTA Priority 2 .....	15
LSTA Priority 3 .....	15
LSTA Priority 4 .....	15
LSTA Priority 5 .....	15
LSTA Priority 6 .....	16
Findings from Surveys.....	16
Summary .....	20
<b><i>Appendix 1. Acronyms .....</i></b>	<b>23</b>
<b><i>Appendix 2. Stakeholders .....</i></b>	<b>24</b>
Appendix 2A. Demographics of Stakeholders Contributing to the Evaluation .....	25
Appendix 2B. Stakeholders in Evaluation of the State Plan .....	30
<b><i>Appendix 3. List of Documents Analyzed .....</i></b>	<b>34</b>
<b><i>Appendix 4. Optional Output of Statistical Findings .....</i></b>	<b>35</b>
Appendix 4A. Reported Benefits of Library Use for Alabama Residents.....	36
Appendix 4B. Grants Awarded 2008-2011 by APLS Categories.....	38
Appendix 4C. Analysis of Listserv Messages.....	39
Appendix 4D. Library Futures .....	40
Appendix 4E. APLS Goals Mapped to the LSTA Priorities with Documentation of Performance	68

Appendix 4F. Describing the present and imagining the future of Alabama Public Libraries.....	85
<b>Appendix 5. Codebooks for Data.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Appendix 6. Surveys and Town Hall Meetings Documents.....</b>	<b>103</b>
Appendix 6A. Survey – Planning.....	104
Appendix 6B. Survey – Public.....	113
Appendix 6C. Town Hall Script.....	124
Appendix 6D. Town Hall Instructions.....	125
<b>Appendix 7. Presentation to APLS Board of Trustees.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Appendix 8. 2011 Patron Survey for Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services.....</b>	<b>141</b>

## **Introduction**

The Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) engaged in an evaluation of its programs and services during the period May 2011 through January 2012. The activities undertaken in the evaluation process assessed how well the goals of State's Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) and the Federal priorities for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) were met. The evaluators collected and analyzed data that would reveal how well the State performed with regard to its last 5-year Plan and that would inform future planning by the State's library agency and the public library community.

This report addresses the questions in the "Guidelines for Five-Year Evaluation" and provides a series of appendices that support the findings in the evaluation.

## **Evaluation Summary**

The activities undertaken through the State's LSTA plan have achieved results that relate to the priorities identified in the Act. Specifically, the plan articulated 37 program activities, exclusive of grant awards, that related directly to the federal priorities. The evaluation showed that:

- 24 programs (65 percent) met the goals and are ongoing;
- 7 programs (19 percent) partially met the goals and are ongoing;
- 2 programs (5 percent) fully met the goals; and were completed
- 4 program (11 percent) activities either did not meet their goals or were discontinued during the five-year period.
- Grant awards supported all priorities listed in the Act.

Due to the nature of the competitive grant funding cycle in Alabama, adjustments cannot be made during a one-year project. One year is the period covered by LSTA funding awards. However, ongoing statewide initiatives do allow for adjustments. Services have been discontinued if usage or participation did not warrant continuation. An example is the discontinuation of deposit collections of talking books from the APLS Department for the Blind and Physically Handicapped for library users with special needs. (This service activity was reported as "not met.")

The evaluation of the results for the retrospective questions relate only to the implementation of statewide programs, not programs in local libraries funded by competitive grants.

The data collected via a Public Survey suggest that programs and services benefitted users with widely diverse information needs. The survey indicated that both personal enhancement activities and personal decision-making needs were met. See Appendix 4A for more information on the benefits of programs for Alabama library users.

## **Process Questions**

The Plan was not modified.

As mentioned above, the nature of the competitive grant funding cycle in Alabama precludes making changes, even if based on performance metrics, during the one-year project period. Ongoing statewide initiatives, which may be funded in part by LSTA funds, do allow for adjustments. Managerial decisions regarding statewide program continuation are informed by cost-benefit analyses, so programs may be altered to reflect usage of services, participation in programs, and costs.

Outcome-based data is difficult to collect for LSTA grants since the LSTA grant cycle is a single year. However, outcomes do relate to the purposes for which residents report using their libraries: for decision-making and for personal enhancement.

Appendix 4A provides additional detail.

- Some projects and on-going statewide services do not lend themselves to outcome based assessment.
- Outcome-based data are being requested of grant recipients as part of their evaluations. As recipients learn more about outcome-based assessments they may begin to follow-up on their projects in the longer term. This is a recommendation for both local libraries and APLS.

### **Prospective Questions**

APLS plans to share performance metrics and other evaluation-related information within and outside of the SLAA to inform policy and administrative decisions during the next five years by:

- Publish relevant aspects of the evaluation report on the agency's website;
- Include evaluation-related information in the agency's newsletter and annual reports;
- Report on the State's plan at COSLA and at other relevant professional meetings and conferences;
- Distribute information on performance to legislators at state and national Legislative Days;
- Share evaluation findings in LSTA workshops for prospective grant seekers; and Collaborate with the evaluators to publish methods and results in the peer-reviewed literature.

Performance data such as participation rates for programs, usage rates for materials, and goals partially met can be used as starting points for establishing goals and objectives for the next planning period. For example, APLS might establish a higher target for the number of people using Homework Alabama and provide support and marketing so that a greater percentage of Alabama students can receive the service during the next plan period.

The demographic data collected during this evaluation can be used to arrive at more detailed information regarding the use of various materials and services by particular populations.

### **Key Lessons**

Outcome-based data is difficult to gather for many library programs. For example, one cannot easily obtain reading scores for students who have participated in summer reading programs to

establish an outcome due to privacy concerns; adults who attend job-search programs or use library computers to file employment applications may not report the outcome of their use. It is simply difficult to develop the kind of outcome measures that are needed.

Libraries and the APLS might explore the use of journaling, reflection, testimonials, and other similar means to get users to report outcomes of library use. Enlisting the support of users in the collection of these data might reveal interesting unexplored outcomes.

A public education program for staff and users might also encourage reporting of outcomes. Staff could be educated as to why outcome measures are important in constructing arguments for the support of library programs; the public could learn why the librarians hope that they will share outcomes in support of libraries.

## **Optional Prospective Questions**

### **Major Challenges and Opportunities**

The breadth of the congressional priorities allows for a vast variety of programs that State Library can offer to meet State and local needs. This is helpful in its flexibility, but it also makes relating local goals, objectives and program activities to the federal priorities a difficult task, particularly when several state/local goals support multiple federal priorities. A more intuitive evaluation process, encompassing input, output, and outcome metrics, might be possible if APLS could directly adopt some or all of the federal priorities as their goals and set targets specifically related to those rather than developing a second set of broad overarching priorities or goal statements.

If possible, the planning process for 2013-2017 should map the Alabama plan and programs, including the grant categories, directly to the LSTA priorities. This will facilitate interim as well as the final evaluation of the plan's performance in 2017.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations for justifying the continuation, expansion and/or adoption of promising programs in the next five-year plan include:

- Addressing the recurring themes identified by the constituents in two distinct categories: those that can and should be addressed by APLS and those that should be addressed at the local level with APLS assistance and support.
- APLS themes included (1) defining the advocacy role, (2) providing funding from federal and state resources, (3) developing statewide collections of resources such as e-books and databases, (4) providing technology funding, training, and assistance, and (5) providing for the training and education of board members, staff, and library directors. Local themes included (1) addressing the need for facilities, both new and renovated, (2) developing local funding sources, and (3) developing programs and services that address local needs.

- A recurrent theme in the data collected is the need for libraries to be increasingly community-oriented, to be centers of community activity, and to develop relationships and collaborate with other organizations and institutions.
- Appendix 4D provides details on additional library futures and how they might develop.

The data collected suggest that most program activities should continue. However, a reordering of priorities is suggested.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

### **Evaluation and Interpretation**

Elizabeth Aversa and Jennifer Campbell-Meier submitted a proposal and APLS selected theirs for the evaluation contract. The evaluators did the work with APLS input and assistance.

### **Dissemination and Communication of the Key Findings and Recommendations**

In addition to the evaluators meeting with the Board of APLS, APLS will disseminate findings by:

- Publishing relevant aspects of the evaluation report on the agency's website;
- Including evaluation related information in the agency's newsletter and annual reports;
- Reporting on the State's plan at COSLA and at other relevant professional meetings and conferences;
- Distributing information on performance to legislators at state and national Legislative Days;
- Sharing evaluation findings in LSTA workshops for prospective grant seekers; and
- Collaborating with the evaluators to publish methods and results in the peer-reviewed literature.

### **IMLS Congressional Priorities**

The IMLS priorities are the overarching priorities against which the APLS goals and program activities are assessed. They are provided here for the reader's reference.

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.
5. Targeting 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. Targeting 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 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

### **Key Recommendations**

This section discusses recurring themes identified by the constituents in two distinct categories: those that can and should be addressed by APLS and those that should be addressed at the local level with APLS assistance and support. Carefully differentiate and communicate the two roles.

APLS themes included (1) defining the advocacy role, (2) providing funding from federal and state resources, (3) developing statewide collections of resources such as e-books and databases, (4) providing technology funding, training, and assistance, and (5) providing for the training and education of board members, staff, and library directors. Local themes included (1) addressing the need for facilities, both new and renovated, (2) developing local funding sources, and (3) developing programs and services that address local needs.

- A recurrent theme is the need for libraries to be increasingly community-oriented, to be centers of community activity, and to develop relationships and collaborate with other organizations and institutions.
- An administrative recommendation is to consistently name and label priorities, metrics, and outcomes.
- Libraries and the APLS might explore the use of journaling, reflection, testimonials, and other similar means to get users to report outcomes of library use. Enlisting the support of users in the collection of these data might reveal interesting unexplored outcomes.
- A public education program for staff and users might also encourage reporting of outcomes. Staff could be educated as to why outcome measures are important in constructing arguments for the support of library programs; the public could learn why the librarians hope that they will share outcomes in support of libraries.
- Focus on advocacy, including training, PR and marketing of library services, technology support and outreach.
- Focus on Statewide programs such as summer reading; and statewide collection development (including databases and electronic books).
- See also Appendices for supporting data.

## Evaluation Report Narrative

### Background of the Study

The School of Library & Information Studies at the University of Alabama was charged in May 2011 with gathering input on public library performance and needs, analyzing and synthesizing it, and reporting to the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) in preparation for the development of the next Five-Year Plan (FY2012-FY2017) for the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The IMLS that administers the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and allocates its funds to the states requires that each state submit a five-year plan based on, in part, an evaluation of accomplishments and progress on the previous plan's goals and objectives.

The data was gathered and analyzed by the co-PIs, Elizabeth Aversa and Jennifer Campbell-Meier, with assistance of two graduate students in the Master of Library and Information Studies program at The University of Alabama. This group is hereinafter referenced as "the evaluators." The findings from the work described herein serve as the basis for this report and its recommendations.

The intended audience for the report is the Alabama Public Library Service, its board and its constituents. Findings from the evaluation will be incorporated into reports and plans that will be produced by APLS for the Federal IMLS.

The overarching question that the evaluation sought to answer is: did the priorities, programs, activities and practices undertaken under the State's Five-Year Plan for FY2008-FY2012 achieve the State's intended results and address the priorities identified in the Federal Act? A secondary objective was to identify and recommend priorities, goals, objectives and programs to be considered for the next five-year plan. The methodologies employed and the answers to the retrospective, process, and prospective questions called for in the IMLS *Guidelines for Five-Year Evaluation* provide evidence for the responses to the overarching and subordinate questions.

Through the several methods selected for data collection and analysis, the evaluators attempted, as David Krathwohl suggests, to optimize both credibility with the audience and resource allocation for the evaluation project.<sup>1</sup> Within constraints of time, distribution of effort, and budget, the evaluators selected methods that would yield sufficient data to answer the questions posed in the *Guidelines for Five-Year Evaluation* and to provide APLS some guidance for future planning.

<sup>1</sup> David R. Krathwohl, *Methods of Educational and Social Science Research: The Logic of Methods* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2009, 59.

## **Evaluation Plan**

The evaluation plan called for two direct methods and one indirect method for collection of input on the accomplishments, shortcomings, and aspirations for public libraries as stated by library leaders and public library users. The direct methods were two online surveys and a series of seven Town Hall Meetings at which those interested in libraries identified and prioritized library accomplishments and needs. APLS staff and consultants through several meetings and informal interviews provided additional direct input. The seven Town Hall Meetings were scheduled and held in June and July 2011.

Indirect and unobtrusive data collection was accomplished through the evaluators' analysis of various APLS documents that are described below.

### **Direct Collection of Input**

An Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved online survey was opened to the state's library leadership beginning in June and continuing until August 1<sup>st</sup>. This survey, entitled the APLS Planning Survey, was publicized by the APLS staff on the public library listserv (APLSadmin) and by communication from APLS staff to key elected officials throughout Alabama. The survey consisted of nineteen questions, eight of which sought demographic data and eleven that sought opinions about library services in the state. There was an item that asked for open-ended comments as well. The first survey was designed to inform the design for the APLS Public Survey that was administered in October through mid-November. The APLS Planning Survey instrument is reproduced as Appendix 6A.

The APLS Public Survey was also approved by the University of Alabama's IRB, and it was opened online in October for completion by November 15<sup>th</sup>. This survey was slightly longer than the first, consisting of 22 questions and an open-ended opportunity for comment. Of the 22 formal questions, nine requested demographic data and 13 were questions about library use, potential use, and priorities that public libraries have addressed or might address in the future.

Procedures were in place to ensure that prospective respondents could use a print-on-paper survey if requested. The APLS Public Survey instrument is contained in Appendix 6B.

In addition to the surveys, seven Town Hall Meetings were held at libraries in distinct regions of the State during June and July 2011. The schedule consisted of the following meetings at locations from the far southeastern to extreme northwestern corners of Alabama:

- (1) Enterprise, June 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Enterprise Public Library
- (2) Montgomery, June 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Alabama Public Library Service agency
- (3) Boaz, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at the Boaz Public Library
- (4) Florence, June 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library
- (5) Hoover, July 18<sup>th</sup>, at the Hoover Public Library
- (6) Demopolis, July 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Demopolis Public Library
- (7) Daphne, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, at the Daphne Public Library

The distribution of meetings across the state made it possible for any resident or library staff member wishing to participate to be within a one-day turn around driving distance.

### **Indirect Collection of Input**

Indirect collection of input was completed through analysis of documents provided by the APLS. In order to identify priorities addressed by APLS and public library programs, the evaluators reviewed the following:

- a. the State Plan for FY2008-FY2012;
- b. reports on grant projects funded by APLS/LSTA from FY2008 through FY2011;
- c. APLS annual reports;
- d. results from an APLS directors' survey;
- e. messages posted to the State's public library administrator listserv.
- f. Interviews with APLS staff, as needed, provided additional information and clarification of documents.

A complete list of the documents reviewed is at [Appendix 3](#).

### **Rationale**

The rationale for the use of multiple means of data collection is seated in the belief that, although no method is perfect, triangulation of data enabled the evaluators to determine the strength and weakness of responses across methods and thus to better interpret the findings. This is an advantage of the use of both direct and indirect means of collecting data, and it is the reason that surveys, Town Hall Meetings, and document analyses were employed. Each of these, of course, has its own strengths and shortcomings.

The two surveys were approved by the University of Alabama's IRB, and ensured the safe and ethical treatment of humans as subjects in research in accordance with federal and university regulations. The surveys were administered online using a web survey tool, so the identities of the respondents were protected. The web-based survey was used due to the low cost of administration and the expanded time frame for response.<sup>2</sup> However, the tradeoff here was that the online survey was advertised through online sources, although libraries were prepared to provide print-on-paper instruments if requested. Some prospective participants may have been missed due to the use of the web survey.

Since respondents to the surveys were self-selected, there was likely bias toward those who were concerned with libraries. The collection of demographic information allowed for future analysis by county, region, age group, gender, and respondent type, and enabled the evaluators to determine if the target populations were reached by the data collection strategies employed. For the first survey (Planning Survey) this was not the weakness it might have been since the goal was to survey Alabama's public library leaders. The distribution of respondents indicates that 86.6 percent of them were associated with public libraries: they were library directors,

<sup>2</sup> Palmer Morrell Samuels, "Web Surveys' Hidden Hazards," *Harvard Business Review* July 2002, p. 2.

staff members, board members, or elected or municipal officials, so the survey reached, to a large degree the intended audience.

The Public Survey, administered later, also reached a self-selected group, but the intended audience did respond. The distribution of respondents to the Public Survey indicated that over 60 percent of the respondents were “users” not associated with public libraries in any official capacity. Overall, then, the evaluators believe that the surveys reached the intended audiences to the greatest degree possible, that respondents were not limited in their responses by forced choice answers due to the presence of open-ended questions, and that the respondents truthfully and accurately answered the questions. The questions were structured so as to evoke responses high on reliability.<sup>3</sup> Both surveys evoked responses to open ended questions such as “Are there any other needs that could or should be addressed [in the next state plan]?” Respondents to the Planning Survey contributed 46 comments to the summary open-ended questions and 115 respondents to the Public Survey did the same.

The Town Hall Meetings were structured events designed to include several different activities for gathering data. Two exercises were futures oriented. Participants speculated on preferred futures for public libraries in a relatively unstructured exercise and then identified potential social, political, economic, technological and legal influences that might affect their libraries’ futures. Finally, modified focus groups were used to gather opinions about the state’s performance in meeting its priorities on the FY2008-FY2012 LSTA plan and to generate ideas about what issues need to be addressed in the next five-year plan. The participants were assembled but not selected by the evaluators, but nonetheless this modified focus group method had an advantage of enabling evaluators to observe participants voicing agreement and disagreements and forming new perspectives in the process. The trade-off disadvantage is that some participants may have been more reserved in their opinions than they might have been in individual interviews. Appendix 6C contains the introductory script that was used to introduce and explain the activities employed in the Town Hall Meetings.

Appendix 2A contains demographic information on the stakeholders who provided input via surveys and Town Hall Meetings. Lists of individuals who attended the meetings and who were interviewed comprise Appendix 2B.

#### **Findings from Review of Grant Awards, FY2008-FY2011**

A review of the LSTA grants awarded to Alabama libraries between 2008 and 2011 revealed that the Federal priorities were well served by the grant program of the APLS. The largest number of grants awarded was categorized as “Collection Development” for which 180 grants were awarded during the four years for which statistics are available. The collection development rubric can be mapped to LSTA Priority 1: Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries,

<sup>3</sup> Mick P. Couper, “Web Surveys: A Review of Issues and Approaches,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, 2000, p. 464-494. The author describes shortcomings and remedies but suggests that a 100 percent unbiased and reliable survey is an impossibility.

for individuals of all ages. The second highest number of grants went for Information Access and Collection Control, with 86 grants awarded. This APLS category of grants maps directly to LSTA Priority 2 (Developing library services that provide all users access to information through, local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks) and Priority 3 (Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries). Grants awarded under these categories accounted for 64 percent of the total number of grants awarded, and for 55.5 percent of the value of all grants awarded through the competitive grant program (~\$2.7 million of the total ~\$4.8 million). When 2011 grants awarded under the revised rubric "Library Technology & Automation" are added, the number of grants and the amount of funding associated with Federal LSTA priorities 1, 2 and 3 increased by some 35 grants with a value of \$130,000.

The analysis of the grant awards includes few outcome measures because the APLS grant period is only one year. By the time awardees receive their grants, the full year is required to initiate and implement the programs supported by the grant funding. There are often insufficient resources to carry out extensive outcome assessments after the grant period ends. The collection of anecdotal information from users would begin to address this issue. Such evidence of outcomes is requested for the final reports that grant awardees are required to provide to APLS.

When library users reported on what public library services they used most frequently (APLS Public Survey), the responses were congruent with the allocation of LSTA grant funds. Most users reportedly availed themselves of collections including books, e-books, audio books and DVDs (ranked number one by 244 respondents) and Internet/Computer Access (ranked number one by 76 respondents). Over 99 percent of respondents used the library collections and 95 percent used computers in the library. These findings show that the grant program of APLS supports the services most often accessed by Alabama's library users.

Additional details on grants awarded and the priorities that they supported are found in the table at [Appendix 4B](#).

### **Findings from Document Analysis of APLS Listserv Activity**

To get an unobtrusive look at what questions and topics Alabama public librarians are concerned about, a document analysis was done on the messages on the APLS administrators' listserv. A moderated listserv, the APLS administrators' listserv provides a vehicle for communication among the public and state library leaders in Alabama. Nearly 1,000 messages from the list captured during three months in fall of 2011 were categorized by topics, sorted, and the results interpreted. The numbers of messages associated with each category are reported in the table in [Appendix 4C](#).

The original classification scheme for the listserv messages included a category for "announcements." This category of messages was found to have little content of interest for the evaluation, so those messages were removed from the analysis. The classification of the remaining 841 messages suggests that programs and services are paramount for the library

directors. They turn to one another and to the state library for information on these substantive topics. Technology questions and information sharing was second. Together, Programs/Services (27 percent) and Technology (16 percent) accounted for 43 percent of all messages. The messages in the two categories accounting for nearly half of all messages relate to the LSTA priorities 1, 2, and 3, suggesting that Alabama public library directors are concerned with these priority areas on a day-to-day basis. Other topics that accounted for ten or more percent of messages were those concerned with developing communication with other librarians (13 percent) and library development (10 percent). The four most frequent topics accounted for two-thirds (66 percent) of all the traffic on this listserv. There was no traffic about the economy, demographic changes, or any new topics not already identified.

The emphases on programs and services and technology in the listserv messages are congruent with the ranking of priorities from the Planning Survey that was answered by library leaders in the State. The message contents also reflect librarians' concerns with the programs and services most utilized by Alabama public library users as identified in the Public Survey.

### **Findings from Document Analysis of APLS Annual Reports and Directors' Survey**

This section of the report is organized by the six IMLS Congressional priorities as articulated in *Library Services and Technology Act, The Alabama Public Library Service Five-Year Plan, October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2012*, hereinafter called the Plan.

The Plan was organized around five "areas of need" identified through the evaluation of the FY2003-FY2007 Plan that took place in 2006-2007. Each of the programs and activities that were developed to address the needs supported one or more of the priorities stated in the LSTA, 20 USC Section 9141. In this section, the status of each program activity is reported: the priorities are reported as *fully met, met – ongoing, partially met – ongoing, or not met*.

The table in Appendix 4E maps all five Alabama priorities and program activities to the Federal LSTA priorities and lists the status of each and the evidence supporting the status. The sources of data supporting these findings include a Library Directors' Survey administered by APLS in 2011, the APLS Annual Reports for 2008 through 2011, reports of LSTA grants awarded to Alabama public libraries from 2008 through 2011, and information gathered through interviews and meetings with APLS staff. The findings are summarized here.

**LSTA Priority 1:** Expanding 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.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting the LSTA priority was eleven. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: two were fully met, six were met-ongoing, one was partially met-ongoing, and two were not met. The Alabama goal that best supported the federal priority was to "Strengthen information services through the provision of library materials and informational programs for all Alabamians."

**LSTA Priority 2:** Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting the LSTA priority was six. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: three were met-ongoing and three were partially met-ongoing. The Alabama goal that best supported the federal priority was to "Strengthen information technology in public libraries by (1) establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among or between libraries, (2) electronically linking libraries with educational, social, or information services, (3) accessing information through electronic networks, (4) paying the costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunication technologies, (5) paying the costs for libraries to acquire other technologies to record, save and retrieve information, and (6) training library staff and users".

**LSTA Priority 3:** Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting the LSTA priority was three. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: two were met-ongoing and one was partially met-ongoing. The Alabama goal that best supported this federal priority was to "Strengthen information technology in public libraries by (1) establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among or between libraries, (2) electronically linking libraries with educational, social, or information services, (3) accessing information through electronic networks, (4) paying the costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunication technologies, (5) paying the costs for libraries to acquire other technologies to record, save and retrieve information, and (6) training library staff and users."

