

Chairman Celeste, members of the Committee, I am Jo Budler, State Librarian of Ohio. I am happy to be here today to provide testimony on the State Library of Ohio's proposed budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011.

First I want to thank you and the Strickland administration for continuing to support the State Library. I promised two years ago that we would continue to work to strengthen our state through the programs and services that we provide to state government, libraries, and residents of Ohio and I would like to tell you how we have done this and our plans for the future.

The State Library is committed to helping state employees in their jobs – answering reference questions and providing research, library material and training. In addition, the State Library offers meeting room space to state agencies. In fact I have included a chart in my testimony which shows the usage of these rooms and suggests the savings realized by state government from using the State Library facility rather than scheduling a meeting in a hotel or conference facility. At an 88% fill rate, the value is more than \$220,000.

State Library Meeting Room Savings for State Agencies

Room	Square Feet	Usage Number	Rental Cost	Total Cost
Boardroom	1920	222	\$ 550.00	\$ 122,100.00
A	250	19	\$ 250.00	\$ 4,750.00
B	250	94	\$ 250.00	\$ 23,500.00
C	250	29	\$ 250.00	\$ 7,250.00
D	1650	120	\$ 400.00	\$ 48,000.00
Training Room	350	58	\$ 250.00	\$ 14,500.00
TOTAL		542		\$ 220,100.00

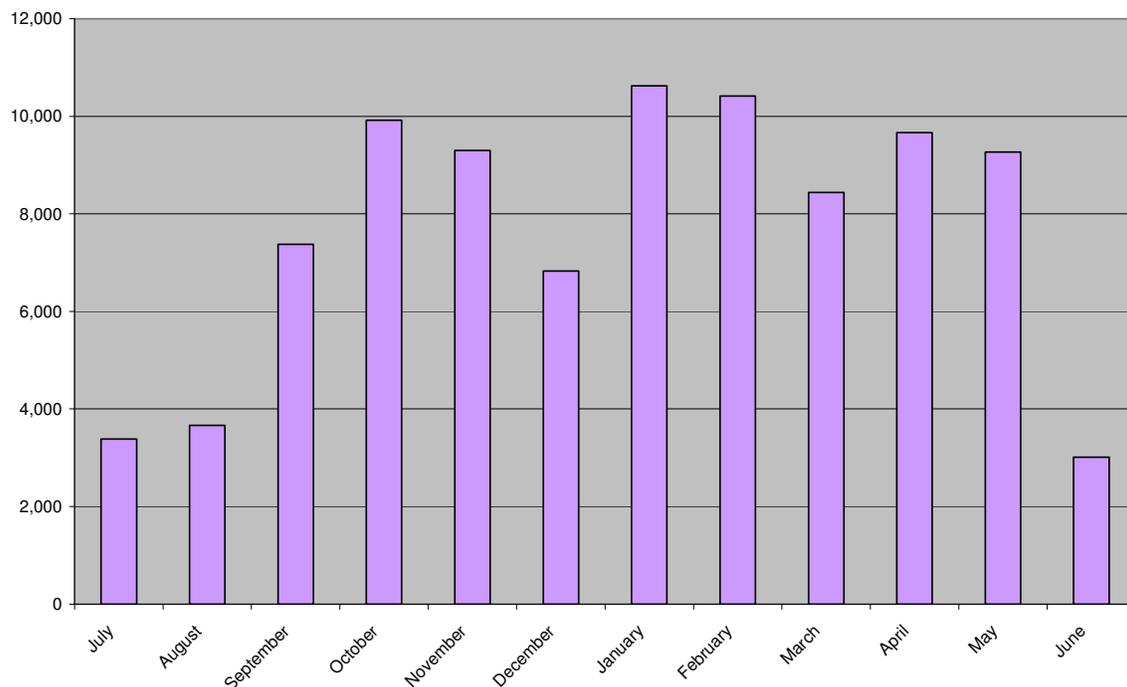
The reason that the State Library meeting room fill rate is slightly reduced this year is because we underwent some construction. Kent State University School of Library and Information Science has a distance education program which it offers in Columbus. In 2008 the State Library invited them to

move their Columbus program to the State Library. This is the first time since 1889 that a State Library and a library school have had such a partnership. I have included a press release about this historic event in your packet.

The State Library is no stranger to education and learning. We have several programs which the State Library makes available to all Ohio residents. Let me start with how the State Library helps students learn.

In September 2004 the State Library introduced KnowItNow, a 24/7 virtual reference service staffed by librarians. This is funded with federal funding – Library Services and Technology Act dollars from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This service is especially popular with students from elementary school through college. I have inserted a usage chart in my testimony and you can see how the usage follows the school calendar year in dips and peaks.

KnowItNow Statewide Questions July 2007 - June 2008



This service is a success. From September 2008 through January 2009, usage increased by over 13% compared to the same time period last year, going from 43,544 to 50,436 questions answered.

KnowItNow is still the busiest statewide virtual reference service in the country.

I think that these testimonials speak for themselves. As more than one student proclaims: "It rocks!"



"This is an amazingly helpful resource....I never want it to go away!! The librarians are so incredibly helpful...I really appreciate it!!"

"The service was a five letter word great G-R-E-A-T!"

"This is the best website I have ever seen. It's a great source to use when you don't have time to go to the library, or you can't get there, or you really need information online. Keep up the great work!!"

"I love this program. I am a seventh grade student, and I love being able to get info from a librarian, and good websites to, without having to drive to a library. GOOD PROGRAM!!!!!!!!!"

"You guys are wonderful! What a great idea! I'm a single mom working 2 jobs and going to school. This service has helped me so much. Time is precious to me. Again thank you!"

"Books rock and so do you guys, ROCK ON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

This service, however, had a serious flaw: it was not accessible to the blind community. We tried to remedy this problem by working with the commercial vendor with whom we contracted for the software but were unsuccessful. Last year the State Library of Ohio entered into a partnership with Oregon State Library and pooled funding to acquire Open Source Software to run this service. In September, the service moved from the commercial software to the Open Source Software and in March we will be rolling out an Instant Messaging service which will make KnowItNow accessible to the blind community in Ohio.

Moving this service from a commercial vendor to Open Source Software allowed us to save \$100,000 the first year and will allow us to save \$150,000 per year in future years. These saved federal dollars will go to other statewide projects or into our competitive grant process for libraries of all types. But most importantly this allows us to customize the software to meet our needs and improve service to all our customers. Further evidence of this is the dramatic increase in usage immediately following the change in the software.

Libraries of all types and sizes benefit from the State Library competitive grant process: school, academic, public and special. The projects include: helping libraries move their card catalogs to electronic catalogs, enhancing library services to youth and young adults, helping libraries realize an innovative technology, and improving library service delivery to Ohio