**LSTA Priority 4:** Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting the LSTA priority was two. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: one was met-ongoing and the other was partially met-ongoing. Alabama goals that supported this Federal priority were to "Strengthen communities by assisting public libraries to: (a) serve as community activity and learning centers, (b) serve as central sources of information about their communities and about community services, (c) partner with other community agencies, institutions, and organizations to improve the quality of life for all of their citizens, (d) cooperate with their local governments and associated agencies to assist in the economic development of their communities, and (e) promote awareness of community services and awareness of the intrinsic value of public libraries;" and to "Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access."

**LSTA Priority 5:** Targeting 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.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting the LSTA priority was six. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: Five of the goals were categorized as met-ongoing and one was not met due to discontinuation of a program for lack of need. The Alabama goal that served all six program activities was to “Strengthen information services through the provision of library materials and informational programs for all Alabamians.”

**LSTA Priority 6:** Targeting 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 USC Section 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

The number of Alabama program activities supporting this sixth LSTA priority was nine. Targets for this priority were evaluated as follows: six were met-ongoing, one was not met and two were partially met-ongoing. The Alabama goal that best supported the federal priority was to “Strengthen youth and family by targeting library and information services to: (1) to youth (from birth through 17) in underserved urban and rural communities, including youth from families with incomes below the poverty line, and (2) to the parents and care-givers to improve their child-rearing knowledge and skills.”

Overall, the review of the APLS Annual Reports and the 2011 Directors’ Survey revealed that of 37 Alabama program activities that supported the LSTA priorities, more than half (24 or 65 percent) were met and ongoing. Another seven program activities (19 percent) partially met their targets and are continuing, while two were fully met (5 percent) and four were not met or were discontinued (11 percent).

### **Findings from Surveys**

The Planning Survey and the Public Survey asked respondents to rank the five APLS Goals in order of importance and then to identify the priorities that have been “best addressed” and those “requiring most improvement.” Both the leaders in the library community (Planning Survey) and users (Public Survey) ranked the priorities as follows:

**Table 1: APLS Goals Ranked by Survey Respondents**

Rank	Goals in the FY 2008-FY2012 Plan
1	<u>Strengthen information technology</u> in public libraries by: (1) establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among or between libraries, (2) electronically linking libraries with educational, social, or information services, (3) accessing information through electronic networks, (4) paying the costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunication technologies, (5) paying the costs for libraries to acquire other technologies to record, save and retrieve information, and (6) training library staff and users.
2	<u>Strengthen communities</u> by assisting public libraries to: (a) serve as community activity and learning centers, (b) serve as central sources of information about their communities and about community services, (c) partner with other community agencies, institutions, and organizations to improve the quality of life for all of their citizens, (d) cooperate with their local governments and associated agencies to assist in the economic development of their communities, and (e) promote awareness of community services and awareness of the intrinsic value of public libraries.
3	<u>Strengthen information services</u> through the provision of library materials and informational programs for all Alabamians.
4	<u>Strengthen youth and family</u> by targeting library and information services to: (1) to youth (from birth through 17) in underserved urban and rural communities, including youth from families with incomes below the poverty line, and (2) to the parents and care-givers to improve their child-rearing knowledge and skills.
5	<u>Develop and strengthen partnerships</u> with other units within State government, private industry and the non-profit sector to help provide (1) information and educational resources for public libraries and the people they serve and (2) information for government officials so that they can better perform their work in serving the people of Alabama.

While respondents to both surveys ranked the goals identically, there were differences in their identification of areas of need that have been best served during the period FY2008-FY2012 and that continue to need improvement. Table 2 below summarizes the data.

**Table 2: Rankings of APLS Goals as Best Addressed and Needing Improvement**

Goals FY2008-FY2012	Rank and Percentage identified as "best addressed" by leadership	Rank and Percentage identified as "best addressed" by public	Rank and Percentage identified as "needing most improvement" by leadership	Rank and Percentage identified as "needing most improvement" by public
Strengthen Information Technology	1 <sup>st</sup> 40.7 percent	2 <sup>nd</sup> 32.0 percent	1 <sup>st</sup> 29.2 percent	3 <sup>rd</sup> 22.2 percent
Strengthen Communities	3 <sup>rd</sup> 18.1 percent	4 <sup>th</sup> 15.3 percent	2 <sup>nd</sup> 25.9 percent	1 <sup>st</sup> 24.6 percent
Strengthen Information Services	4 <sup>th</sup> 11.0 percent	3 <sup>rd</sup> 15.6 percent	3 <sup>rd</sup> 17.8 percent	2 <sup>nd</sup> 23.3 percent
Strengthen Youth & Family	2 <sup>nd</sup> 27.5 percent	1 <sup>st</sup> 32.8 percent	5 <sup>th</sup> 9.7 percent	5 <sup>th</sup> 13.1 percent
Develop & strengthen partnerships	5 <sup>th</sup> 2.7 percent	5 <sup>th</sup> 4.3 percent	4 <sup>th</sup> 17.3 percent	4 <sup>th</sup> 16.8 percent

The relatively higher rankings of the “information technology” and “youth and family” goals by both library leaders and users suggest that these areas have been adequately addressed by APLS programs, grants, and statewide services. The “youth and family” goal follows suit with its last place rankings as needing improvement. However, the “information technology” goal seems to be an ongoing need in the view of the library leadership but not so much in the eyes of users. This is likely an artifact of the librarians knowing more than the users about the possibilities of information technology for libraries, while the users may be more impressed than the library leaders by what the libraries offer in the way of computers, programs and training in the technology area.

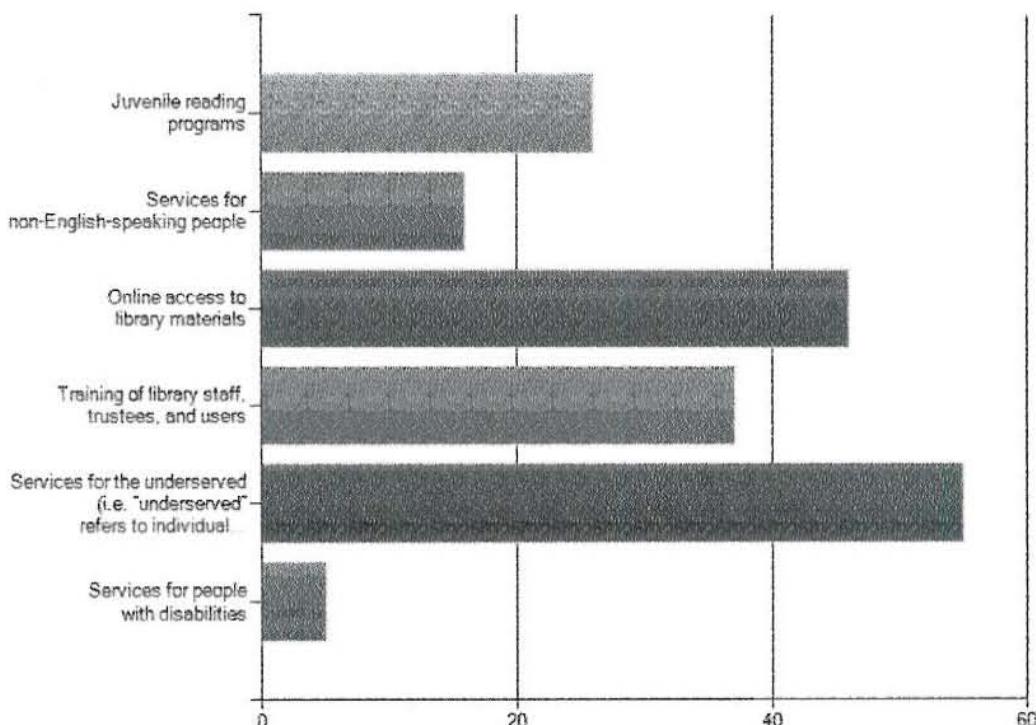
“Strengthening communities” was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in “needing improvement” by respondents to Public Planning Surveys. This suggests that Alabamians who are interested in public libraries are seeking assistance in advocacy, public relations, and communications about the libraries and the services they offer. This was also identified in the exercises in the Town Hall Meetings where “community” was frequently mentioned.

“Strengthening information services”, the third goal, was regarded by both the leadership and the public as a priority that needs continual addressing.

In addition to the five APLS goals, several key programs were identified in the FY2008-FY2012 State Plan. Those who took the Planning Survey were asked to select the one program they believed to need the most improvement.

Services for the “underserved” was considered the area most needing improvement (29.7%), and online access to library materials was a close second (24.9%). Training of library staff, trustees, and users ranked third at 20%. Services for non-English speakers and services for those with disabilities were ranked as least needing improvement at 8.6% and 2.7%, respectively. The chart below shows the number of respondents that selected each program as most needing improvement.

**Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**

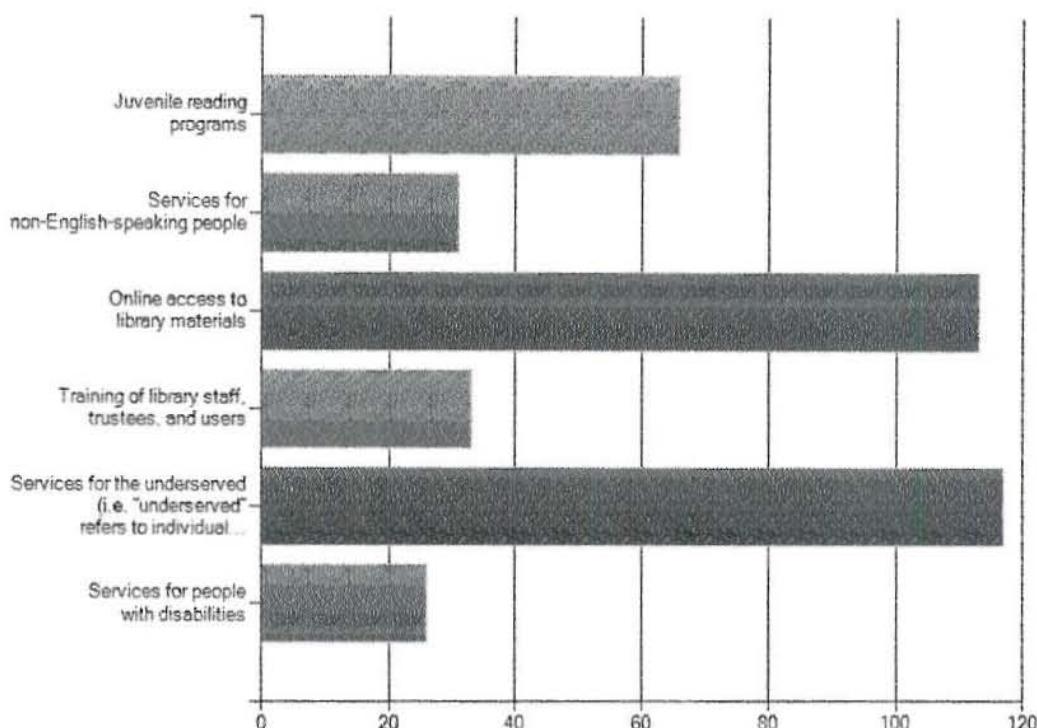


**Chart 1: Areas of Improvement Identified by Library Leadership**

The Public Survey also asked respondents to select the one program they believed to need the most improvement. Services for the “underserved” was considered the area most needing improvement (30.3%), and online access to library materials was a close second (29.3%). Juvenile reading programs (17.1%) ranked third, even though the Strengthen youth and family goal, which includes providing summer reading manuals and programs to libraries at no cost as well as enabling libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, was not judged as needing improvement. Training of library staff, trustees, and users, services for non-English speakers and services for those with

disabilities were ranked as least needing improvement at 8.5%, 8% and 6.7%, respectively. The chart below illustrates the responses to this question on the Public Survey.

**Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**



**Chart 2: Areas of Improvement Identified by the Public**

The library leadership clearly sees a need for improvement in training of library staff, trustees and users, while those responding to the public survey saw a greater need for improvement in juvenile reading programs. Neither group of respondents noted a need to improve services for people with disabilities or for non-English speakers and ranked them accordingly.

### **Summary**

Two surveys, seven Town Hall Meetings, interviews, and document analyses support the finding that the Alabama Public Library Services (APLS) statewide programs and grant awards for FY2008-FY2012 support the priorities identified in the Federal Act. The Alabama goals of strengthening communities, strengthening information services, strengthening information technologies, strengthening youth and family, and developing partnerships framed program activities for which the evaluators identified evidence that the majority of target metrics were met. Over ninety percent of the target objectives were met, while the remaining four program

activities were discontinued or not addressed. In the latter cases, the APLS provided logical rationales for the performance reported.

Throughout the evaluation, certain themes recurred. Constituents look to the APLS for guidance and support in area such as

- Library advocacy, including public relations and communications
- Library funding
- Statewide collections, including e-books and database access
- Technology, including equipment and training
- Training for library staff, trustees, and users

Additional areas mentioned in face-to-face meetings and surveys included a high degree of need for facilities (building, repurposing, and renovation), enhancement to local funding, and increased programs and services. The evaluators believe that these are local concerns for which APLS should provide guidance and advocacy.

Specific recommendations for APLS for future planning can be categorized as programmatic or administrative. They are listed below.

- Programmatic Recommendations
  - Consider adopting some or all of the federal LSTA priorities, as appropriate to Alabama and address them with individual program activities that have measurable goals and objectives. Eliminate the separate set of APLS priorities, since they map to the priorities in the Act anyway.
  - If Alabama priorities are maintained, consider keeping the five that were established in the FY2008-FY2012 *LSTA Plan*. Consider reordering the priorities and focusing increased attention and resources on developing partnerships and outreach in the communities throughout the state.
    - Develop a mechanism beyond the listserv for librarians for document sharing, informing, and general discussion of library matters.
    - Develop statewide campaigns to inform residents of the offerings of their local libraries.
  - Develop alternatives and adopt the best strategy for statewide collection development, particularly for electronic books and similar resources.
  - Continue to advocate for improved broadband access across the State while continuing to support ongoing technology development through the State's libraries.
  - Continue to continue to support and expand successful statewide programs such as Homework Alabama, Summer Reading, and the AVL.
- Administrative Recommendations
  - Develop pertinent and functional categories for labeling programs, grants, and services so that evaluation data can be consistently captured at all times. These categories must be used throughout the full five-year planning period.

- In the same view, terms used in planning (goals, needs priorities, targets and the like) should be used consistently over time.
- Administer user/director surveys periodically during the next five year period.
- Performance data such as participation rates for programs, usage rates for materials, and goals partially met can be used as starting points for establishing goals and objectives for the next planning period.
- The demographic data collected during this evaluation can be used to arrive at more detailed information regarding the use of various materials and services by particular populations.
- Outcome based data is difficult to gather for many library programs. Libraries and the APLS might explore the use of journaling, reflection, testimonials, and other similar means to get users to report outcomes of library use. Enlisting the support of users in the collection of these data might reveal interesting unexplored outcomes.
- A public education program for staff and users might also encourage reporting of outcomes. Staff could be educated as to why outcome measures are important in constructing arguments for the support of library programs; the public could learn why the librarians hope that they will share outcomes in support of libraries.

These findings and recommendations were presented in summary form on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 before the board of the ALABAMA Public Library Service in Montgomery, Alabama.

## **Appendix 1. Acronyms**

APLS	Alabama Public Library Service
COSLA	Chief Officers of State Library Agencies
IMLS	Institute of Museum and Library Services
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LSTA	Library Services and Technology Act
MLIS	Master of Library & Information Studies
PI	Principal Investigator
PR	Public Relations
SLAA	State Library Administrative Agencies

## **Appendix 2. Stakeholders**

2A. Demographics of Stakeholders Contributing to the Evaluation

2B: Stakeholders in Evaluation of the State Plan

## **Appendix 2A. Demographics of Stakeholders Contributing to the Evaluation**

### **Demographic Data on Survey Respondents and Town Hall Meeting Participants**

Those who filled out the web-based surveys were asked a number of questions that would enable the evaluators to determine whether the target audiences for the surveys were reached and to describe the respondent groups. The table below lists the respondent types for the APLS Planning Survey that was designed to reach leaders in the Alabama public library community.

#### **Respondent Types for APLS Planning Survey**

<i>Respondent Type</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N of Responses</i>
Library director	53.6	105
Library user	13.3	26
Library staff member	12.8	25
Elected official (municipal, county or state)	11.2	22
Library trustee/board member	5.1	10
Municipal or county employee	4.1	8
ALL	100.1	196

The predominant respondent type could be categorized as “library employees” with library directors and other employees accounting for two thirds of the respondents. Library users and elected officials together accounted for almost a fourth of all respondents, with municipal or county employees and library trustees accounting for about five percent each.

Respondents to the survey represented 55 of Alabama’s 67 counties. The next table shows the counties represented and percentage of respondents from each. Autauga, Baldwin, Jefferson and Shelby counties accounted for 37 percent of all responses, with remaining counties each accounting for less than 10 percent of the responses. Twenty-five counties (45 percent of the participating counties) contributed only one response.

#### **Counties Represented in the APLS Planning Survey**

<i>County</i>	<i>N of Responses</i>	<i>Percent of Responses</i>
Autauga	24	11.7
Baldwin	24	11.7
Jefferson	18	8.7
Shelby	13	6.3
Tuscaloosa	8	3.9
Etowah	7	3.4
Morgan	7	3.4
DeKalb	6	2.9
Geneva	6	2.9

Lauderdale	6	2.9
Mobile	6	2.9
Talladega	6	2.9
Marshall	5	2.4
Bibb	4	1.9
Calhoun	4	1.9
Montgomery	4	1.9
Clarke	3	1.5
Colbert	3	1.5
Elmore	3	1.5
Jackson	3	1.5
Marion	3	1.5
Pickens	3	1.5
St. Clair	3	1.5
Coffee	2	1.0
Dale	2	1.0
Fayette	2	1.0
Greene	2	1.0
Hale	2	1.0
Lawrence	2	1.0
Tallapoosa	2	1.0
Barbour	1	0.4
Blount	1	0.4
Bullock	1	0.4
Butler	1	0.4
Chambers	1	0.4
Choctaw	1	0.4
Clay	1	0.4
Coosa	1	0.4
Covington	1	0.4
Crenshaw	1	0.4
Escambia	1	0.4
Franklin	1	0.4
Houston	1	0.4
Lamar	1	0.4
Limestone	1	0.4
Lowndes	1	0.4
Macon	1	0.4
Marengo	1	0.4
Monroe	1	0.4
Perry	1	0.4
Sumter	1	0.4

Walker	1	0.4
Washington	1	0.4
Wilcox	1	0.4
Winston	1	0.4

Respondents to this survey were largely long-time Alabama residents: 187 of the 201 individuals (93 percent) who filled out the survey question on longevity in Alabama have lived ten or more years in the State. This suggests that the respondents have lived in the state long enough to have learned about and to have made a commitment to public libraries in Alabama.

The greatest proportion of respondents was over the age of 45, with the most represented age group between 46 and 60 years old. Less than five percent of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30. As is often the case in surveys such as this one, over 80 percent of the respondents were female.

Survey takers were asked to identify their race/ethnic origins. Just fewer than 95 percent of respondents identified themselves as white, 5.4 percent identified themselves as African-American or Black, and .5 self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan native. One percent (2 individuals of 203 answering the question) identified themselves as "of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity." No one reported to be of Asian or Pacific Island origins. (Percentages do not sum to 100 due to some respondents reporting multiple ethnicities.)

Clearly, the library leadership that participated in the survey is primarily white with origins from Europe, the Middle East or Northern Africa.

A final demographic question asked if respondents' communities had been impacted by various kinds of disasters during the past five years. This question was meant to help discern both the need for and response to APLS efforts in disaster preparedness. The following table shows that the communities in Alabama have been hit hard by emergencies and disasters. (Only 45 of 186 respondents – fewer than 25 percent - reported no such impacts on their communities.)

#### **Communities Affected by Disasters 2006-2011**

Type of Disaster/Emergency	Number reporting yes
Hurricane	21
Oil spill	29
Tornado	113
No impact	45
Other	14
Total Responses	186*

\*Some respondents reported more than one type of disaster.

The second survey, the APLS Public Survey, was also available online for six weeks. Over 500 (504) people started the survey, and 399 (79.1 percent) completed it. Of the respondents, the

majority (60.3 percent) reported to be library users. The table shows the distribution of respondent types.

#### Respondent Types for APLS Public Survey

<i>Respondent type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Library user	288	60.3
Library staff member	107	22.4
Library director	68	14.2
Library trustee/board member	15	3.1

Just under ninety percent of the respondents to this survey were long-time Alabama residents; 89 percent reported Alabama residence of 10 or more years. By comparison, very few respondents were new to the state: only 1.4 percent had lived in the state fewer than 12 months. As with the first survey, the majority of respondents were female (81.4 percent). Notably, the second survey was filled out by a somewhat younger group (which would be expected of users rather than the library leaders) and the respondents to the second survey included a greater percentage of shorter-term Alabama residents.

Five counties accounted for half of the responses to the public survey: Mobile, Jefferson, Baldwin, Madison, and Elmore. Mobile, which accounted for 19 percent of all responses, with 95 respondents, had nearly twice the number of the next two counties, Jefferson and Baldwin. Of course, it is not surprising that the more populous counties yielded the greater numbers of responses. Counties that contributed four or more responses to the APLS Public Survey are listed in the table below, while counties contributing fewer are listed below the table.

### **Counties Represented in APLS Public Survey**

County	N of Responses	Percent of Responses
Mobile	95	19
Jefferson	53	10
Baldwin	51	10
Madison	34	6
Elmore	22	4
Colbert	19	3
Tuscaloosa	17	3
Marshall	16	3
Shelby	12	2
Talladega	12	2
Clarke	11	2
Calhoun	10	2
Montgomery	10	2
Morgan	8	1
Lee	8	1
Marion	8	1
DeKalb	7	1
Jackson	7	1
Greene	6	1
Limestone	6	1
Covington	5	1
Cullman	5	1
Monroe	5	1
Autauga	4	<1
Lamar	4	<1
Lauderdale	4	<1

Counties contributing fewer than four responses are: Barbour, Bibb, Blount, Bullock, Chilton, Choctaw, Clay, Coffee, Crenshaw, Escambia, Etowah, Franklin, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Marengo, Pickens, Pike, Randolph, St. Clair, and Washington. In all, responses were received from 46 (69 percent) of Alabama's 67 counties.

Respondents to the APLS Public Survey were also more diverse than those responding to the APLS Planning Survey. Eighty eight percent of the respondents reported to be white, 10.7 percent were African-American, 3.8 percent were American Indian or Alaskan natives, and almost 2 percent reported to be Asian. (Percentages do not sum to 100 due to some respondents reporting multiple ethnicities.)

## **Appendix 2B. Stakeholders in Evaluation of the State Plan**

### **Town Hall Meeting Participants**

#### **Enterprise (June 9, 2011)**

Bettye Forbus	Houston-Love Memorial Library (Dothan)
Lenora Baker	Mary Berry Brown Memorial Library (Midland City)
Ed Baker	Mary Berry Brown Memorial Library (Midland City)
Pam Brooks	Mary Berry Brown Memorial Library (Midland City)
Donna Miller	Troy University - Dothan Library
Peggy Samuel	retired Enterprise Public Library librarian & Friends of Library Treasurer
Louise Hayes	Enterprise Public Library; Vice President, Friends of Library
Jacqueline Bonn	Enterprise Public Library; Secretary, Friends of Library
Kay Wilson	Elba Public Library
Tara Wish Emmett	City of Enterprise Mayor's office, special projects coordinator
Mary Penny	Enterprise Public Library Board of trustees
Mary Fleming	Enterprise Public Library Board of trustees
Denise Unruh-Kitch	Enterprise Public Library Director
Al Sneedenberg	Enterprise Public Library; Friends of Library member and former trustee
Melissa Brown	no affiliation given
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Montgomery (June 10, 2011)**

Ron Leonard	Network of Alabama Academic Libraries
Stephanie Taylor	Alabama Public Library Service
Donna Dickey	B.B. Comer Memorial Library (Sylacauga)
March Sampson	Lewis Cooper Jr. Memorial Library (Opelika)
Susie Anderson	Horseshoe Bend Public Library
Chris Bowman	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Alisa McLeod	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Boaz (June 20, 2011)**

Debra Slaton	Marshall County Cooperative Library
Jane Nelson	Albertville High School
Karen Chambers	Woodville Public Library, Director
Nancy Gregory	Scottsboro Public Library, Director
Lisa Rowell	Albertville Public Library
Lynn Burgess	Boaz Public Library

Cindy Lancaster	Boaz; MLIS student, UA
Cari Frey	Oneonta Public Library Board Chair
Gail Sheldon	Oneonta Public Library, Director
Beth Wheeler-Dean	Guntersville Public Library, Director
Ben Lewis	Resident, Sardis
Marge Bekrens-Lewis	Resident, Sardis
John Kitchens	Boaz Public Library Board Member
Betty Martin	Boaz Public Library Board Chair
Kerry Rich	State Representative Dist. 26
Georgia Lipscomb	Sardis City Public library
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Stephanie Taylor	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Florence (June 21, 2011)**

Denita Lester	Muscle Shoals Public Library
Linda Ezzell	Weatherford Public Library (Red Bay)
Anthony Paganelli	Northwest Regional Library (Winfield)
Lucy Heidorn	Muscle Shoals Public Library
Ruth Will	Muscle Shoals Public Library
Teresa Garner	Rogersville Public Library
Bobbie Lou Leigh	Alabama Public Library Service - chair
Paula Laurita	Athens-Limestone Public Library
Phyllis Loherts	Decatur Public Library
Linda Dolheimer	Decatur Public Library
Abby Carpenter	Florence-Lauderdale Public Library
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Denise Wetzel	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Hoover (July 18, 2011)**

Vince Bellofatto	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Kevin V. Smith	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Amy Patton	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Jennie Kemp	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Aimee Pittman	Green Pond-Woodstock Library
Jerry Spector	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Emily Robie	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Rick Freemon	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Kelly Butler	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Susan Spafford	Hoover Public Library
Linda Andrews	Hoover Public Library

Patricia Gearen	Hoover Public Library
Deborah Fout	Homewood Public Library
Taneisha Young Tucker	Vestavia Hills Public Library
Max Hand	Cullman Public Library
Sherie Giles	Tuscaloosa Public Library, Board of Trustees
Mary Elizabeth Harper	Tuscaloosa Public Library, Director
Horace Allen	Tuscaloosa Public Library, Board of Trustees
Kelly Easterling	Chilton-Clanton Public Library
Vickie Harkins	Armstrong-Osborne Library (Talladega)
Kery H Smith	UAB Lister Hill Library
Emily Tish	Trussville Public Library
Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Denise Wetzel	Alabama Public Library Service

**Demopolis (July 19, 2011)**

Gina Wilson	Thomasville Public Library
Emily Seymour	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Marilyn Gibson	James C. Poole Memorial Library (Eutaw)
Linda Davis	Moundville Public Library
Jana Fine	Tuscaloosa Public Library
Morgan Grimes	Demopolis Public Library
Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service

**Daphne (July 22, 2011)**

Deborah Zonker	Loxley Public Library
Rebecca McGill	Daphne Public Library
Sarah Yee	Mobile Public Library
Janet Silvernail	Mobile Public Library
Janette Curry	Mobile Public Library
Cecilia Schupp	Mobile Public Library
Debbie Turner	Mobile Public Library
Janesy Blankenhouse	Daphne Public Library
Maria Baroco	Orange Beach Public Library
John Burgess	University of Alabama
Adrienne Breech	Mt Vernon Public Library
Gake Seabury	Mt Vernon Public Library
Darryl Pennywell	Mt Vernon Public Library
Liz Reed	Baldwin County Library Cooperative

Tonja Young	Daphne Public Library
Cathy McKinley	Atmore Public Library
Brenda R Barnes	Mt Vernon Public Library
Shirley Grant	Mt Vernon Public Library
Shea Arlatt	Gulf Coast News
Jessica Ross	Washington Co Public Library
Spencer Watts	Mobile Public Library
Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service

### **List of People Interviewed**

#### **Formal Meeting at UA – April 2011**

Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Informal Meetings at Town Hall Meeting Events**

Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Alisa McLeod	Alabama Public Library Service
Denise Wetzel	Alabama Public Library Service
Stephanie Taylor	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Formal Meeting at UA – February 3, 2011**

Rebecca Mitchell	Alabama Public Library Service
Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
Kelyn Ralya	Alabama Public Library Service
Alisa McLeod	Alabama Public Library Service

#### **Interview & Work Session at UA – February 8-9, 2011**

Jim Smith	Alabama Public Library Service
-----------	--------------------------------

### **Appendix 3. List of Documents Analyzed**

Alabama Public Library Service, Library Services and Technology Act Plan:

***The Alabama Public Library Service Five Year Plan, October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2012***

Access at: <http://statelibrary.alabama.gov/Content/LSTAinfo.aspx>

Alabama Public Library Service, Reports of Grant Activity:

***LSTA Grants Awarded 2007 - 2011***

***LSTA Approved Grant Listing for 2012, Including grant category summaries, grant policies, and other material related to LSTA Grants***

Access at: <http://statelibrary.alabama.gov/Content/LSTAinfo.aspx>

Alabama Public Library Service and Public Library Division of Alabama Library Association Standards:

***A Plan for Excellence: Alabama Public Library Standards***

Access at: <http://statelibrary.alabama.gov/Content/publications.aspx>

Annual Reports of the Alabama Public Library Service:

***Libraries in Bloom, Alabama Public Library Service Annual Report 2008.***

***Alabama Public Library Service 2009 Annual Report.***

***Alabama Public Library Service 2010 Annual Report.***

***Alabama Public Library Service 2011 Annual Report.***

Access at: <http://statelibrary.alabama.gov/Content/publications.aspx>

Institute of Museum and Library Services Evaluation Guidelines:

***Guidelines for Five-Year Evaluation and Guiding Principles for the Evaluation.***

File of Listserv messages:

***Listserv messages from Alabama Public Library Service administrators' listserv, September-November 2011.***

Report of a Survey of Public Library Directors:

***Directors' Survey Results (prepared by Jim Smith, September 14, 2011).***

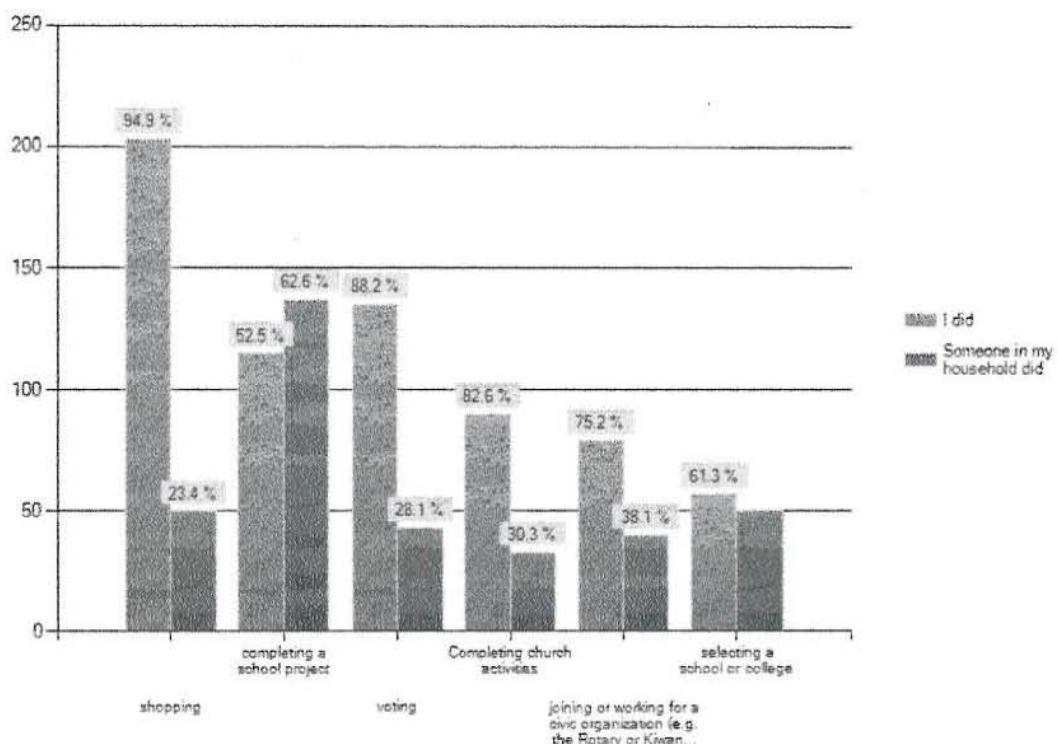
#### **Appendix 4. Optional Output of Statistical Findings**

- 4A Reported Benefits of Library Use for Alabama Residents
- 4B Grants Awarded 2008-2011 by APLS
- 4C Analysis of Listserv Measures
- 4D Library Futures
- 4E APLS Goals Mapped to the LSTA Priorities with Documentation of Performance
- 4F Describing the Present and Imagining the Future of Alabama Public Libraries

#### **Appendix 4A. Reported Benefits of Library Use for Alabama Residents**

Alabama library users reported in the Public Survey that they use public libraries for a wide variety of purposes. The Public Survey revealed that users made decisions based on information from public libraries. Decisions about such shopping, completing school projects, and voting were based, for many, on information from library services and resources. The table below shows the types of decisions and proportions of respondents who reported having been assisted in decision-making through the library.

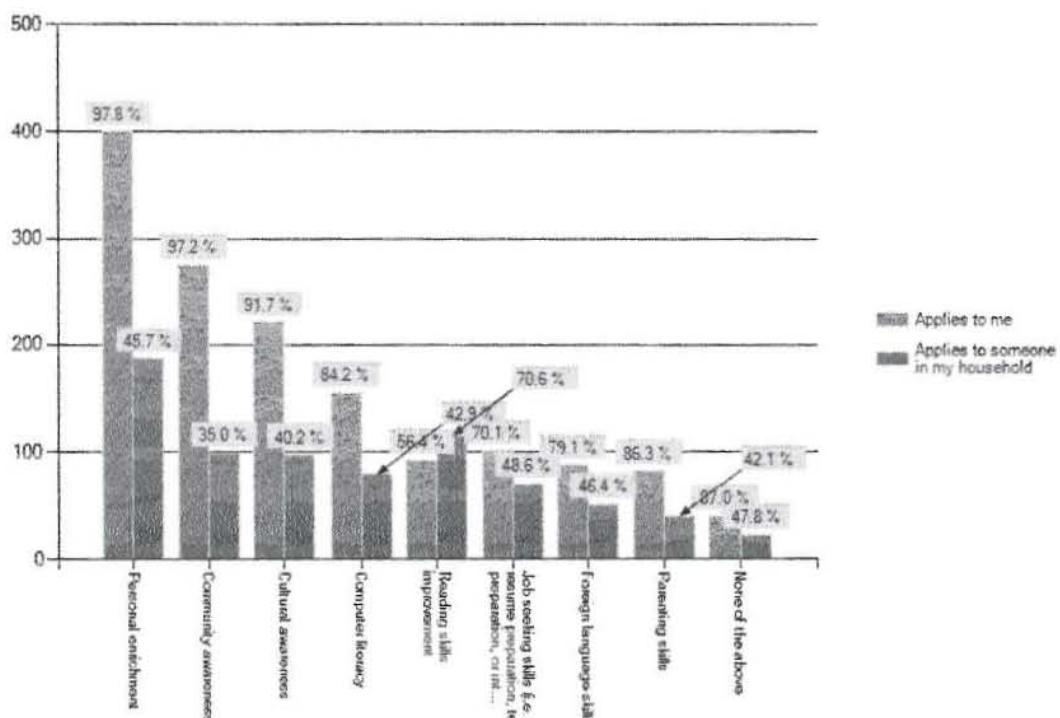
**In the past 12 months, did the use of the library or library resources provide information for decision-making in any of the following areas?**



Survey respondents also reported on broad categories of decisions they made on the basis of information from the library. Users reported frequent use of information from libraries for making technological decisions, voting decisions, and social decisions. Fewer used libraries as sources of information for economic and legal decisions.

Library users also reported to have used libraries in personal enhancement activities related to community awareness, cultural awareness, computer literacy, job seeking, parenting and improving reading skills. The table that follows illustrates the numbers of users and proportion of respondents who used libraries in eight personal enhancement activities.

The following is a list of personal enhancement activities that may relate to library use. Check those that apply to you or members of your household:



## **Appendix 4B. Grants Awarded 2008-2011 by APLS Categories**

### **LSTA grants awarded and the APLS goals addressed**

<i>Grant Category (APLS)</i>	<i>N of Grants 2008</i>	<i>N of Grants 2009</i>	<i>N of Grants 2010</i>	<i>N of Grants 2011</i>	<i>Total N of Grants 2008-2011</i>
Collection Development	38	35	59	48	180
Cultural Diversity	1	0	0	1	2
Digitization of Rare Material	3	1	1	0	5
Emergency Grant	0	0	1	0	1
Information Access & Control	32	16	38	0	86
Library Technology	0	0	6	0	6
Library Technology & Automation	0	0	0	35	35
Library Vehicles	0	0	2	0	2
Micrographic Equipment	3	1	1	2	7
Professional Training	11	8	9	10	38
Services for Disabled	1	1	2	0	4
Services for Those with Difficulty using libraries	2	2	0	0	4
Strengthening Communities	8	3	8	3	22
Strengthening Youth & Family	9	3	11	2	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>417</b>

## **Appendix 4C. Analysis of Listserv Messages**

### **Frequency of topical messages on APLS Listserv, Fall 2011**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of all messages</i>	<i>Cumulative percentage</i>
Programs/Services	228	27	27
Technology	131	16	43
Communication	108	13	56
Development	87	10	66
Education	68	8	74
Staff	54	6.4	80.4
Collections	40	5	85.4
Funding	26	3.1	88.5
Weather/Disasters	26	3.1	91.6
Facilities	23	2.7	94.3
Local Politics	18	2.1	96.4
Relationships	13	1.5	97.9
Local Issues	6	.7	98.6
Immigration	5	.5	99.1
Leadership	5	.6	99.7
Legal Issues	3	.4	100.1

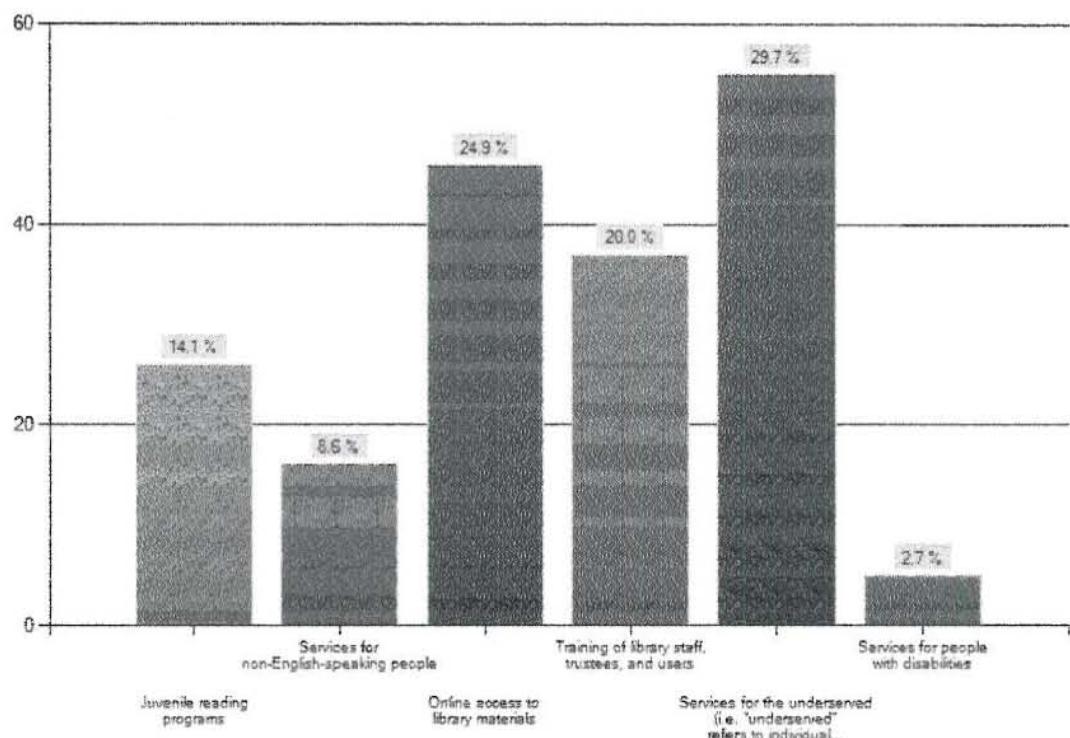
## Appendix 4D. Library Futures

### *Library Leadership and the APLS Planning Survey*

Several questions on the APLS Planning Survey asked participants to identify areas of need and priorities for the future. The responses to these questions are intended to assist APLS in future planning initiatives by identifying the areas need from the library leadership community.

Respondents asked which program areas in the previous plan need the most improvement. "Services for the underserved" was identified as needing the most improvement by 29.7% of respondents followed by Online access to library materials (24.9%), Training of library staff, trustees and users (20.0%), Juvenile reading programs (14.1%), Services for non-English-speaking people (8.6%) and Services for people with disabilities (2.7%) (n=185).

**Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**



When asked to identify which programs should remain high priorities in the next five-year State Plan, over two-thirds of the respondents listed online access to library materials; juvenile reading programs; training of library staff, trustees, and users; and services for the "underserved." Less than half of the respondents (48.9%) felt that services to people with disabilities should be a high priority program, and only 35.5% suggested that service to non-English speakers should be a high priority.

14. A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future? Check all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Online access to library materials	74.7%	139
Juvenile reading programs	74.2%	138
Training of library staff, trustees, and users	68.8%	128
Services for the underserved	67.2%	125
Services for people with disabilities	48.9%	91
Services for non-English-speaking people	35.5%	66
Other (please specify)		10

In addition, 10 participants wrote in additional priorities. The comments were categorized into one or more of the following categories: collections, facilities, fund raising, programs, technical assistance and not applicable.

#### Open-ended Responses

Category	Number of respondents	Issues Identified
Collections	1	Funding for online access to databases Funding for Camellia Net
Facilities	2	Upgrading facilities Enlarging buildings Expanding capacity for technology
Funding	2	Assistance with fund raising Ensuring funds are available for the priorities listed
Programs	1	Finding and retaining jobs
Technology	2	Technical support for small libraries Technology upgrades
Not Applicable	3	Answered no or N/A Comment on non-English speaking services

The same areas were identified for the questions:

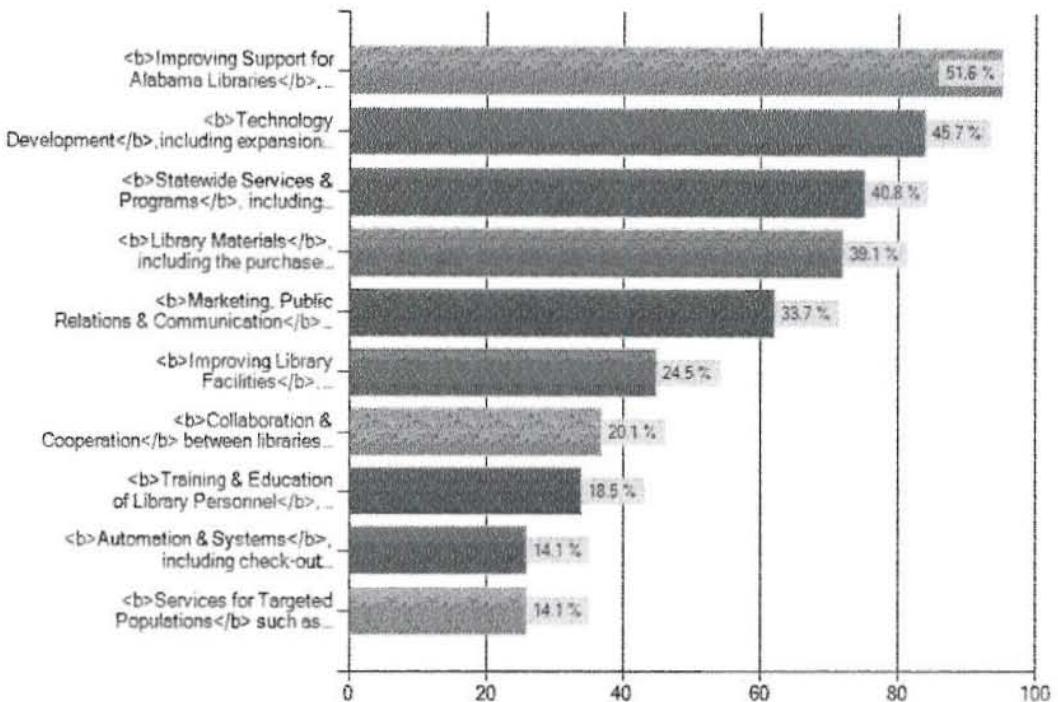
A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future?

Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.

To some extent, most of the areas were aligned in each list, except for "Services for the underserved". Services for the underserved was identified as needed the most improvement in Alabama libraries, however, it ranked fourth as a priority to be continued.

According to the survey respondents, the three categories that should be addressed in the next state plan are: Improving Support of Alabama Libraries (52.6%), Technology Development (45.7%) and Statewide Services & Programs (40.8%) were identified most frequently as priorities. These focus on the services provided by libraries and the support needed to serve local communities.

Listed below are broad headings that can be used to categorize some library issues that could be addressed over the next few years. Please identify 3 categories that you believe should be addressed. Check only 3 categories.



Participants also had the opportunity to respond to an open ended question:  
 Are there any other needs or services that could/should be included or addressed in the plan?  
 43 participants provided comments that were divided into seven content categories. An eighth category was developed for comments consisting of "no" and other similar responses.

Category	Number of respondents	Comments
Advocacy	2	We librarians need to speak together with one voice to the politicians. The numbers really count. Local advocacy and library "pitch" to decision makers/community leaders.
Collections	5	state wide ebook collection Need to provide more databases for all Alabama libraries through AVL or whatever means possible. Strengthening basic book collections--fiction, non-fiction,

		<p>children's, juvenile</p> <p>I think that the state should help the smaller, rural libraries gain access to online databases for E books and audio books (something like Overdrive). Smaller markets are priced out of this on their own.</p> <p>access to Archives materials at state level</p>
Facilities	10	<p>funding for libraries in rural areas to update building structure, bathrooms, and walkways to be in compliance with ADA</p> <p>Need for funds for construction and renovation so that there is an adequate facility and space to provide the services listed above</p> <p>New facilities and larger ones so they can expand their space</p> <p>Money for building</p> <p>The need for construction funds.</p> <p>New building construction, building remodeling and building expansions</p> <p>Adequate space for genealogical records.</p> <p>Larger branches needed for more materials &amp; programs updated and enlarged main building including conference/meeting rooms for community. Without this our library cannot expand services.</p> <p>More provided meeting rooms free to the agencies that need them to meet with their groups. (some are charged and others are not.)</p>
Funding	5	<p>more funding for libraries</p> <p>Local, State funding inadequate</p> <p>Finding funding sources to supplement library budget cuts</p> <p>Self sustainability and fund-raising.</p> <p>help with fund raising</p>
Programs	7	<p>Adult programming</p> <p>Juvenile reading programs</p> <p>Materials, programs and services for young adults (teens). juvenile reading programs; online access to library materials; services for people with disabilities</p> <p>Programs that ensure English Only in schools, businesses, government.</p> <p>Computer training for job seekers.</p> <p>There seems to be a real disparity between people who can afford computer and internet access. Libraries are having to help people with job applications, testing and skills improvement</p>
Technology	4	<p>DSL is unavailable throughout most of the rural areas of the state. If there was a way to widen its availability, I believe</p>

		<p>many would benefit.</p> <p>state wide library card</p> <p>Information and tech equip to assist low vision people</p> <p>Statewide library card which would lend itself to a statewide online downloadable collection</p>
Training	7	<p>Training of library staff, trustees, and users</p> <p>Better training for library staff. Workshops on all topics about running a library such as : liabilities (illegal downloads using wireless service, access for the disabled, ten year old kids watching videos of homeless people being murdered, nude pictures in someone's Facebook account being visible to all library users, hostile working environment when library staff and patrons are sexually harassed by patrons looking at pornography - something that is not permitted in any other office based industry in the country, etc.), physical structure (floor plans, planning for more shelving, safety issues of non-library grade shelving, OSHA requirements, run down facilities and convincing the board or city council to do repairs, planning for new structures, etc.), business side (how to plan a budget, which are city and library expenses and which are to be included in the library's budget, how to select insurance policies for the structure or the collection or the staff or even against lawsuits, having a library attorney, statistics to use when talking to library boards and city councils, pay and benefit structures, employee issues, and so on), local politics and the library, workplace safety (such as wearing gloves that protect the wrists from overuse injuries, dangerous patrons, friends and family members in non-public areas, harassment or assault by a co-worker), how to write and enforce policies that protect all citizens and employees in the library not just those who want to do anything they please, and on and on. We need training for staff members, directors, and trustees. Trustee training should be required and should focus on the legal liabilities involving a library and those who make the policies including items such as allowing unattended children is a policy of accepting responsibility for their care and safety. Many staff members can't do anything about dangerous patrons because the library board won't pass any policies. This puts staff and patrons in unpleasant and dangerous situations and the library in a dangerous litigious position. Many libraries are being poorly run because staff and directors don't know how to do it well. We need a higher standard of professionalism, skills, customer service, and policies. We</p>

		<p>can attain a better library community through better training.</p> <p>Adapting to the changing environment for libraries. in house visits from APLS and others who can see, understand, and help libraries with community needs.</p> <p>More support/communication/training from the state level library agency for libraries and their branches, especially in small rural areas.</p> <p>Training and increased usage of Alabama Virtual Library</p> <p>I would love to see more use of teleconferencing or webinars. It would be nice to hold meetings to give teachers, parents, etc. a walkthrough of what databases APLS provides and how to use these databases.</p>
Not Applicable	6	No or N/A

The final question provided respondents with an opportunity to make comments and suggestions. Many of the comments expressed the continued need for libraries in communities: Libraries are still an essential part of life for many people.

Our public libraries are one of our most important resources.

A library is the most important for any community. I could not do what we do without APLS.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication

Public Libraries are an exceptional gift to the people of public funds. Most people do not realize the amazing gift a public library gives to the community including the council members who approve funding for the library on the local level. I wish people understood the better funded the library is the more resources available for the whole community and the impact that a public library has on the development and success of the citizens.

It is very important for any city to have a library.....any library is better than none at all....some people have no computer at home and college students have to have a computer to finish papers..It is considered the no #1 thing that any city needs

Comments were categorized as: advocacy, collections, facilities, funding, programs and technology.

Category	Number of respondents	Comments
Advocacy	7	<p>Our libraries need better financial support from city, county, and state, but difficult to convince the "powers that be" of needs of libraries. Do libraries need a PR person?</p> <p>We need to make sure that people understand that public libraries are still needed and can be helpful in their lives.</p> <p>The rise of digital media makes it imperative that libraries are shown to be more than a warehouse for books. APLS needs to focus on this issue or risk being like Borders Bookstore or Tower Records.</p>

		<p>We really need to stand together and to get our more PR. Most people don't know what we do -- and with the politicians it is a new crop every few years.</p> <p>Guidelines to better convince Town Councils of the importance of libraries.</p> <p>Although there are some minority members of the community who would benefit from ESL classes, they do not appear interested in coming to the library.</p> <p>APLS could do more to advertise and promote our services.</p>
<b>Collections</b>	2	<p>Top priority to pay for more databases for all Alabama Libraries. ex. Reference USA, Ancestry.Com, News Library or other newspaper sources, language programs such as Mango</p> <p>Included in the provision of library materials would be access to e-books, downloadables, and online services (so there is a technological aspect to that). However, everything comes down to funding and therefore advocacy, grants, marketing, etc. in order to make all the other things possible.</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	4	<p>Our lack of space is curtailing our inventory and ability to assist in certain community projects.</p> <p>Please enlarge the library! As always, continue to add new materials to the collection!</p> <p>Prattville/Autauga County needs to start planning fund raising &amp; The City of Prattville &amp; Autauga County budget for a new library in a new location!</p> <p>Local library needs more space for meeting rooms, tutoring, etc.</p>
Funding	9	<p>Public Libraries are an exceptional gift to the people of public funds. Most people do not realize the amazing gift a public library gives to the community including the council members who approve funding for the library on the local level. I wish people understood the better funded the library is the more resources available for the whole community and the impact that a public library has on the development and success of the citizens.</p> <p>If funding does not increase for local libraries they may have to be closed. Alabama and local cities do not see a need for libraries. Therefore they tend to fund them at the lowest level.</p> <p>Even though I live in Lowndes County, I use the Prattville Library. Due to drastic funding cuts by the City of Prattville, the library has had to lay off personnel and reduce hours of operation. I use the Library mainly for genealogical research, so this is only a minor inconvenience for me; but I'm sure it has been more than that for other users. Almost every afternoon I'm in there, someone is tutoring a child, or using the computers, etc. My own grandsons have enjoyed the story times on Tuesdays for several years. The</p>

		<p>Library is a safe, enjoyable, repository of information for many, many citizens of all ages. I thought "education" was of upmost importance to our country, yet places of learning are taking a big blow. These actions by officials do not encourage citizens to see libraries in the best light.</p> <p>The State of Alabama should fund libraries much better than it is doing now. The State demands more and more conditions for libraries to receive money. The requisites augment while the funds allocated keep on shrinking. It seems unfair to the tax payers who are the ones using the public libraries.</p> <p>I think that during times of tight budgets, what the libraries really need is funding for library materials; updated technology equipment and services that fulfill the public's needs; contractual memberships that people cannot afford at home (such as Camellia Net, Career Cruising, Ancestry, Heritage Quest, etc); and software including family-friendly games that enhance learning and recreation (fishing, flight simulator, zoo tycoon, etc), multiple languages, graphic arts, pdf, etc.</p> <p>The Alabama Public Library Service should use economies of scale whenever practical to lower cost for participation for all public libraries in the state. In particular, the state agency should target those areas which most impact the core daily operations of libraries and library systems.</p> <p>We can't stand more cuts. We need to make our public and elected officials aware of how much we really do for the public, and the countless things and services we are asked for.</p> <p>I believe the basics need to be enhanced because of the budget cuts the last few years. Basics include buildings, materials and programs, and staff training.</p> <p>The community library nowadays is just that, a community gathering place for enrichment and access to services, and needs to be supported and funded as such.</p>
<b>Technology</b>	2	<p>Would like for State Library to have IT staff increased so techs can check on libraries before problems occur.</p> <p>We have got to have Internet service for the entire state. This is the future of employment and services for the public</p>
<b>Training</b>	3	<p>Information Tech Library staff need training in correct cataloging. We need more construction/facility improvement grants. We need more technology/website development and assistance.</p> <p>No organization, for profit or non-profit can grow and serve its customers without continued training and educational opportunities. I would also comment that libraries need to find opportunities to be leaders in offering information about technology to their communities. My perception is that libraries are often</p>

		<p>playing "catch-up". Proactively creating "partnerships" with them would allow for everyone to win-win and for libraries to overcome the perception of being archaic and irrelevant.</p> <p>As computer use in Libraries grows, policies and procedures must be addressed and understood by all users to ensure that only legal, proper and prudent services are available and provided. While the electronic age is upon us, Libraries must meet the challenge head on and merge the written word with the electronic advances. The politician with his hand held do it all device must understand that the first grader must first learn to read and write before he/she can operate his/her hand held device. Nothing will ever replace the written word in books as we know it today.</p>
--	--	---

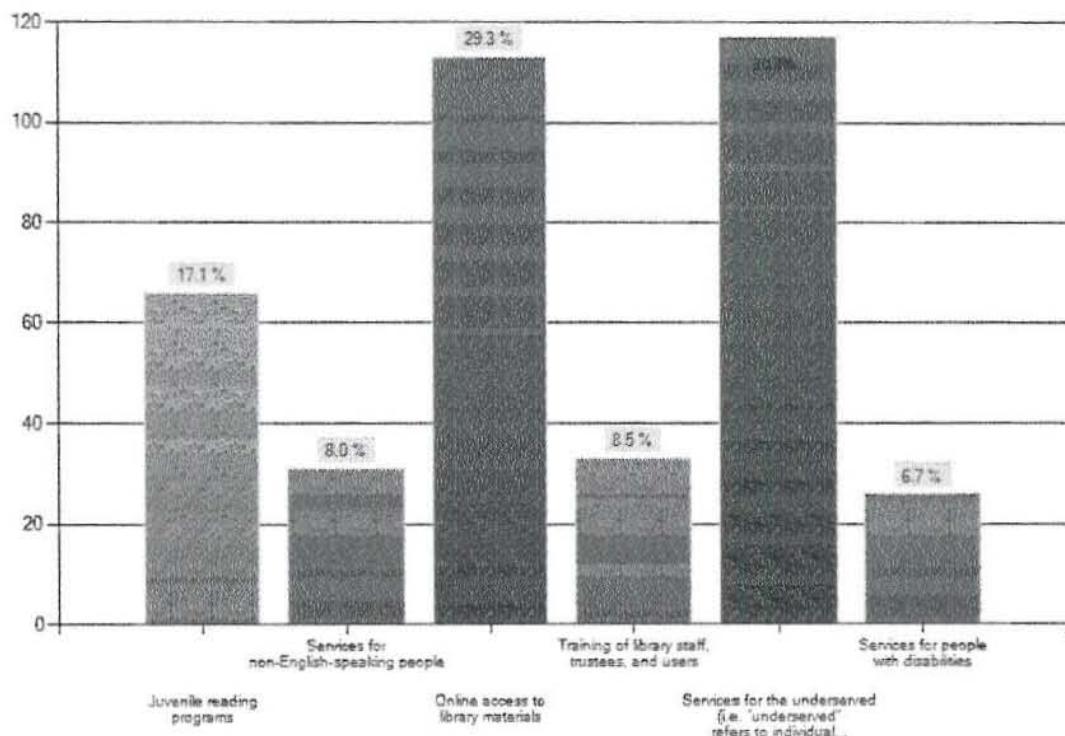
Open ended questions were categorized at different times during the evaluation process. Content did fall into categories that were repeated throughout the questions. Advocacy, collections, facilities, funding, programs, technology and training are repeated themes.

#### ***APLS Public Survey***

Several questions on the APLS Public Survey asked participants to identify areas of need and priorities for the future. The responses to these questions are intended to assist APLS in future planning initiatives by identifying the areas need from the general public.

Respondents asked which program areas in the previous plan need the most improvement. "Services for the underserved" was identified as needing the most improvement by 30.3% of respondents followed by Online access to library materials (29.3%), Juvenile reading programs (17.1%), Training of library staff, trustees and users (8.5%), Services for non-English-speaking people (8.0%) and Services for people with disabilities (6.7%) (n=386).

**Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**



When asked to identify which programs should remain high priorities in the next five-year State Plan, more than half of the respondents listed online access to library materials; juvenile reading programs; and services for the "underserved"; and training of library staff, trustees, and users. Less than half of the respondents (45.5%) felt that services to people with disabilities should be a high priority program, and only 39.2% suggested that service to non-English speakers should be a high priority.

**A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future? Check all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Online access to library materials	74.3%	286
Juvenile reading programs	73.0%	281
Services for the underserved	64.9%	250
Training of library staff, trustees, and users	55.1%	212
Services for people with disabilities	45.5%	175
Services for non-English-speaking people	39.2%	151
Other (please specify)		26

Twenty-six people provided comments.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Collections	3	ebook lending, ebook lending, ebook lending more updated reference material books or books on tape that gives insight into another's faith. The Quran on tape would go a long way in that, The stories of the American Indians is a must.
Facilities	2	Construction funds for expansion of facilities. Libraries should provide a comfortable environment for everyone, and encourage intellectual pursuits with lectures, book clubs, etc. I wish every county had a beautiful library facility like the Florence / Lauderdale Public Library.
Funding	1	more funding
Library management	5	Hours extended... Library's should be working more closely with public schools... Our library does a good job and should continue in its offering of ALL forms of information, books, magazines, Local papers & computer access. Libraries should not try to be all things to all persons in order to remain relevant. While archives of rare historical resources are my primary interest, perhaps some libraries or library systems should not attempt to operate archives. Also, surely there are easier ways to give disaster victims access to the Internet than to tell them to go to the library. One more point: unschooled or "home-schooled" children are an important population. all should be
Programs	6	Summer reading programs to promote youth reading. Local knowledge known only by the aging adults. Not history, how to, craftsmanship and artisans. We gonna need them and they're gonna die. An initiative to bring cultural art enrichment to the underserved....those who are unable to access library programs due to socio-economic issues. MATH AND SCIENCE COMPETITIONS Services designed to help small businesses. Senior Citizen technology training. Young adult reading programs.
Services	5	gear to blind but not disabled. Nothing for physically disabled except elevators. Assistance to people with intellectual disabilities; "friendly"

		assistance with locating books, using the copier, etc. I think services for non-English speakers and people with disabilities should be considered as an aspect in all services Services for seniors (55 and older). Services to the community. Helping libraries move outside library building walls and utilize new technologies to share library resources with those in the community when and where they are needed.
Training	1	I don't think our trustees receive any training regarding what should be expected in library operation or do they receive training manual.
Technology	2	Technological advances. Provide access to current high-tech information. Many computer books in the library are years old and virtually useless.

The same areas were identified for the questions:

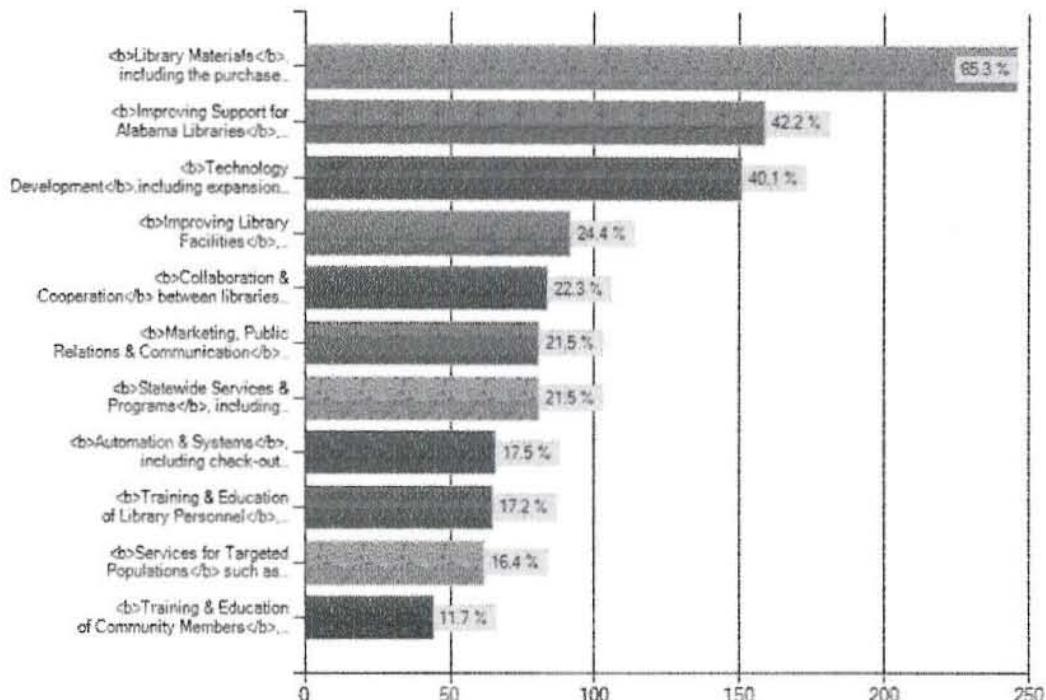
A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future?

Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.

Similar to the APLS survey, respondents identified Services to the underserved as an area needing the most improvement in the state. While it is one of the top priorities on the public survey, Online access and juvenile reading programs rank higher. Both the APLS Planning Survey and the APLS Public Survey rank local needs, in terms of access and programming, higher than the needs of the statewide community, the "underserved."

According to the survey respondents, the three categories that should be addressed in the next state plan are: Library Materials (65.3%), Improving Support of Alabama Libraries (42.2%) and Technology Development (40.1%) were identified most frequently as priorities. These focus on the local services provided by libraries and the support needed to serve local communities.

Listed below are broad headings that can be used to categorize some library issues that could be addressed over the next few years. Please identify 3 categories that you believe should be addressed. Check only 3 categories.



The final question in the APLS Public Survey provided respondents with an opportunity to make comments and suggestions. Similar to the APLS Planning Survey, many of the comments expressed the continued need for libraries in communities:

- Awesome library!!!!!!!!!
- I don't really use the library for much besides checking out books, DVDs, and cads. But when I was in school I used it more for homework/research purposes. I LOVE my library though!!! Please, don't change too much.
- I love the library.
- Whether it is leisure reading, information provision, connections that help people find jobs or that encourage children to read the services of the library have an impact that extends to every aspect of our lives. In a world where exposure to cultures other than our own is a normal part of life, the library provides a means of building awareness and understanding
- This is a wonderful library to visit with very pleasant staff.
- You are doing an excellent job.
- Maintain the leadership of Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Bivins and consultant staff
- I like the library it is very resourceful, and very much needed to our community! Thank you to all the librarians who are there to help.

- I am very pleased with the public library services in Clarke County. All three libraries do an excellent job. I especially like what the Jackson and the Grove Hill libraries do with collaboration with the community and with working with the community college library.
- I responded to this survey because I use Alabama libraries extensively for research even though I live in Arkansas and because my brother, who is poor and sometimes homeless, uses a public library in Birmingham every day. We represent two different constituencies that receive tremendous benefits from public libraries. Thank you.
- Rogersville Public Library is wonderful and is a tremendous asset to our community.
- The staff at the Saraland branch is very helpful, pleasant and my experience there has always been a good. My family has used our Library for many years and it is very important to us
- Hard to place a value on services when all are important.
- We love our library and are so glad that it is available to us.
- I love APLS. Our library would not be what it is today without the help of all your staff. I use your help and resources and could always do more.
- I appreciate the efforts of my public library to serve as many citizens of the community as it can.
- I think the Mobile Public Library system is a good one, and I was at one time a school media specialist. I imagine the budget is a challenge, I just wish more people would take advantage of all they have to offer
- Encourage reading.
- No public library should turn away any immigrant, legal or undocumented.
- Libraries are a national treasure that should be available to all people. They are a place to learn, socialize, and be a citizen. Thank you!
- I use the library at least once a week and have for years. I cannot imagine a city without a great library.
- As a regular user of my local library I am grateful for all the resources currently available. I don't know what my family would do without it!
- A library is a repository of knowledge. This knowledge in The United States should be unlimited and without censorship. United States Supreme Court Justice, Hugo Black. agreed with this assessment.

Comments were categorized using the same terms as the APLS Planning Survey: advocacy, collections, facilities, funding, programs and technology. Based on the content, additional categories were developed for the comments: local issues, services, and staffing.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Advocacy</b>	22	<p>Support for libraries is essential. Far too many people -- especially elected officials -- have any idea how the library helps people. City leaders from the mayor to all council members, should be more involved and supportive of their public library. I don't know if this will ever happen and it's very sad.</p> <p>The biggest issue we will have over the next decade is getting support from our legislators (i.e. monies) unless we put pressure on them. We really have to be a BIG visible entity.</p> <p>We also need to reinvent ourselves in order to remain viable with all the new technology or we will become obsolete. We cannot afford to pretend libraries can continue with business as usual. We are no longer keepers of bound books. We MUST be creative in how we market ourselves. Change is constant. We must change or we will be obsolete.</p> <p>Libraries are vital to a community and a good library will automatically find itself the hub of its community. However, we must be aggressive in Marketing our libraries and keep them in the forefront of the fickle minds of our public or we will find ourselves forgotten. We must be aggressive in making sure we change with the times and provide what the community wants!</p> <p>As a library employee and a library patron, I see the face of libraries changing. We must start to look at libraries as a place of service to our community, where the community can gather and obtain information, but do it in a fun, comfortable, easily accessed manner. Yes, checking out books is important, but not as important as building relationships with our patrons through trained, efficient, hospitality-oriented staff. We need to look at how retail stores are functioning and follow in their footsteps.</p> <p>Libraries are an integral part of our communities and need to remain in the public consciousness as something worth fighting for in these lean economic times.</p> <p>I have used the Montgomery City County Public Library branches for over 15 years since I have lived here. Though the location is not as convenient, I look forward to the opening of the new main branch in downtown Montgomery, I see it as added value with the other museums and city life in that district.</p> <p>My local library is exceptional! I wish it were bigger and could afford more programming like Hoover, but that is a function of budget, not competence of management. Our director is visionary and our teen librarian is superb. I live and teach in Homewood, so I'm bragging on that branch!!!</p>

	<p>In this economically distressed era, public libraries provide an invaluable service for our citizens. Nowhere else does one find free and easy access to the information needed to improve at work, in the family and for educational advancement. There is simply no practical alternative for the average citizen.</p> <p>I think with the information age in which we live often times the library is viewed as obsolete. IT IS NOT OBSOLETE, but very necessary. I would like to see more advocacy for libraries and their services.</p> <p>Many people have lost jobs and either cannot find work or are taking significant pay cuts to provide their family's basic needs. Libraries help our communities by filling the gap in information access that occurs so often in poverty.</p> <p>I feel libraries provide a vital service for our community. I believe that funding needs to continue so that libraries can continue to help those from all economical levels, but especially for lower income families</p> <p>I love my library!!! If it was a stock company, I would buy as much stock as I could. I was a member of the library when I had to pay for my card, and considered it worth every penny. I could market the library. Thank you!!!</p> <p>Try not to close any branches in rural areas they truly need them there</p> <p>Also better promotion/publicity of existing services that are offered locally</p> <p>The library is one of the few places that belongs to the whole community and meets the needs of the whole community.</p> <p>The library system in this state has been my lifeline since I moved here four years ago. I don't know what I would have done without the wonderful discoveries I have made at the library. Thank you for being there. Please continue to find support for the library system into the future because it creates horizons where there were none.</p> <p>Thanks</p> <p>continue to keep libraries moving forward with additions and positive changes.</p> <p>APLS has been doing a wonderful job for public libraries for many years. Anything to keep it funded and available to libraries for assistance and advice throughout the year is a necessity of which the Public, Politicians, and Benefactors should be kept aware. Let us remind all that it is everybody's generosity and taxes at work, coming back to help our communities.</p> <p>There are few lukewarm members of the public. If they know of our materials and services, they are very positive, and those who don't know, well, simply don't expect us to do what we do. Most</p>
--	---

		<p>patrons and patrons-to-be don't see themselves as individually responsible for our budget and ability to serve the public. Again, those that do, including Friends and clubs who make us their philanthropy, are generous. Donations of materials are very welcome, but I think we should offer patrons more chances to help out financially.</p> <p>but the lack of PSA and support for branches needs to be accessed without too much effort</p>
Collections	18	<p>I would love to see Wetumpka Library grow and expand, especially in the adult and children's Christian fiction sections.</p> <p>I love our library system!! I visit the library at least 2 times a week. My only complaint, and it is a very minor one, is that I enjoy re-reading some of the older books I have read in the past, but they have been phased out of the library system. Some of the newer books I consider trash due to the subject matter, bad language or sexually explicit scenes in books. These are offensive to me and not uplifting to society as a whole. I guess that is why I want to re-read books from the past. I love the great selection of DVDs and am saddened to see that the Main Library has material that is stolen. I would also like to see more classic literature on CD's for listening, both in adult and children's literature. Thanks so much and I appreciate all you are doing!!!</p> <p>I would like to see the library have more books and more quality books. They seem to be putting too much emphasis on computers and such.</p> <p>Books with large print.</p> <p>I strongly dislike the new "feel" of the library layout where many different displays are used. Please, please put the books BACK on the shelves -- we can't find them half the time! Also, sad to see many books discarded just because they are not popular in circulation. A library is a repository, where books are held for when you need them or want to go back &amp; read old favorites. Cull down to one copy yes, but don't discard all!</p> <p>I believe that ebook lending has to be a top priority. Eventually, I predict within the next generation, most books will be electronic. It is better to be on top of this rather than behind. Learn the lesson from the music industry. The library facilities should begin to focus on non-book related activities while beginning the shift to electronic books. They otherwise may disappear altogether.</p> <p>For myself I very much look forward to the time the collection will be available to check out as e-books.</p> <p>Keep increasing locally applicable useful materials. Was very happy when I found the weed cookbook and a book with help for my very old sewing machine.</p>

	<p>Trussville library is the pits. most of their books are older ones. especially in the paperback area</p> <p>Would greatly enjoy more new non-fiction titles as a priority &amp; periodicals to be included back into circulation.</p> <p>I believe the state needs to become much more involved in helping the Public Libraries provide EBooks to the population. Interest and demand for these items is greater than any of the libraries are able to supply (at least in the Birmingham Metro Area).</p> <p>I FEEL THEY NEED MORE FUNDING, IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT IMPROVE THEIR SELECTION OF DVD'S. I AM A SENIOR CITIZEN WHO LIVES ALONE, AND I VISIT THE LIBRARY AN AVERAGE OF THREE TIMES PER WEEK.</p> <p>Made comments in another area of the survey. Need many more books, audio DVDs, movies (everything) at Orange Beach.</p> <p>I am an avid reader and love my local library, but since we are in a rural area there is not much selection and I still end up buying more books than I should because there is simply not enough available in the local library. I am appalled sometimes at the small amount of classics available, these are very important for our literary heritage. I also feel that I don't really know how to help the local library to get more books or how and if donations are accepted of books I have already read. More information on how to help the local library build its collection would be useful information for me because I would love to help in whatever small ways I can. I also think community outreach is important because I want more people in the community to love books and the library like I do. Availability of eBooks would be nice, maybe a coordination of statewide eBooks since the smaller libraries might not have the technological capability for this. And just as a personal preference I wish there was a way to have books for smokers and nonsmokers because I often get books that have been read by a smoker, and I get a headache smelling the smoke on the pages. This discourages me from getting books at the library sometimes.</p> <p>I would like to suggest that all state libraries offer more classic books such as LITTLE WOMEN, PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, BLACK BEAUTY, etc. rather than the Harry Potter genre, etc. - our society is more and more leading our young people in the wrong direction today; I long to see a pendulum swing to the "olden" days of reading when a book was an asset to a young person, and not an avenue to witchcraft and any other path that leads downward. Just because something is popular does not make it the most beneficial.</p> <p>Nothing can replace a book.....certainly not a computer screen as</p>
--	---

		<p>we do not yet know the long term effects on children's developing eyes(&amp;ours) ...and when the power is out...in Mobile, i.e. Hurricane Central... a book is a good thing. Nor the experienced Librarians at the circulation desk who have been a great help.</p> <p>There is not much support for the local school curricula as far as on shelf materials for students or parents. A complete set of books K through College should be on the shelf. The Downtown Branch has an alarming amount Black History resources, yet a very poor selection of General History (Current) resources.</p> <p>Please see my earlier comment regarding accessibility to a larger variety of books</p> <p>Automation for collection management and circulation would free staff to expand services to targeted population types..seniors, teens, special needs patrons, etc. Training of library staff would be essential to meet the individual needs of each targeted group.</p> <p>Automation would allow staff to focus on the patron vs. the physical item.</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	4	<p>I'd like to see new or remodeled library facilities in Montgomery County</p> <p>The Monrovia branch library of Madison Co. is doing an excellent job at serving the needs of a community that is growing rapidly. I hope there is an expansion plan, as new subdivisions and schools indicate the area will probably continue to experience growth in years to come.</p> <p>We need updated facilities in our county library and updated technologies.</p> <p>Grants to improve outdated lighting in older libraries.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	13	<p>We need to know how to build relationships with local government leaders in order to obtain the funding we need to operate.</p> <p>As long as Alabama is per capita the least-taxed state in the USA, we will fail our libraries. We must raise taxes so that they are at the national average.</p> <p>I enjoy coming to the library its helps alot for me to complete all my assignments and other fun activities.</p> <p>libraries need more funding. they are continuing to do more with less and eventually this will no longer be possible.. quality materials and technology require decent funding. inadequate funding can only be supplemented with grants for so long. they state and local governments must step up to meet the needs their communities.</p> <p>City and county as well as state governments should increase funding</p> <p>Funding should be the main priority. A library cannot succeed if the funding is not there to keep it open.</p>

		<p><b>MORE FUNDING,</b>      15% increase a year for the five years is good for all countries.      Better funding is a must for a better educated people.      I love our Libraries! I hope the funds can be found to make ongoing improvements to every aspect of the services offered.      Securing funding for libraries is more important than ever!  <b>MORE FUNDING IS NEEDED</b>      Funding is a really big issue, however. It is one that will help with a number of the others.</p>
<b>Local Issues</b>	1	I reside in Lee County, but use the Phoenix City-Russell County Public Library. There was no question concerning which library we use, and I do not use the library in my county it is much further away than the Russell County location.
<b>Programming</b>	3	Materials and support for the summer reading program It would be nice to see our library offer programs like Lunch at the Library, book clubs, Mother/Toddler programs, etc. More programs would generate more public interest which in turn could help generate more support (financial) in my opinion. And as always, we need to fully support preschool and school age children with reading programs and school readiness programs. Training in early literacy reading readiness for staff working with children would be a great idea!
<b>Services</b>	19	When the library's need to discard their books they are then sold at branch stores by FOL As a school librarian, I feel that our community library provides literacy support to our students and their families. Our students are able to check out more books than at their school library. There have been many times that I have seen our families with their children checking out books. The library staff and I partner on projects. For example, I purchased a book but it had not arrived but the library staff was able to locate a book at another location and have it to me within 24 hours. The students loved the book. sales are \$.25 the first week for us this year, due to cancelled sale in April's tornado...and \$.10 the next week...and then Free but we still have thousands...thousands..really! Alabama need to extend their hours and also open on Saturday... Book mobile and books by mail available to all. Within Huntsville/Madison Co library -- LOVE automated checkout and the new adult and teen programs. I used to live in Shelby County which has excellent library services and coming to a more rural area with very limited services (and none online) has been difficult. Bringing better services to more rural areas should be a priority. Libraries will have to make use of consortias in the economic times

		<p>that we live in; technology makes it possible to do this without a physical relationship i.e., and expensive "headquarters." Community colleges have free ESL services, so why are public libraries duplicating those?</p> <p>Need more evening and night activities and services (book clubs, friends of the library meetings, which I can't attend due to work, as well as other activities after business hours).</p> <p>I live in Northern Shelby County which ranks in the highest socio-economic classes in the state, and have access to most of the best libraries in the state (UAB, Jefferson County Consortium, etc).</p> <p>Think resources should be more evenly distributed to underserved, poor areas in the state to increase information access and literacy.</p> <p>Provide more services for school aged children. homework help etc</p> <p>The Library should not provide a gateway service to the welfare systems. Security is very poor, especially at the Main Branch in Mobile. Transients wandering around and in the facilities. This is a safety issue for children as well as adults. The Library should not act as a Daycare facility for unattended kids. Library rules should be enforced as to silence of kids and patrons in the facilities.</p> <p>The outreach of the Bookmobile has been invaluable to those of us who cannot access other libraries</p> <p>Longer hours during school year</p> <p>Extend to interlibrary loan to statewide instead of county wide</p> <p>It is important to keep expanding services especially in a poor economy.</p> <p>I have used this website 5 times this month and did not know about this survey until today. Last day. Never saw this on facebook never got an email. Tells a lot about the library system in that . There should be a state wide system that alerts all public entities of book sales.</p>
Staffing	10	<p>qualified staff require decent pay</p> <p>Some classes on people skills should be offered to library employees. A love of reading and books along with a pleasant manner should be a factor for employment.</p> <p>I would like to see more professionalism among staff members, more awareness of various patrons' needs,</p> <p>By far, the best resource at my home library (Albertville City) is the staff. They deserve a raise</p> <p>WHILE THE PEOPLE AT THE ALBERTVILLE LIBRARY HAVE BEEN MOST POLITE, EFFICIENT, AND KNOWLEDGEABLE,</p> <p>Many changes have been made in access to the materials as well as staff attitude and professionalism.</p> <p>Sensitivity training is much needed in libraries . . people with</p>

		<p>disabilities do not just need help, they need to feel welcome and desire to return</p> <p>If I need assistance in my search for information and materials, I would like the person who is assisting me to be knowledgeable and educated to better meet my needs and the needs of my community.</p> <p>Treat the part-time staff as good as you treat the full-time staff. We need librarians with a masters' degree in library and information technology, preferably from an accredited institution.</p>
<b>Technology</b>	10	<p>Online tools and internet searches are useful but the vetted information available through a library is invaluable.</p> <p>I love libraries. Computers have great learning potential for underserved kids, especially because they have pictures that make learning more accessible. I would love to see more programs to help kids access these resources to become more successful in their studies. This is something schools, libraries and volunteers could collaborate on.</p> <p>and more regular updating of library technological equipment. The technological divide is still very much an issue in Alabama and we need to work very hard to provide high speed internet and plenty of computers for those without access</p> <p>We received new computers through a grant. This has been like cutting on a light in this small community. People are learning so much through this technology.</p> <p>Please work on getting Internet access to underserved areas. There was an article about in The New York Times this past year.</p> <p>The use of well educated, highly trained personnel (or anyone for that matter) to be "Wal-Mart greeters" at the library is ludicrous. Anyone at any table or desk is always available to answer questions. Put the money on connecting information technology avenues for students, writers, and educators.</p> <p>The online capabilities of the library also provide a tremendous service to the same population.</p> <p>I APPRECIATE BEING ABLE TO USE COMPUTERS AT THE LIBRARY. SEVERAL COMPUTERS ARE OUT OF SERVICE EACH TIME I COME SO THAT "I.T" PERSONNEL NEED TO BE ABLE TO VISIT EACH LIBRARY WHENEVER THEY ARE NEEDED. ALSO, UPDATED SOFTWARE IS IMPORTANT TO THOSE WHO USE THE COMPUTERS. THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING THEM.</p> <p>All libraries should have free Wi-Fi and staff who can assist computer users who do not have computer skills.</p>
<b>Training</b>	6	The most serious problem in our library is the fear that the library staff has of the online catalog. In part, this is seems to be due to

	<p>the staff's lack of knowledge about what information should be included on a "card." Further, it would be good for APLS to put more pressure on the library staffs to attend statewide APLS meetings.</p> <p><b>MORE TRAINING OF STAFF IN LIBRARIES</b></p> <p>What I would like to see? Offering more opportunities for continuing education and training of staff. Not to make it mandatory, but to offer to help with the costs of those wishing to improve their skills. I know times are hard for libraries and funding scarce, but investing in the people who work at these organizations will better serve the patrons.</p> <p>Provide Computer &amp; Library Training info to All Employees who wants it, regardless of their Title or Department.</p> <p>Training for the library staff, should be for all the library staff and not for certain staff</p> <p>All Library staff should be required to attend computer classes and be computer literate in order to be of assistance to novice computer users who visit the library.</p>
--	--

### ***Town Meetings***

#### *Word Clouds*

At each of the seven town meetings, participants were asked to write down 3-5 words or phrases that will describe their libraries in five years. Community, technology and programs were major themes at every meeting.



**Figure 1:** Word cloud of "future" words and phrases from all locations

A recurrent theme is the need for libraries to be increasingly community-oriented, to be centers of community activity, and to develop relationships and collaborate with other organizations and institutions.

#### Critical Events

During the meetings, participants were asked to identify "critical events" that would likely impact library planning in their communities. The events were suggested in five categories: Political, Economic, Social/Demographic, Technological and Legal. A total of 563 events were identified in the meetings. Each event was categorized as having a positive, negative or neutral outcome on library planning.

Critical Events	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Economic	19	26	84
Political	6	80	39
Social/Demographic	10	84	28
Technological	12	60	31
Legal	0	34	43
All Events	47	284	225

#### Economic

#### *Negative*

Participants are concerned about possible budget cuts resulting from a loss of industry. The impact of a natural disaster on local communities is also a concern. According to the APLS Planning Survey, more than 70% of respondents identified one or more disasters occurred in the local community.

**Was your community impacted by a disaster in the past 5 years? Check all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Oil spill	15.6%	29
Tornado	60.8%	113
Hurricane	11.3%	21
No impact	24.2%	45
Other (please specify)		14

*answered question*

**186**

The comments suggest a lack of revenue sources could jeopardize ability to effectively serve the community.

#### *Neutral*

Participants identified both positive and negative change for a variable (losing/adding businesses; property taxes increase/decrease), suggesting the economic outlook in their areas is unknown.

*Positive*

Some participants point to the economy rebounding. Comments also identify opportunities to develop foundations or apply for grants, suggesting libraries are searching for alternative funding solutions.

**LEGAL**

*Negative*

Library leaders are worried about being sued or suffering a legal challenge. They are also concerned that they are not keeping up with acts and laws passed that may impact libraries and are not ADA compliant. Other issues of concern were: privacy; Wi-Fi; filtering; and copyright.

*Neutral*

The library leaders are concerned about e-book publisher decisions about lending. Other concerns include the privacy of library records and state ethics laws. Legal concerns about contracts with vendors, meeting requirements for grant funding and rezoning were also mentioned.

**POLITICAL**

*Negative*

There is concern that federal aid may become harder to obtain. The lack of support from local government and elected officials who do not understand the importance of libraries were mentioned frequently. There is some concern about privatization of public services. HB 56: Hammon-Beason Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act was also a concern. The immigration law may impact library services and there was concern over that Latino users may not use services or leave the community.

*Neutral*

Political leadership may be changing in many communities around the state as new mayors; council members; or new legislators are elected.

*Positive*

Several library leaders believe that library friendly officials will be elected at the local and county levels.

**SOCIAL**

### *Negative*

Concerns arise over aging and/or shrinking populations. Many identified social problems like drugs abuse in the community. Shifting populations, an increase in Hispanic, Japanese, Korean and German workers, may create language barriers. Of additional concern, as with the tornados in April 2011, storms may wipe out small communities.

### *Neutral*

While increasing Hispanic, Korean and Japanese populations may need new services and collections, there may be an increase in the number library users or the opportunity for development monies. Population changes could be positive or negative. A population increase could mean more tax support for the library, but it will also require the library to provide more services; perhaps more branch libraries, outreach, or more multicultural. Natural disaster recovery could bring people into the library, provide new funding or grant opportunities, or negatively impact library collections.

### *Positive*

Library leaders suggested that public relations campaigns that describe the value of libraries to healthy communities could be developed. There are opportunities for new buildings in some communities. Population changes may mean more parents and children are using library.

## Technology

### *Negatives*

Library leaders and staffed expressed concern about not being able to keep up with social media. Libraries can't afford new technology, and current infrastructure is inadequate. There are not enough computers or space for computers. Many libraries have overtaxed broadband access and a lack of funding for fiber or online databases. There is concern over the loss of IT staff.

### *Neutral*

Technology is changing and libraries are concerned with the adoption of technologies and their use in the library. Technology specifically mentioned: e-readers, mobile apps, e-books, smart phones, and play-aways.

### *Positive*

The adoption of city-wide Wi-Fi could have a positive impact on the library and library services. Community partnerships and grant opportunities were also mentioned.

While most events were neutral (284), their impact could have no impact, a negative impact or a positive impact on libraries. Negative events (225) outweighed positive events (47),

suggesting not just uncertainty about the future, but an expectation that future change will be negative as well.

#### Flip Chart Activity

Priorities were developed in small groups and then organized and ranked with all participants at each location.

#### Top Priorities

1. Advocacy
2. Collections
3. Development & Funding
4. Education
5. Outreach
6. Technology
7. Facilities

#### *Advocacy*

At the meetings, library leaders identified a need for a **marketing campaign** to increase awareness of library services and programs to the public as well as local, county and state officials.

#### *Collections*

Participants were interested in developing statewide collections for e-books and statewide contracts for other services. Collection development grants are highly regarded.

#### *Development & Funding*

Participants need assistance identifying grant opportunities as well as grant writing. Developing foundations and funding streams was a priority for most participants.

#### *Education*

Educational opportunities for library staff members, library trustees, Friends groups and library users are needed. Participants suggested workshops or training using webinars, classrooms and videoconferencing for:

- New Directors
- Youth services
- Computers
- Funding opportunities
- Databases
- Trustees

It was also suggested that a library or collection of sample policies be developed.

### *Outreach*

Partnerships for **mutual assistance** and **communication** were also discussed. Participants discussed how local libraries needed guidance to work with other community stakeholders to provide services and build relationships. More opportunities for communication between library staff members were suggested. In addition, participants sought assistance with web content delivery and the use of social media tools

### *Technology*

LSTA funds have helped provide computer access. Library staff need assistance identifying which devices to support. There is a need for assistance with technology planning and management, for example, city-wide Wi-Fi, bandwidth planning and website development.

### *Facilities*

Participants are concerned about facilities. Space is at a premium and there is concern over safety issues and code requirements for access.

### *APLS and the Future*

Through the discussions, exercises and surveys many themes kept reoccurring:

- Advocacy
- Collections
- Facilities
- Funding
- Programs
- Services
- Technology
- Training

These themes fall into two distinct categories: those that can and should be addressed by APLS and those that should be addressed at the local level with APLS assistance and support. APLS has the opportunity to focus on statewide services and programming and collections of resources; continuing current initiatives by providing funding from federal and state resources as well as providing technology training, funding and assistance. For local issues, such as facilities, training and funding, APLS can provide tools and guidance at the local level and become an advocate for programs and services across the state.

#### **Appendix 4E. APLS Goals Mapped to the LSTA Priorities with Documentation of Performance**

	Strengthen Communities	Strengthen Information Services	Strengthen Information Technology	Strengthen Youth & Family	Partnership development
Expanding 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	X	X	X		
Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks	X	X	X		
Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries	X	X	X		
Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations	X				X
Targeting 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	X				X
Targeting 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		X		X	

The following are definitions of the terms used to describe the status of activities within the plan:

Status term	Definition
Met	The activity was completed as planned.
Met-ongoing	The activity was completed as planned but additional effort is planned for year five.
Partially met-ongoing	The activity was partially completed within the first four years of the plan. Additional effort is planned for year five.
Not met	The activity was not initiated and no effort is planned for year five.

**1. Expanding 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;**

APLS Goal	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence										
Strengthen Communities	Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons.	Met-ongoing	<p>Total Library Conference (TLC)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Participants</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>August 2008</td><td>210</td></tr> <tr> <td>September 2009</td><td>133</td></tr> <tr> <td>August 2010</td><td>61</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">404 participants</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators' meetings</li> <li>• Summer library program kickoff</li> <li>• Consultants follow up on topics introduced at TLCs.</li> <li>• Conference materials document this program activity.</li> </ul>	Year	Participants	August 2008	210	September 2009	133	August 2010	61	404 participants	
Year	Participants												
August 2008	210												
September 2009	133												
August 2010	61												
404 participants													
Strengthen Information Services	Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff.	Not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultant reports this activity has not been initiated.</li> <li>• The administration decided that it would be a more effective use of LSTA funding to pay for in-person training of library administrators through the Total Library Conferences rather than through web-based educational services. Using private funding the agency had experimented with web-based education through an online service and discovered that the completion rate of web-based courses was very low.</li> </ul>										

	Design, coordinate and/or offer workshops and institutes for public library staff on serving patrons with diverse backgrounds and needs	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLC conferences 404 participants over 3 years. Conference materials document this program activity.</li> </ul>															
	Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama.	Met - ongoing	<p>Professional training grants for the masters degree consist of scholarships.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Number of Scholarships</th><th>Amount</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>11</td><td>\$45,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>8</td><td>\$17,712</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>9</td><td>\$20,790</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>10</td><td>\$24,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Graduation rate is greater than 95%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accredited programs attended by recipients include information services courses.</li> </ul>	Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount	2008	11	\$45,000	2009	8	\$17,712	2010	9	\$20,790	2011	10	\$24,000
Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount																
2008	11	\$45,000																
2009	8	\$17,712																
2010	9	\$20,790																
2011	10	\$24,000																
	Training of library staff to improve services to library users with special needs.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided to the 133 participants at the 2009 TLC Conference materials document this program activity.</li> </ul>															
	Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons.	Partially met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directors' Survey (2011) indicates 39% of respondents support a CE program. (n=155)</li> </ul>															
	Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSTA grant workshops are offered annually.</li> <li>Grant applicants are required to attend a grant workshop periodically.</li> <li>Anecdotal evidence suggests overall improvement in grant proposals.</li> </ul>															

Strengthen Information Technology	<p>Support the development of a statewide video/audio telecommunication system for libraries for purposes of training and dissemination of information.</p>	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS established 10 video conference sites across the state.</li> <li>• Public library administrators attend required APLS quarterly meetings at regional sites.</li> </ul>
	<p>Support computer training for library users to help them learn how to access information.</p>	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LSTA grant process allows libraries to request computer training for library users.</li> <li>• No metrics at present.</li> </ul>
	<p>Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff.</p>	Not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The administration decided that it would be a more effective use of LSTA funding to pay for in-person training of library administrators through the Total Library Conferences rather than through web-based educational services. Using private funding the agency had experimented with web-based education through an online service and discovered that the completion rate of web-based courses was very low.</li> </ul>

	Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama.	Met - ongoing	<p>Professional training grants for the masters degree consist of scholarships.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Number of Scholarships</th><th>Amount</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>11</td><td>\$45,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>8</td><td>\$17,712</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>9</td><td>\$20,790</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>10</td><td>\$24,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Graduation rate is greater than 95%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accredited programs attended by recipients include information technology courses.</li> </ul>	Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount	2008	11	\$45,000	2009	8	\$17,712	2010	9	\$20,790	2011	10	\$24,000
Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount																
2008	11	\$45,000																
2009	8	\$17,712																
2010	9	\$20,790																
2011	10	\$24,000																

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

APLS Priority	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence
Strengthen Communities	Train public library directors and/or their designated to collect and distribute information about their libraries.	Partially Met-ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TLCs provided information on public relations, assessment and statistical reports. Conference materials document this program activity.</li> </ul>
	Train public library directors and/or their designated staff to help young adults equip themselves to succeed in their careers.	Partially met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Compass, a program that trains library staff to assist users in developing job skills and seeking employment, is ongoing .Librarians trained to provide assistance with: Learning Express and Facts on File Ferguson's Career Guidance Center.</li> </ul>
Strengthen Information Technology	Strengthen the electronic infrastructure of libraries throughout the state by providing grant funds for technological equipment, software, rapid telecommunications, partnering with other agencies, and upgrading equipment for learning opportunities.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS offered opportunities for LSTA grants under "Strengthening Information Technology".</li> <li>• APLS established 10 video conference sites across the state.</li> <li>• LSTA assists in the funding of technical support through the statewide IT program.</li> </ul>

	<p>Provide funds for resource-sharing, including the following components: 1) statewide materials and document delivery (electronic and physical delivery), 2) databases and 3) electronic interlibrary loan.</p>	Partially met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide physical delivery of materials has not been initiated; consideration of options continues.</li> <li>• Provide funding for statewide access to databases; includes access to AVL databases (state-funded), Learning Express, and Homework Alabama.</li> <li>• APLS provides access to the Alabama Union Catalog, WorldCat and FirstSearch, allowing ILL through STARS; approximately 730,000 transactions were documented in 2010.</li> </ul>
	<p>Support the technical training of public library staff for the purpose of operating and maintaining automation equipment and software.</p>	Met ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS Information Technology staff provides training for public library staff as needed.</li> </ul>
	<p>Provide grant funds for the digitization of library materials for the purposes of preservation and electronic access.</p>	Met ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 LSTA grants under the heading "Digitization of High-Demand Rare Library Materials" were awarded 2008-2011. The average grant was approximately</li> </ul>

			\$13,500. • Grants awarded by year:
			2008      3
			2009      1
			2010      1
			2011      0

3.

**4. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;**

APLS Priority	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence										
Strengthen Information Services	Support cooperative library planning.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative library planning is required in state aid rules.</li> <li>• Library consultants encourage cooperative library planning for programming, information and resource sharing.</li> <li>• 12 formal library cooperatives continue to provide services to local libraries. APLS consultants are assigned to assist the cooperative library systems.</li> <li>• Cooperative library systems are eligible for LSTA grant funding.</li> </ul>										
Strengthen Information Technology	Provide funds for making technical assistance consulting available to public libraries throughout the state.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS offers free IT services to all public libraries.</li> <li>• Allocation of LSTA grants for technology have increased:</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Total Amount Awarded</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>\$673,299</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>\$975,149</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>\$834,838</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>\$1,190,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2011, IT staff provided the equivalent of \$545,000 in help desk and onsite IT services (2011 Annual Report).</li> </ul>	Year	Total Amount Awarded	2008	\$673,299	2009	\$975,149	2010	\$834,838	2011	\$1,190,000
Year	Total Amount Awarded												
2008	\$673,299												
2009	\$975,149												
2010	\$834,838												
2011	\$1,190,000												
Support libraries' and library systems' efforts to secure E-Rate telecommunication discounts.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated staff member works with libraries on E-Rate.</li> <li>• In 2011, APLS received nearly \$1 million in discounts, approximately one half of libraries in Alabama receive a discount of 80-90% (2011 Annual Report).</li> </ul>											

**5. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;**

APLS Priority	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence
Strengthen Communities	Develop and support surveys to be conducted of and by public libraries to discover the availability of free local services.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This program activity was addressed in the Directors' Survey administered in 2011 (Question 6). 60% of respondents stated they do maintain a list of free local community services (n=154).</li> </ul>
Partnership development	The state library will partner with the following state departments and other organizations, as necessary, to provide both government officials and public libraries with information needed to better serve the people of Alabama: (1) Department of Industrial Relations, (2) Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, (3) Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries, (4) Department of Archives and History, (5) Department of Corrections, (6) Alabama Commission on Higher Education, (7) Department of Education, (8)	Partially met - ongoing	<p>An interview with the APLS Director revealed that cooperation and communication continues with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor's Office</li> <li>• State Legislature</li> <li>• Network of Alabama Academic Libraries</li> <li>• Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind</li> <li>• League of Municipalities</li> <li>• Department of Industrial Relations</li> <li>• Alabama State Personnel Department</li> <li>• Alabama Research and Education Network</li> <li>• Department of Finance</li> <li>• Department of Archives and History</li> <li>• Alabama Commission on Higher Education</li> <li>• Department of Education</li> <li>• Alabama Emergency Management Agency</li> <li>• Alabama Department of Public Health</li> </ul>

	<p>Alabama Emergency Management Agency, (9) Alabama Department of Public Health, (10) Department of Labor, (11) Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, (12) Bureau of Tourism and Travel, (13) Department of Youth Services, (14) Department of Veterans Affairs, (15) Department of Children's Affairs, (16) the juvenile courts and (17) other public agencies and private organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureau of Tourism and Travel</li> <li>• Department of Youth Services</li> <li>• Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs</li> <li>• Department of Corrections</li> <li>• First Lady's Office</li> <li>• Collaborative Summer Library Program</li> <li>• COSLA</li> <li>• Georgia Public Library Service</li> <li>• State Library of North Carolina</li> <li>• Mississippi Library Commission</li> </ul>
--	--	--

**6. Targeting 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;**

APLS Priority	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence															
Strengthen Information Services	Support the strengthening of collections for the underserved at the state and local level.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>180 LSTA collection development grants were awarded between 2008 and 2011.</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Number of Grants</th><th>Total Amount Awarded*</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>38</td><td>\$204,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>35</td><td>\$205,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>59</td><td>\$366,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>48</td><td>\$289,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Rounded to the nearest 1000.</p>	Year	Number of Grants	Total Amount Awarded*	2008	38	\$204,000	2009	35	\$205,000	2010	59	\$366,000	2011	48	\$289,000
Year	Number of Grants	Total Amount Awarded*																
2008	38	\$204,000																
2009	35	\$205,000																
2010	59	\$366,000																
2011	48	\$289,000																
	Support information programs and the acquisition of library materials for persons of diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSTA grants for programs, materials and services for non-native speaking groups were awarded in the amount of \$40,000 during the plan period.</li> </ul>															
	The acquisition and use of technology to enable library users with special needs to access library resources and services.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APLS funded 4 LSTA grants totaling \$21,092 under "Services for the Disabled".</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Total Grants</th><th>Amount Awarded</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>1</td><td>\$3,549</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>1</td><td>\$2,532</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>2</td><td>\$15,011</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) acquires and distributes reading machines. It also maintains a collection of books for the blind.</li> </ul>	Year	Total Grants	Amount Awarded	2008	1	\$3,549	2009	1	\$2,532	2010	2	\$15,011			
Year	Total Grants	Amount Awarded																
2008	1	\$3,549																
2009	1	\$2,532																
2010	2	\$15,011																

	The statewide services of the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of APLS.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LBPH services are ongoing.</li> <li>• Library of Congress supports library materials and equipment for LBPH.</li> </ul>
	Provide deposit collections at convenient locations for library users with special needs.	Not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An interview with LBPH department head indicated that public library demand for deposit collections offered through BPH has stopped. The service formerly provided has been discontinued.</li> </ul>
	Support information services for those having difficulty using a library, including support for outreach programs for such places as institutions, hospitals, nursing homes and senior citizen centers.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS funded 4 LSTA grants in support this program activity. The total amount awarded was \$56,670.</li> </ul>

- 7. Targeting 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 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.**

APLS Priority	APLS Program Activity	Status	Evidence										
Strengthen Information Services	Support the acquisition and utilization of library service delivery vehicles.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APLS supported the acquisition of bookmobiles for Anniston, Harrison, and Cullman. Vehicles for APLS were also purchased.</li> </ul>										
Strengthen Youth & Family	Each year APLS will provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at all participating public libraries at no cost to the libraries. These will include posters, reading logs, bookmarks, and certificates. In addition APLS will provide libraries with an extensive manual of programming and promotional ideas.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials distributed and demonstrated at the annual summer reading kick-off provide documentation.</li> <li>• Surveys indicated high level of participation in these programs.</li> <li>• Certificates were awarded to children who completed the program.</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Certificates Awarded</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>30,611</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>31,673</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>35,416</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>33,235</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Certificates Awarded	2008	30,611	2009	31,673	2010	35,416	2011	33,235
Year	Certificates Awarded												
2008	30,611												
2009	31,673												
2010	35,416												
2011	33,235												

	<p>Increase participation in Alabama's Statewide Summer Reading Program by expanding the visibility of the program. Methods will include the expansion of partnerships among library systems, public libraries, schools, corporations, the Legislature, and others to improve publicity, promotion, and usage of Alabama's Summer Reading Program.</p>	Partially met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APLS participated in the National Collaborative Summer Reading Program. The program enables states to share visibility and programming ideas for summer library programs.</li> </ul>															
	<p>Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama.</p>	Met - ongoing	<p>Professional training grants for the masters degree consist of scholarships.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Number of Scholarships</th><th>Amount</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>11</td><td>\$45,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>8</td><td>\$17,712</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>9</td><td>\$20,790</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>10</td><td>\$24,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Graduation rate is greater than 95%. Many recipients take courses in Children and Young Adult Literature and/or Children and Young Adult Services.</p>	Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount	2008	11	\$45,000	2009	8	\$17,712	2010	9	\$20,790	2011	10	\$24,000
Year	Number of Scholarships	Amount																
2008	11	\$45,000																
2009	8	\$17,712																
2010	9	\$20,790																
2011	10	\$24,000																

	Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directors' Survey (2011) indicates 39% of respondents support a CE program (n=155).</li> </ul>															
	Provide competitive grants to public libraries and to state departments and institutions to provide services targeted to children and youth at risk. These services may include the development of partnerships with other organizations providing services to children such as schools, pre-schools, youth detention centers, youth courts, housing authorities, community services and child-care centers.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APLS funded LSTA grants totaling \$315,431 targeted to "Children at Risk" identified in Annual Reports for 2008 - 2011.</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Total Grants</th><th>Amount Awarded</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td><td>n/a</td><td>\$67,549</td></tr> <tr> <td>2009</td><td>4</td><td>\$68,288</td></tr> <tr> <td>2010</td><td>11</td><td>\$119,594</td></tr> <tr> <td>2011</td><td>3</td><td>\$60,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Total Grants	Amount Awarded	2008	n/a	\$67,549	2009	4	\$68,288	2010	11	\$119,594	2011	3	\$60,000
Year	Total Grants	Amount Awarded																
2008	n/a	\$67,549																
2009	4	\$68,288																
2010	11	\$119,594																
2011	3	\$60,000																
	Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation.	Met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSTA grant workshops are offered annually.</li> <li>Grant applicants are required to attend a grant workshop periodically.</li> <li>Anecdotal evidence suggests overall improvement in grant proposals.</li> </ul>															

	Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff.	Not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultant reports this activity has not been initiated.</li> <li>• The administration decided that it would be a more effective use of LSTA funding to pay for in-person training of library administrators through the Total Library Conferences rather than through web-based educational services. Using private funding, the agency had experimented with web-based education through an online service and discovered that the completion rate of web-based courses was very low.</li> </ul>
	Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal.	Partially met - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programming ideas are shared by members of the APLS Administrators Listserv. Programs and Services most prevalent listserv topic. The study did not differentiate between Youth and Adult programming.</li> <li>• The Children's Consultant works with libraries in developing programming.</li> </ul>

## **Appendix 4F. Describing the present and imagining the future of Alabama Public Libraries**

The first data collection exercise that participants at Town Meetings experienced was the Card Exercise. The exercise was designed to encourage participants to think about their respective libraries as they exist today and as they would like the libraries to exist in the near future. Each participant was given a card and they were asked to write three to five words or phrases describing their library today. Then participants were asked to turn the card over and describe, again in three to five words or phrases, the library they would like to see in five years.

The cards were collected and put into Wordle™ program for analysis. This tool takes the text (the words and phrases submitted on the cards, in this case) and develops “word clouds” that provide graphical presentations giving prominence to the more frequently used terms and less prominence to those less used.

### ***Results and Interpretation***

Here the card exercises are interpreted and reproduced. Each Town Meeting is reported individually and then a summative interpretation is given for all locations.

Boaz Area (Northeastern Alabama).

*Busy, up-to-date, and friendly* were the most frequently mentioned terms describing the present libraries represented by the participants at the Boaz Town Meeting. Staff was often mentioned. Second tier terms included those that are descriptive of the services (*resources, helpful, enough*). Third tier terms include words and phrases indicative of specific services (*program, children's, books, collection, online, audiobooks,*) and adjectival terms about the overall library (*used, crowded, variety, patron-oriented, available, excellent space, location-oriented, accessible, personable, and new*). *Community and community-minded* appeared among the third-level terms.

The concepts of *community* and *community center* were far more prominent on the “futures” card than on the “present” card. *Up-to-date, access, technology* and *progressive* were other prominent terms for the future. Many of the terms that described the libraries of today were also used to describe the hoped-for future libraries: *attractive, friendly, helpful, variety, informed, and patron-oriented* were among those desirable traits for the future libraries. The elevation of “community” concepts to the most prominent tier was the most striking difference between the “present” and “futures” clouds derived from the card exercise at Boaz.

Boaz



Figure 2: Boaz Now



Figure 3: Boaz Future

Daphne (Gulf Area).

Participants in the Daphne Town Meeting described the current libraries as *community oriented community centers*. The concept of *community* was the first tier term in both the present and futures described on the cards from this group. It is interesting to note that the *community* concept stands alone in the first tier for the present, but it shares the first tier for future libraries with other terms including *computer, public, technology* and *access*.

Among the themes in the Daphne area library futures were *improvement* and having *more* of the services and programs described in the "present" cards. Increased funding was also a top tier term for the libraries' futures. The total counts of words and concepts for Daphne was higher than for most other sites due to the number of participants. (Daphne had the second highest turnout among the seven meetings.)

Daphne



Figure 4: Daphne Now



Figure 5: Daphne Future

***Demopolis (West Central Area).***

Participants in the Demopolis Town Meeting described today's libraries as *child friendly*, *providing great programs*, *helpful in service to the community*, and *busy*. However, they were also seen as *crowded*, *small*, and *understaffed*. The small number of participants recognized both positive and negative aspects of their libraries.

For the future, the participants envisioned the library as a “*community center*,” “*a big part of the community*.” The concept of *community* was central, the most prominent of the terms and phrases offered in the session. Many of the other concepts were the “positives” identified for current library: *helpful*, *busy*, *service oriented*. There was also the hopeful mention of a *new building*, *security for the institution*, and “*more staff to accommodate more programs*.”

Demopolis



Figure 6: Demopolis Now



Figure 7: Demopolis Future

***Enterprise Area (Southeastern Alabama).***

The cloud that resulted from the “now” card exercise in the Enterprise area suggests that the libraries are regarded as effective, functional and convenient though they may be understaffed and outdated. The most prominent terms are needs and friendly. Participants also mentioned computers, technology, and materials (including audio-books) and specifically named services such as AVL, children’s services, fiction and non-fiction. The current libraries are described also as comfortable, diverse, resourceful, and accessible. Libraries are regarded as both informational and exciting. Space is seen as an issue, and it receives equal billing in the “future” exercise as well.

The terms that were most prominent on the “future” card included *community, programs, space, and resources*. *Technology* and related terms (*media, computers, databases, e-compliance, e-book, hardware, downloadable, Internet and online*) appeared frequently on the cards. The emphasis on *space* (including terms like *building, room, place and gathering*) suggests that library “as place” is important in the communities represented at the Enterprise Town Meeting.

Enterprise



Figure 8: Enterprise Now



Figure 9: Enterprise Future

**Florence Area (Northwestern Alabama).**

In the cloud resulting from descriptive words and phrases for the Florence area libraries of today, the most prominent terms can be said to describe the library environments and the feelings evoked by the libraries. Terms such as *friendly*, *welcoming*, *busy*, and *informative* stand out. Second tier terms, occurring less frequently, describe broad characteristics of the library as the participants understand it: *interactive*, *changing*, *innovative*, *helpful*, *hopeful*, *transitional*, *convenient*, *active*, and *struggling*, for example. At the same level, participants name service-related aspects of the libraries as they see them today: *instructions*, *technology*, *attractive collections*, *lots of services*, *education*, *user place*, *multi-media*.

In describing what the library participants want for the Florence area in the future, terms like *busy* and *welcoming* remain high on the priority list, while other terms emerge: *community needs*, *programs*, *patrons*, and *technology* take a front seat where they were further down on the list for the libraries as they exist today, or where they were not on the list at all. Terms associated with technology also prevail on the "library future" list: *digital*, *technological*, *downloadable*, *technically*, *technology accessible*, and *electronic* appear throughout the cloud.

Florence



Figure 10: Florence Now



Figure 11: Florence Future

***Hoover Area (Birmingham Region).***

The Hoover Town Hall Meeting was the largest in terms of attendance, and thus generated the longest list of terms and concepts for both present and future libraries in the area. In describing present libraries, most frequent terms were *busy* and *friendly*. Second tier terms included *community*, *computers*, *innovative*, *access*, and *staff*. Other terms described general services, but the participants named very few specifics.

Similarly, the terms used in the futures exercise stressed, in the first tier, *community*. *Busy* remained a frequently mentioned concept, will other aspects suggested *growth*, and libraries that will be *bigger*, *better*, *well-funded*, and *innovative*. Again, unlike most of the other meetings, the Hoover Town Meeting did not yield many mentions of specific services.

*Technology*, *programming* and *computers* were mentioned but other specifics were missing for the lists created in Hoover. We suggest that the participants in this particular Town Meeting may have been more urban and more used to a wide range of library services than participants in some of the other meetings.

It could be suggested that these participants assume that services such as AVL, extensive collections, and programs for youth are givens in public library services since they are prevalent in the area that was represented at the Hoover meeting.

Hoover



Figure 12: Hoover Now



Figure 13: Hoover Future

**Montgomery (Capital Area).**

The Montgomery Town Hall Meeting was among the least well attended, so the results of the card exercise depended upon a very few (8) participants. The overarching concepts identified for "current" libraries included *helpful*, *good*, *need-oriented*, *children's*, *programs*, and *place*. Negative terms and concepts were few throughout the card exercises at all sites, with *lacking* being the only negative expressed, as a second tier term, at the Montgomery meeting. *Outreach*, *community-building*, *welcoming*, *needed*, and other similar terms suggest that the individuals in attendance see many positives in the area's libraries today.

As to the future, the most prominent term is *community*, followed in tier two with terms like *support*, *technology*, *books*, and *public*. *Inviting*, *functional*, and *helpful* are additional terms that the participants would like to see as characterizing their libraries in the future.

Montgomery



Figure 14: Montgomery Now



Figure 15: Montgomery Future

### ***Summary***

The most often stated terms, across all Town Meeting locations, to describe Alabama's public libraries of today were *busy*, *friendly*, and *helpful*. Programmatic terms including *programs*, *computers*, *technology*, *children's*, and *community* were often used, but less frequently than those describing the general library environments of today. Positive terms such as *great*, *fun*, *good*, and *welcoming* also suggest that participants in the town meetings find their libraries to be helpful and service-oriented.

For the future, participants used the term *community* far more often than any other to describe the future library. Programs and technology followed behind the concept of community. The frequency with which "community" concepts were mentioned was striking: the term was mentioned four times the number of times as the next most prevalent term. A variety of meanings for the term community have been described by Veinot. These include a locality or place, a social system, a social network, a type of relationship, and interaction. The participants in the Town Meetings appear to have meant community to be a place; they mentioned community centers, community driven services, community meeting place, and "heart" of the community. Service were described as "community oriented," suggesting both place and social system.

A second overall observation is that participants want "more" and "better" library services, but they like what they have now and see a need for more in the future. Improvement and growth in staff, funding, and facilities were oft mentioned concepts as well.

The activity that yielded these themes served to get participants to think in some depth about what is and what might be for their libraries.

All Sites



Figure 16 All Now



Figure 17 All Future

## **Appendix 5. Codebooks for Data**

### **Coding Used For Town Hall Meetings Data**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Aging community	Aging local population
Collections	Collection development, etc
Communication	Between librarians for information sharing
Development	Everything fundraising
Economy	Economic issues
Education	Staff training AND user training
Facilities	Things dealing with buildings and safety issues
Funding	Budgets, grants, foundations
Immigration	HB56, immigration
Leadership	Library, also advocacy
Legal	State/local/national laws etc., censorship and challenges
Local Issues	FOL, understaffing, budgets, evaluations
Local Politics	Local political issues, local/state/county level
Programing/Services	For all ages; discussion primarily on programs, especially summer reading
Relationships	With other organizations (partnerships with other agencies)
Technology	Computers, hardware, systems
Other	Does not fall into a category

### **Coding Used for Surveys**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Advocacy	Marketing of services, public relations...
Collections	Collection development, e-books, print...
Facilities	Physical spaces
Funding	Development, budgets, grants, foundations
Local Issues	Content relevant to a specific library or an issue the local library needs to address
Library Management	Management issues for libraries
Programs	For children and adults
Services	Circulation, reference, printing, computer access
Staffing	Comments about staff or staff issues
Technology	Computers, hardware, systems
Training	Education, training staff, users and boards
Not Applicable	Comments of none, N/A; may include content that does not fall into categories

### Coding used for Listserv Analysis

Code	Description
Programs/Services	Messages related to programs or services provided by libraries regardless of age of users
Technology	Messages dealing with hardware, software, information systems and similar technology topics
Communication	Messages sharing specific information between, among libraries
Development	Messages related to local, state, federal and private grants and contracts
Education	Messages dealing with user or staff training and education
Staff	Messages dealing with staffing, positions, job ads, and the like
Collections	Messages related to collection development, including e-collections
Funding	Messages dealing with funding from state and local government allocations
Weather/Disasters	Messages dealing with weather warnings, tornado, hurricane, oil spill, and preparedness for disasters
Facilities	Messages about buildings, library facilities, and building security issues
Local Politics	Messages dealing with elections and other local issues
Relationships	Messages about Friends of Libraries and library relationships with other organizations
Leadership	Messages about internal library leadership
Immigration	Messages about immigration laws, patron immigration issues
Legal Issues	Messages related to legal issues, information policy, intellectual policy and other legal issues except those related to immigration

## **Appendix 6. Surveys and Town Hall Meetings Documents**

- 6A. Survey - Planning
- 6B. Survey – Public
- 6C. Town Hall Meeting Introduction
- 6D. Town Hall Meeting Instructions

# APLS Planning Survey

## APLS Five-Year Plan

**Please participate by July 31, 2011 to have your opinion count!**

The Alabama Public Library Service is developing a five year plan in compliance with the Library Services and Technology Act. The previous plan is available at: <http://www.imls.gov/pdf/5yrplans/ALplan2012.pdf>. You are being asked to participate in a survey evaluating the previous APLS five-year plan. By answering the following questions, you will tell the Alabama Public Library Service about the priorities and plans you would like to see for Alabama libraries.

The survey data will be used in a white paper written for APLS by Elizabeth Aversa and Jennifer Campbell-Meier, faculty members at the School of Library & Information Studies at The University of Alabama. The purpose of this study is to assess the previous APLS five year plan and identify issues that may be incorporated in the 2012-2017 plan. The results of the survey may be used in publications or other scholarly work in addition to the white paper.

The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes. During the survey, you will be asked questions about the previous plan and priorities at your library.

There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences will contribute to provide APLS with the information necessary to develop a five year plan. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study. You may skip any questions you do not want to answer. All study data will be kept confidential. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used. Individual responses will not be linked to identifying content. Survey data will be kept in a password protected account.

If you have any questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Dr. Jennifer Campbell-Meier at [jcm@slis.ua.edu](mailto:jcm@slis.ua.edu). If you have questions or complaints about your rights as a research participant, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University at 205-348-8461 or 877-820-3066. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. You are free not to participate or stop participating any time before you submit your answers.

You must be at least 19 years old to participate in this survey.

If you understand the statements above and freely consent to be in this study, click **NEXT** to begin. By completing the survey, you agree to participate in this project and to the use of survey data as described above.

# APLS Planning Survey

## Demographic Information

Please provide us with demographic information. Be assured that all data will be reported in the aggregate.

### 1. Please identify yourself as one of the following:

- Library director
- Library staff member
- Library trustee
- Library user
- Elected official (municipal, county or state)
- Municipal or county employee

Other (please specify)

### 2. In which Alabama county do you reside?

### 3. Was your community impacted by a disaster in the past 5 years? Check all that apply.

- Oil spill
- Tornado
- Hurricane
- No impact

Other (please specify)

### 4. How long have you been an Alabama resident?

- Less than one year
- One to five years
- Six to ten years
- More than ten years

# APLS Planning Survey

## 5. To which age group do you belong?

- Over 60
- 46-60
- 31-45
- 21-30
- Under 21

## 6. Please identify yourself as one of the following:

- Male
- Female

## 7. Are you of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity—that is, of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race?

- Yes
- No

## 8. What race(s) do you consider yourself? Check all that apply.

- African American or Black: Having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: Having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and maintaining tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian: Having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, e.g., Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Phillipine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: Having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- White: Having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

# APLS Planning Survey

## Priorities and Plans

By answering the following questions, you will tell the Alabama Public Library Service about the priorities and plans you would like to see for Alabama libraries.

**9. The five areas of need listed below were identified as priorities in the 2007 state plan for Alabama libraries. Which do you believe are the most important and the least important? Rank the priorities from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.**

**Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)

**Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for library, etc.)

**Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)

**Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)

**Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

## APLS Planning Survey

### 10. Select the one needs area in which was best addressed in your community during the past five years.

- Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)
- Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for library, etc.)
- Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)
- Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

### 11. Select the one needs area that requires the most improvement in your community.

- Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)
- Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for library, etc.)
- Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)
- Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

## APLS Planning Survey

**12. Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**

- Juvenile reading programs
- Services for non-English-speaking people
- Online access to library materials
- Training of library staff, trustees, and users
- Services for the underserved (i.e. "underserved" refers to individuals who are unable to easily access library programs and services due to geographic, technological, or socio-economic obstacles. Examples of underserved groups may include residents of institutions (such as senior citizen centers) and children living in poverty.)
- Services for people with disabilities

**13. Are there any other needs or services that could/should be included or addressed in the plan?**

**14. A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future? Check all that apply.**

- Juvenile reading programs
- Services for non-English-speaking people
- Online access to library materials
- Training of library staff, trustees, and users
- Services for the underserved (i.e. "underserved" refers to individuals who are unable to easily access library programs and services due to geographic, technological, or socio-economic obstacles. Examples of underserved groups may include residents of institutions (such as senior citizen centers) and children living in poverty.)
- Services for people with disabilities

Other (please specify)

## APLS Planning Survey

### 15. The following is a list of services and programs that are offered by Alabama libraries.

**Check those that you or members of your household have used within the past 12 months. Check all that apply.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Story times and programs for children and teens (i.e. pre-school story times, summer reading programs, gaming tournaments, etc.)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting room use   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs for adults (i.e. book clubs, author lectures, etc.)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster assistance (i.e. used the library computer to file FEMA forms)                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homework Alabama (i.e. online tutoring)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with research or finding information (reference)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alabama Virtual Library (AVL) (i.e. online reference databases)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Services for the blind and physically handicapped (i.e. audio books (cassette, digital, downloadable), etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bookmobile services  | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with selecting books or other materials (i.e. recommendations)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer and Internet use  | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Programs (i.e. English as a Second Language (ESL), getting pre-schoolers ready for school, teaching adults to read, etc.) |   |

### 16. Rank the library services listed below according to their importance to your community. List your most important priority as 1 and your least important as 12.

Alabama Virtual Library (AVL) (i.e. online reference databases)

Literacy Programs (i.e. English as a Second Language (ESL), getting pre-schoolers ready for school, teaching adults to read, etc.)

Disaster assistance (i.e. used the library computer to file FEMA forms)

Computer and Internet use

Bookmobile services

Services for the blind and physically handicapped (i.e. audio books (cassette, digital, downloadable), etc.)

Homework Alabama (i.e. online tutoring)

Meeting room use

Help with research or finding information (i.e. reference)

Programs for adults (i.e. book clubs, author lectures, etc.)

Story times and programs for children and teens (i.e. pre-school story times, summer reading programs, gaming tournaments, etc.)

Help with selecting books or other materials (i.e. recommendations)

# APLS Planning Survey

## Categories

Identify categories of issues important to your library.

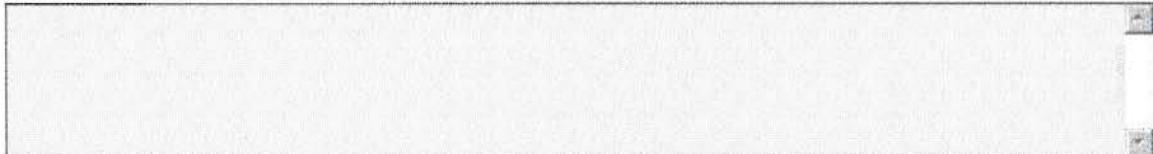
**17. Listed below are broad headings that can be used to categorize some library issues that could be addressed over the next few years. Please identify 3 categories that you believe should be addressed. Check only 3 categories.**

- Automation & Systems**, including check-out and security systems, and automated systems for collection management and circulation
- Collaboration & Cooperation** between libraries and among libraries and other community agencies and organizations
- Marketing, Public Relations & Communication** to citizens and public officials about the contributions of the library to the community
- Library Materials**, including the purchase and leasing of materials (i.e. books, audios, DVDs, etc.) for the public's use
- Statewide Services & Programs**, including the AVL, Homework Alabama, and summer reading programs
- Services for Targeted Populations** such as senior citizens, children at risk, non-English-speaking people, or people seeking employment
- Technology Development**, including expansion of computer services, providing new software in computer labs, offering wireless Internet access, delivering information services to handheld devices
- Training & Education of Library Personnel**, including formal education and continuing education for librarians and library staff
- Improving Library Facilities**, including bookmobiles
- Improving Support for Alabama Libraries**, including advocacy, funding and grants

# APLS Planning Survey

## Comments and Suggestions

**18. Please use this space to make any comments or suggestions.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, designed for respondents to write their comments or suggestions. The box is positioned above the question number 18 and below the question text.

# APLS Public Survey

## APLS Five-Year Plan

**Please participate by November 15, 2011 to have your opinion count!**

The Alabama Public Library Service is developing a five year plan in compliance with the Library Services and Technology Act. The previous plan is available at: [http://www.imls.gov/pdf/5yrplans/AL\\_plan2012.pdf](http://www.imls.gov/pdf/5yrplans/AL_plan2012.pdf). You are being asked to participate in a survey evaluating the previous APLS five-year plan. By answering the following questions, you will tell the Alabama Public Library Service about the priorities and plans you would like to see for Alabama libraries.

The survey data will be used in a white paper written for APLS by Elizabeth Aversa and Jennifer Campbell-Meier, faculty members at the School of Library & Information Studies at The University of Alabama. The purpose of this study is to assess the previous APLS five year plan and identify issues that may be incorporated in the 2013-2017 plan. The results of the survey may be used in publications or other scholarly work in addition to the white paper.

The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes. During the survey, you will be asked questions about the previous plan and priorities at your library.

There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences will contribute to provide APLS with the information necessary to develop a five year plan. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study. You may skip any questions you do not want to answer. All study data will be kept confidential. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used. Individual responses will not be linked to identifying content. Survey data will be kept in a password protected account.

If you have any questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Dr. Jennifer Campbell-Meier at [jcm@slis.ua.edu](mailto:jcm@slis.ua.edu). If you have questions or complaints about your rights as a research participant, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University at 205-348-8461 or 877-820-3066. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. You are free not to participate or stop participating any time before you submit your answers.

You must be at least 19 years old to participate in this survey.

If you understand the statements above and freely consent to be in this study, click **NEXT** to begin. By completing the survey, you agree to participate in this project and to the use of survey data as described above.

# APLS Public Survey

## Demographic Information

Please provide us with demographic information. Be assured that all data will be reported in the aggregate.

### 1. Please identify yourself as one of the following:

- Library director
- Library staff member
- Library trustee/Library board
- Library user

Other (please specify)

### 2. In which Alabama county do you reside?

### 3. Was your community impacted by a disaster in the past 5 years? Check all that apply.

- Oil spill
- Tornado
- Hurricane
- No impact

Other (please specify)

### 4. How long have you been an Alabama resident?

- Less than one year
- One to five years
- Six to ten years
- More than ten years

### 5. To which age group do you belong?

- Over 60
- 46-60
- 31-45
- 21-30
- Under 21

# APLS Public Survey

## 6. Please identify yourself as one of the following:

Male

Female

## 7. Are you of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity—that is, of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race?

Yes

No

## 8. What race(s) do you consider yourself? Check all that apply.

African American or Black: Having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

American Indian or Alaskan Native: Having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and maintaining tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian: Having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, e.g., Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Phillipine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: Having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White: Having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

## 9. How many people are in your household are...

Under 5 years old

5-9 years old

10-14 years old

15-19 years old

Over 20 years old

# APLS Public Survey

## Library Usage

**10. In the past 12 months, did the use of the library or library resources provide information for decision-making information in any of the following areas?**

	I did	Someone in my household did
voting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
selecting a school or college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
completing a school project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
joining or working for a civic organization (e.g. the Rotary or Kiwanis Club)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completing church activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11. The following is a list of personal enhancement activities that may relate to library use. Check those that apply to you or members of your household:**

	Applies to me	Applies to someone in my household
Reading skills improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal enrichment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign language skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job seeking skills (i.e. resume preparation, test preparation, or interviewing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APLS Public Survey

**12. The following is a list of services and programs that are offered by Alabama libraries.**  
**Check those that you or members of your household have used within the past 12 months. Check all that apply.**

	I used this	Someone in my household used this
Story times and programs for children and teens (i.e. pre-school story times, summer reading programs, gaming tournaments, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for adults (i.e. book clubs, author lectures, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homework Alabama (i.e. online tutoring)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online resources and/or reference databases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bookmobile services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer and Internet access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literacy Programs (i.e. English as a Second Language (ESL), getting pre-schoolers ready for school, teaching adults to read, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting room use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disaster assistance (i.e. used the library computer to file FEMA forms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with research or finding information (reference)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services for the blind and physically handicapped (i.e. audio books (cassette, digital, downloadable), etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with selecting books or other materials (i.e. recommendations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LearningExpress (test preparation materials and practice tests)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online Public Access Catalog (searched for books and/or materials in my library)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Circulation of library materials (checked out books, dvds, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public computer training opportunities (i.e. library resources, computer and software training)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13. Have you or any members of your household made decisions about any of the following based on information from the library?**

	I did	Someone in my household did
A political decision (i.e. voting information)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A social decision (i.e. joined a group)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A legal decision (i.e. found information about zoning laws)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A technical decision (i.e. tested computers or e-book readers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An economic decision (i.e. used library resources to find information on stocks or researched mortgage rates)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**14. What library resources do you use most frequently?**

1.
2.
3.

## Priorities and Plans

By answering the following questions, you will tell the Alabama Public Library Service about the priorities and plans you would like to see for Alabama libraries.

**15. The five areas of need listed below were identified as priorities in the 2007 state plan for Alabama libraries. Which do you believe are the most important and the least important? Rank the priorities from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.**

**Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)

**Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for public library staff and trustees, etc.)

**Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)

**Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)

**Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

## APLS Public Survey

### **16. Select the one needs area that was best addressed in your community during the past five years.**

- Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)
- Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for public library staff and trustees, etc.)
- Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)
- Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

### **17. Select the one needs area that requires the most improvement in your community.**

- Strengthen communities** (i.e. enable libraries to partner with local agencies to improve the quality of life for all residents; promote libraries as community activity and learning centers; promote libraries as central sources of information about community services, etc.)
- Strengthen information services** (i.e. enable libraries to provide materials and services to their users; enable libraries to offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collections, or other services for those who cannot readily come to the library; provide training opportunities for public library staff and trustees, etc.)
- Strengthen information technology** (i.e. enable libraries to improve their technological infrastructure through updated equipment, software, and telecommunications access; provide technical assistance to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide free computer classes to their users, etc.)
- Strengthen youth and family** (i.e. provide summer reading program manuals and materials to libraries at no cost; enable libraries to provide programs to children, teens, and their parents to assist with school readiness and reading skills, etc.)
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access** (i.e. provide information resources to State officials and State employees; enable libraries to serve as sources of information to library users about state agencies and other community-based organizations, etc.)

## APLS Public Survey

**18. Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.**

- Juvenile reading programs
- Services for non-English-speaking people
- Online access to library materials
- Training of library staff, trustees, and users
- Services for the underserved (i.e. "underserved" refers to individuals who are unable to easily access library programs and services due to geographic, technological, or socio-economic obstacles. Examples of underserved groups may include residents of institutions (such as senior citizen centers) and children living in poverty.)
- Services for people with disabilities

**19. Are there any other needs or services that could/should be included or addressed in the plan?**

**20. A new five-year state plan for Alabama libraries will be written in 2012. Which of these priorities should continue to be high-priority programs in the future? Check all that apply.**

- Juvenile reading programs
- Services for non-English-speaking people
- Online access to library materials
- Training of library staff, trustees, and users
- Services for the underserved (i.e. "underserved" refers to individuals who are unable to easily access library programs and services due to geographic, technological, or socio-economic obstacles. Examples of underserved groups may include residents of institutions (such as senior citizen centers) and children living in poverty.)
- Services for people with disabilities

Other (please specify)

## APLS Public Survey

### 21. Rank the library services listed below according to their importance to your community. List your most important priority as 1 and your least important as 15.

Programs for adults (i.e. book clubs, author lectures, etc.)

Story times and programs for children and teens (i.e. pre-school story times, summer reading programs, gaming tournaments, etc.)

LearningExpress (test preparation materials and practice tests)

Computer and Internet access

Meeting room use

Online Public Access Catalog (searched for books and/or materials in my library)

Public computer training opportunities (i.e. library resources, computer and software training)

Circulation of library materials (checked out books, dvds, etc.)

Online resources and/or reference databases

Bookmobile services

Homework Alabama (i.e. online tutoring)

Services for the blind and physically handicapped (i.e. audio books - cassettes, digital, downloadable, etc.)

Disaster assistance (i.e. used the library computer to file FEMA forms)

Help with selecting books or other materials (i.e. recommendations)

Help with research or finding information (i.e. reference)

Literacy Programs (i.e. English as a Second Language (ESL), getting pre-schoolers ready for school, teaching adults to read, etc.)

## Categories

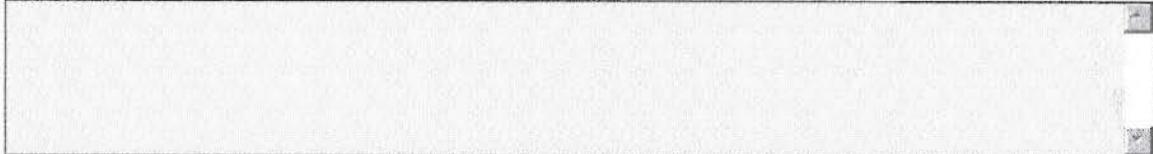
Identify categories of issues important to your library.

**22. Listed below are broad headings that can be used to categorize some library issues that could be addressed over the next few years. Please identify 3 categories that you believe should be addressed. Check only 3 categories.**

- Automation & Systems**, including check-out and security systems, and automated systems for collection management and circulation
- Collaboration & Cooperation** between libraries and among libraries and other community agencies and organizations
- Marketing, Public Relations & Communication** to citizens and public officials about the contributions of the library to the community
- Library Materials**, including the purchase and leasing of materials (i.e. books, ebooks, audios, DVDs, etc.) for the public's use
- Statewide Services & Programs**, including LearningExpress, Homework Alabama, and summer reading programs
- Services for Targeted Populations** such as senior citizens, children at risk, non-English-speaking people, or people seeking employment
- Technology Development**, including expansion of computer services, providing new software in computer labs, offering wireless Internet access, delivering information services to handheld devices
- Training & Education of Library Personnel**, including formal education and continuing education for librarians and library staff
- Improving Library Facilities**, including bookmobiles
- Improving Support for Alabama Libraries**, including advocacy, funding and grants
- Training & Education of Community Members**, including formal and informal training opportunities on library resources, as well as computer and software training

**Comments and Suggestions**

**23. Please use this space to make any comments or suggestions.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, designed for respondents to write their comments or suggestions. The box is positioned below the question number and above the page footer.

## Appendix 6C. Town Hall Script

### WELCOME TO THE 2011 LIBRARY TOWN MEETING

#### Introduction

This town meeting has been arranged by your Alabama Public Library Service in order to gather suggestions and ideas that will affect the future of public libraries in Alabama. More specifically, we will work together today to identify, prioritize, and reach an understanding of the needs that you believe are the most important and that should be included in the State's next five-year plan.

The results of today's meeting will be communicated to the Alabama Public Library Service for consideration, along with other forms of input as the agency plans for the future. We have developed an online survey based on the previous 5-year plan, and we will make that survey available to you and to people who could not attend a meeting in person this summer. We hope you will take the time to participate in the survey for it gives you another opportunity for input. A second survey will be available in the early fall and its availability will be announced over the same listservs and distribution lists that were used to invite you to be with us today. In addition, we will be happy to hear from you if you think of something after we've completed today's meeting. We will be glad to receive your e-mail at the following address:

[stateplan2@slis.ua.edu](mailto:stateplan2@slis.ua.edu)

#### Process & Ground Rules

We will conduct this meeting using three group techniques. First, you will be assigned to a group. Then, there will be a brief card exercise that Jennifer will present. Second, you will have an opportunity to identify critical events that could impact library planning. Finally, you will be asked to write down your ideas about particular issues that you will introduce to your group. We will record your ideas on the flip charts in a round robin fashion until all the ideas are noted. We will discuss them briefly, and then we will ask you to prioritize the suggestions and rate each item on its importance. We will then rank the needs/priorities from most to least importance and present the results as part of our report to APLS.

These processes should allow us to identify needs and priorities in an organized and systematic fashion. We do ask that when you share your ideas you limit the length of any explanations so that all participants have an opportunity to share their ideas and that you identify yourself, your institution, and your role so that we can record that information.

We hope that you enjoy participating in this process that is so important to library planning.

Jennifer Campbell-Meier

Elizabeth Aversa

## Appendix 6D. Town Hall Instructions

### Exercise #1

To get us started let us think about where your library is as opposed to where you would like it to be.

On the card that you have in hand, write NOW at the top. Take a moment to think about your library and then write the three to five words or phrases that capture the library in your community as it now exists.

Next, turn the card over and write FUTURE at the top. Take a moment to think about what your library *could* be in the future. Then write three to five words or phrases that capture that potential or that describe the library you would like to have.

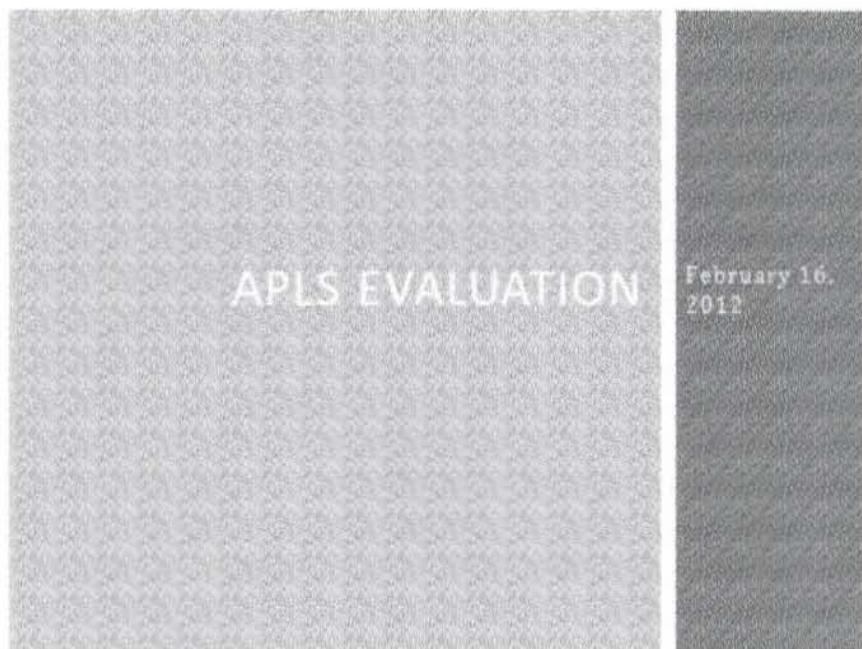
## TOWN MEETING ACTIVITY

### Exercise #2

Suggest for each "influencer" listed below any potential "critical events" that would likely impact library planning in your community. For example, under "POLITICAL" influencer, a critical event could be the election of a new mayor from an alternative political party.

Influencer	Potential Critical Event
POLITICAL	
ECONOMIC	
SOCIAL/DEMOGRAPHIC	
TECHNOLOGICAL	
LEGAL	

**Appendix 7. Presentation to APLS Board of Trustees**



## LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)

As part of the funding process:

- \* Each state submits a five-year plan
- \* The plan is evaluated at the end of the five years
- \* The accomplishments and progress on the previous plan's goals and objectives inform the next five-year plan

## EVALUATORS

- \* **Dr. Elizabeth Aversa**
  - \* Professor, School of Library & Information Studies, The University of Alabama
- \* **Dr. Jennifer Campbell-Meier**
  - \* Assistant Professor, School of Library & Information Studies, The University of Alabama
- \* MLIS Student Assistants:
  - \* **Greg Carr**
  - \* **Elizabeth Levkoff**

## EVALUATION PLAN

### APLS PLANNING SURVEY

Respondent Type	Percent	N of Responses
Library director	53.6	105
Library user	13.3	26
Library staff member	12.8	25
Elected official (municipal, county or state)	11.2	22
Library trustee/board member	5.1	10
Municipal or county employee	4.1	8
ALL	100.1	196

### APLS PUBLIC SURVEY

	Percent	N of Responses
Library user	60.3	288
Library staff member	22.4	107
Library director	14.2	68
Library trustee/board member	3.1	15
Total	100	478

### TOWN HALL MEETINGS

- **Enterprise**, June 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Enterprise Public Library
- **Montgomery**, June 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Alabama Public Library Service agency
- **Boaz**, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at the Boaz Public Library
- **Florence**, June 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library
- **Hoover**, July 18<sup>th</sup>, at the Hoover Public Library
- **Demopolis**, July 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Demopolis Public Library
- **Daphne**, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, at the Daphne Public Library

## PARTICIPANT TYPES FOR APLS TOWN MEETINGS

Participant Type	N of Participants	Percent
Library director	8	8%
Library user	9	9%
Library staff member	67	67%
Elected official (municipal, county or state)	1	1%
Library trustee/board member	8	8%
Municipal or county employee	1	1%
Other and unidentified	6	6%
ALL	100	100%

## TOWN MEETINGS: FORMATS, ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

- \* Introduction
- \* Card Exercise: describing the library of today and five years from now
- \* Environmental Assessment: identifying potential opportunities and threats
- \* Group Exercise: evaluating past performance and identifying priorities for the future

## DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

- \* The State Plan for 2007-2012;
- \* Reports on grant projects funded by APLS/LSTA from 2007 through 2011;
- \* APLS annual reports;
- \* Results from an APLS directors' survey;
- \* Messages posted to the State's public library administrator listserv.
- \* Interviews with APLS staff, as needed, provided additional information and clarification of documents.

## EVALUATION

## RANKED APLS PRIORITIES

1. Strengthen Information Technology
2. Strengthen Communities
3. Strengthen Information Services
4. Strengthen Youth and Family
5. Develop and Strengthen Partnerships

## MAPPING APLS PRIORITIES TO LSTA PRIORITIES

	Preservation of Collections	Delivery of Services	Access to Information	Customer Service & Programs	Overall Performance
Expanding 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	X	X	X		
Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks	X	X	X		
Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all	X	X	X		

## MAPPING APLS PRIORITIES TO LSTA PRIORITIES

	Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community based organizations	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	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	Improve library facilities and equipment	Improve library collections
Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community based organizations	X				X
Targeting 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		X			X
Targeting 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			X	X	

## 35 API'S PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- 21 (60%) Met and ongoing
- 8 (22.8%) Partially met and ongoing
- 2 (5.7%) Fully met
- 4 (11.4%) Not met or were discontinued

## RANKINGS OF API'S PRIORITIES AS BEST ADDRESSED

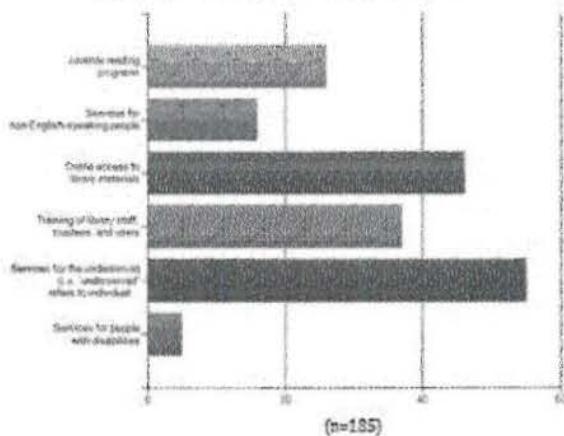
Priority 2007-2012	Rank and Percentage Identified as "best addressed" by leadership	Rank and Percentage Identified as "best addressed" by youth
Strengthen Information Technology	1 <sup>st</sup> 40.7 percent	2 <sup>nd</sup> 32.0 percent
Strengthen Communities	3 <sup>rd</sup> 18.1 percent	4 <sup>th</sup> 15.3 percent
Strengthen Information Services	4 <sup>th</sup> 11.0 percent	3 <sup>rd</sup> 15.6 percent
Strengthen Youth & Family	2 <sup>nd</sup> 27.5 percent	1 <sup>st</sup> 32.8 percent
Develop & strengthen partnerships	5 <sup>th</sup> 2.7 percent	5 <sup>th</sup> 4.3 percent

## RANKINGS OF ALPS PRIORITIES AS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Priority 2007-2011	Rank and Percentage Identified as "needing most improvement" by leadership	Rank and Percentage Identified as "needing most improvement" by public
Strengthen Information Technology	1 <sup>st</sup> 29.2 percent	3 <sup>rd</sup> 22.2 percent
Strengthen Communities	2 <sup>nd</sup> 25.9 percent	1 <sup>st</sup> 24.6 percent
Strengthen Information Services	3 <sup>rd</sup> 17.8 percent	2 <sup>nd</sup> 23.3 percent
Strengthen Youth & Family	5 <sup>th</sup> 9.7 percent	5 <sup>th</sup> 13.1 percent
Develop & strengthen partnerships	4 <sup>th</sup> 17.3 percent	4 <sup>th</sup> 16.8 percent

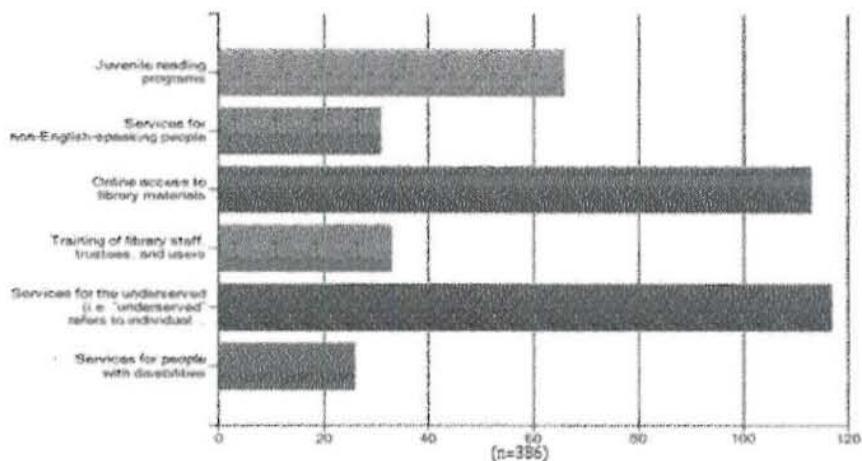
## ALPS PLANNING SURVEY - LEADERSHIP

Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.



## APLS PUBLIC SURVEY - USERS

Several key program areas were identified in the previous plan. Select the one program area in which you believe Alabama libraries need the most improvement.



## RECURRING THEMES

- Advocacy
- Collections
- Facilities
- Funding
- Programs
- Services
- Training
- Technology

FUTURES

FUTURES

technology  
public  
busy  
programs  
resources  
staff  
center  
building  
books  
facilities  
up-to-date  
better  
helpful  
innovative  
**community**

RECOMMENDATIONS

## TWO AREAS OF CONCERN TO PARTICIPANTS

### State Library Service   Local Library Issues

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| ■ Advocacy              | ■ Facilities |
| ■ Funding               | ■ Funding    |
| ■ Statewide collections | ■ Programs   |
| ■ Technology            | ■ Services   |
| ■ Training              |              |

## APIS AS ADVOCATE

- Training
- Outreach
- Technology

## QUESTIONS?

▪ Questions or comments about the APLS

Evaluation:

\*Elizabeth Aversa: [eaversa@slis.ua.edu](mailto:eaversa@slis.ua.edu)

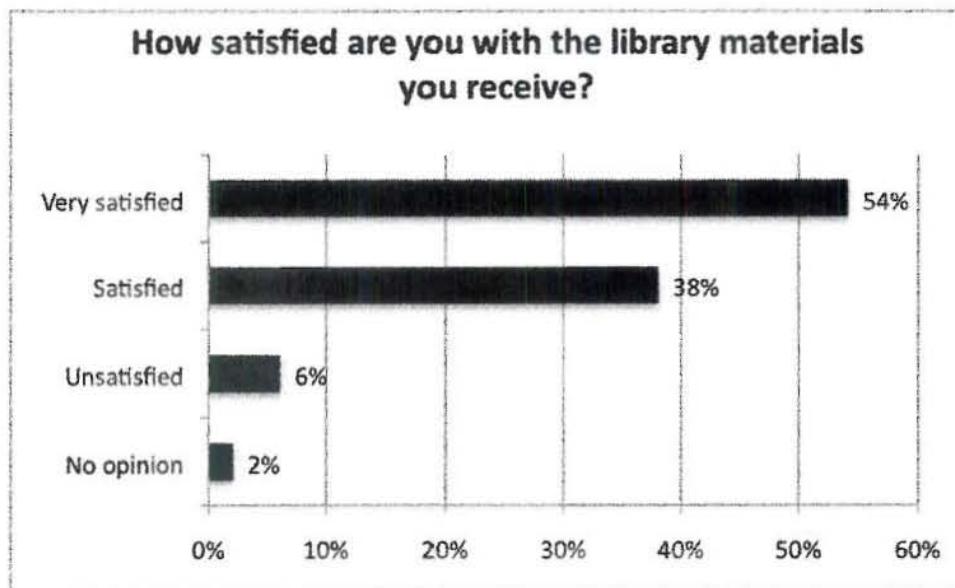
\*Jennifer Campbell-Meier: [jcm@slis.ua.edu](mailto:jcm@slis.ua.edu)

## **Appendix 8. 2011 Patron Survey for Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services**

This appendix was prepared by staff of the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS). Goal 2 of the FY2008-FY2012 Five-Year Plan was "to strengthen information services through the provision of library materials and informational programs for all Alabamians". One of the key outcome targets under this goal stated: "By year-end FY2011, 90% of a sampling of the users of the services of the APLS Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH) will indicate in a survey that the special format materials they have used have significantly enhanced their lives, as ranked on a numerical scale".

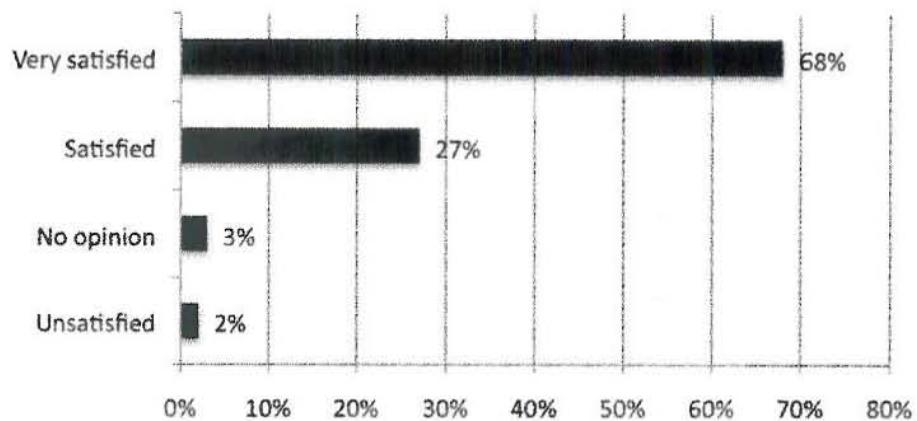
In early December 2011 a survey instrument, consisting of 11 questions, was mailed to all users of BPH: 3,911 to active users and 158 to active institutions (nursing homes, etc.) for a total of 4,069. The cutoff for receipt of completed surveys was in mid-February 2012. 587 useable survey forms (14%) were returned, although not all users answered all of the questions. Below are charts which include the questions and results. The percentages in the charts are based on the number of users answering the question in each chart. The first chart shows the results for the question "How satisfied are you with the library materials you receive?" 92% of those answering this question were satisfied or very satisfied. This result is a strong indicator that the desired outcome target was met.

The remaining questions seek other information from users, including information about computer use and demographic data.



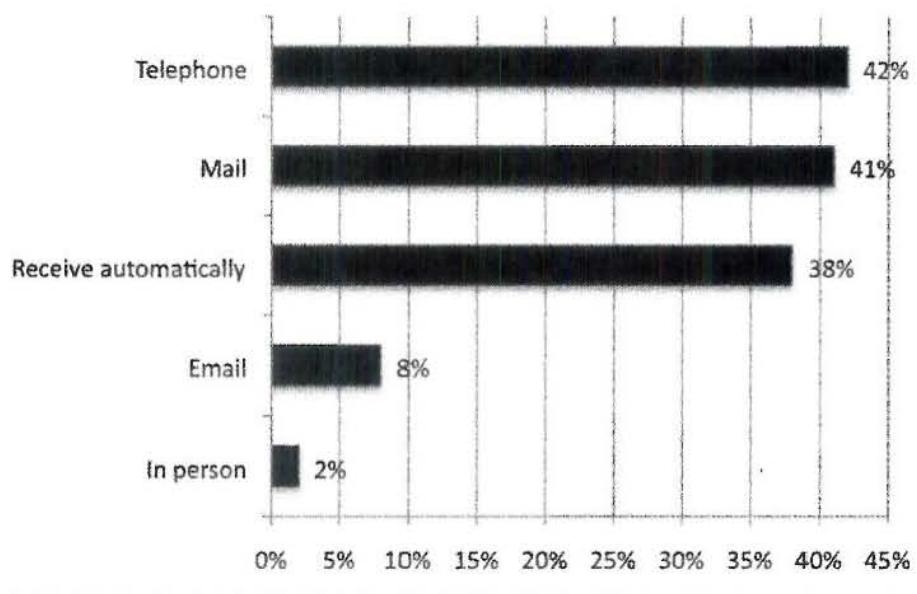
The above percentages are based on the 576 users responding to this question.

### How satisfied are you with the service provided by library staff?



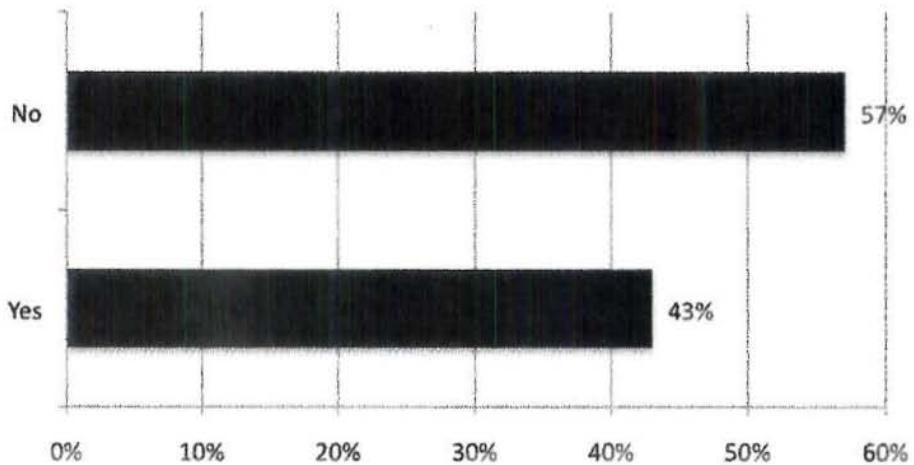
The above percentages are based on the 579 users responding to this question.

### How do you order materials from the library?



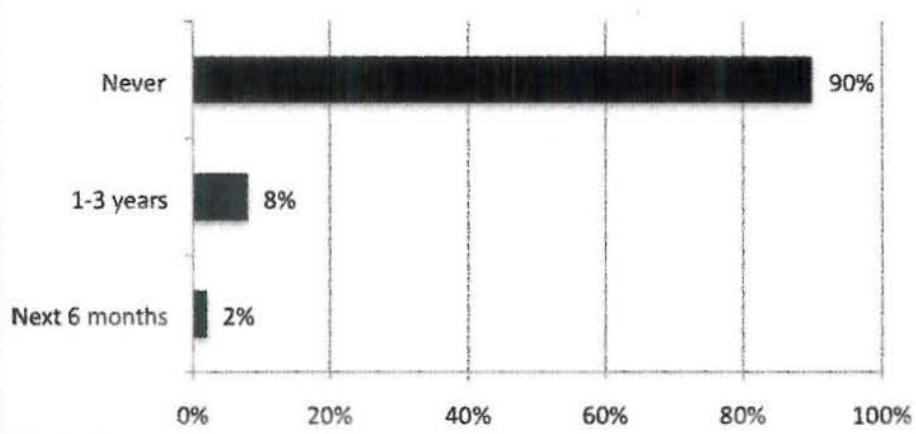
The above percentages are based on the 574 users responding to this question. A number of users reported using more than one ordering method; therefore the sum of the percentages is greater than 100%.

### **Do you have a computer?**



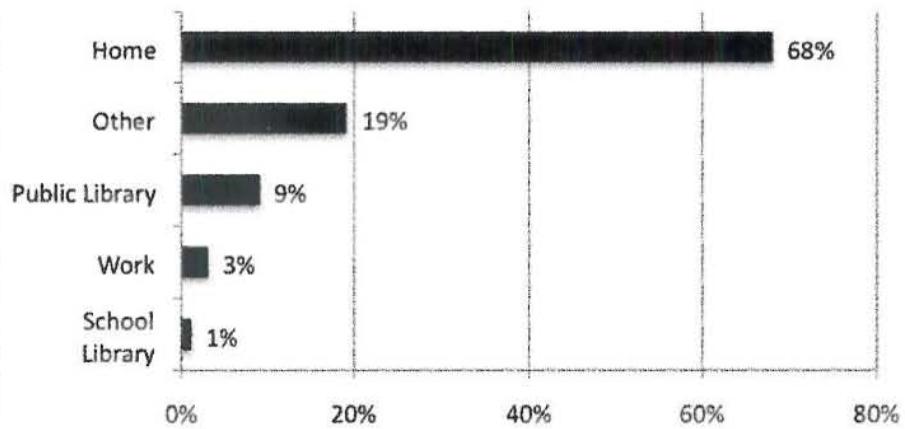
The above percentages are based on the 585 users responding to this question.

### **If no computer, do you expect to purchase a computer?**



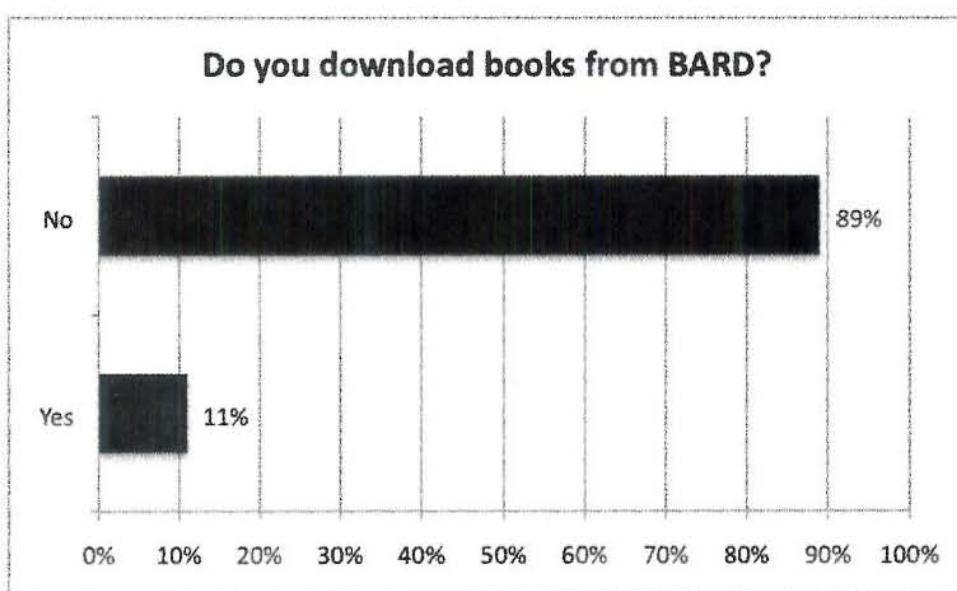
The above percentages are based on the 302 users responding to this question.

**If you have access to the Internet, where is your access located?**



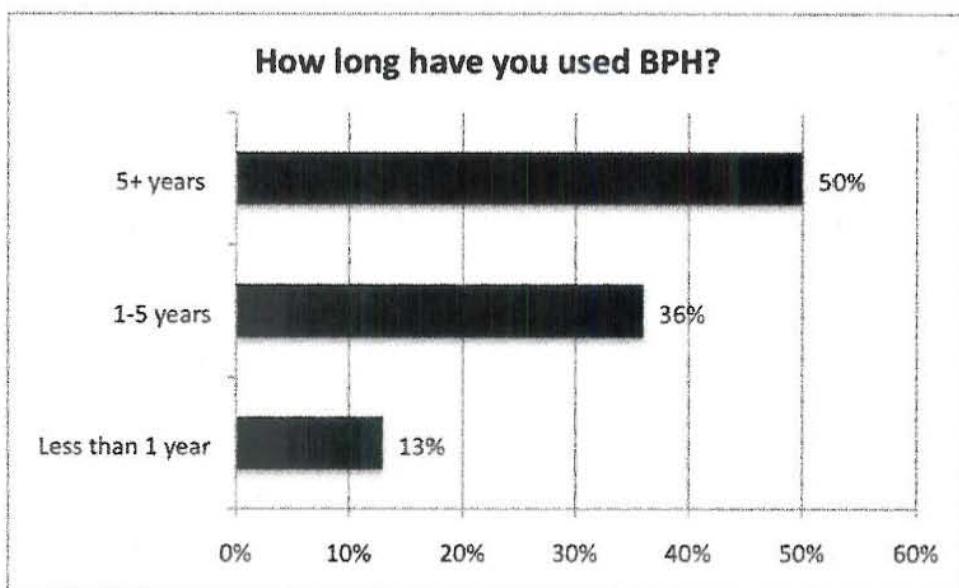
The above percentages are based on the 343 users responding to this question.

**Do you download books from BARD?**



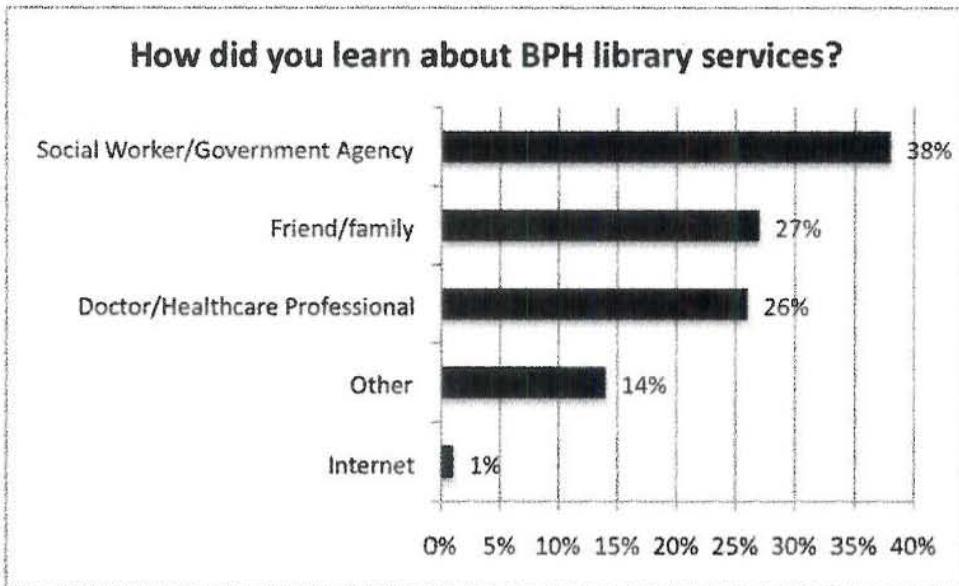
The above percentages are based on the 532 users responding to this question. BARD stands for "Braille and Audio Reading Download", a service accessible 24/7 on the National Library Service BARD website.

### How long have you used BPH?



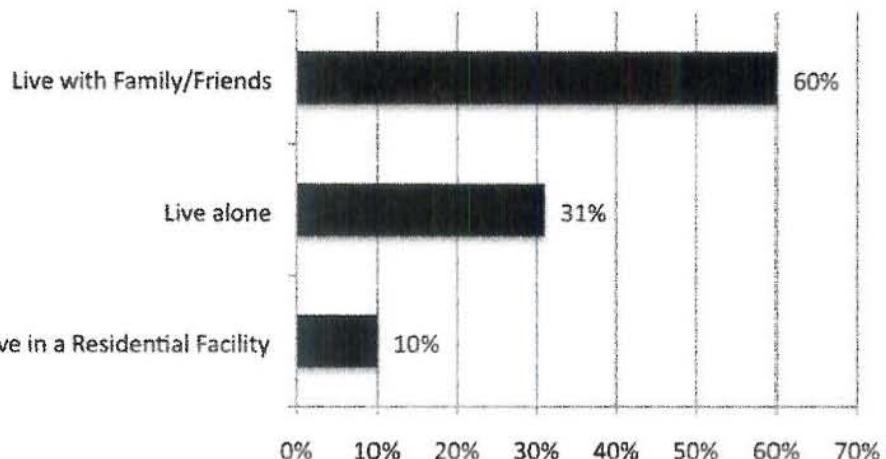
The above percentages are based on the 508 users responding to this question.

### How did you learn about BPH library services?



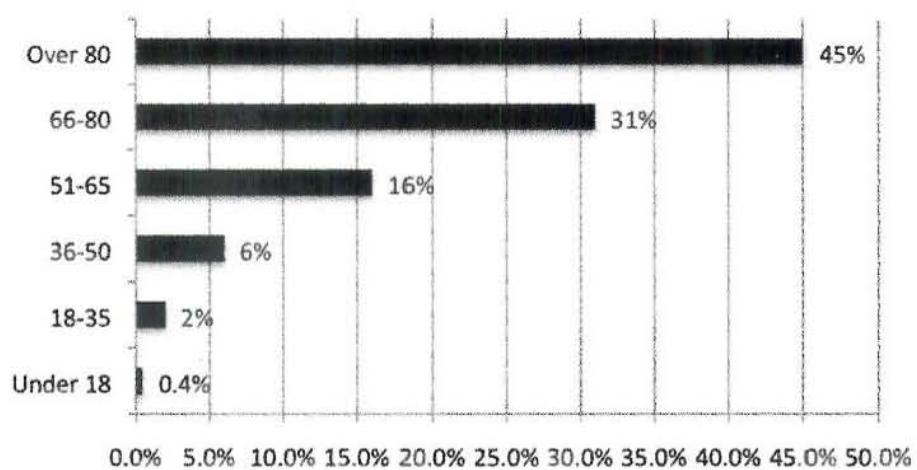
The above percentages are based on the 554 users responding to this question. Several users reported learning about the services from more than one source; therefore the sum of the percentages is greater than 100%.

### Where do you live?



The above percentages are based on the 578 users responding to this question.

### What is your age?



The above percentages are based on the 576 users responding to this question.

Further information about BPH services is available from the office of the Alabama Public Library Service Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Contact Ruth Evans, [revans@apls.state.al.us](mailto:revans@apls.state.al.us).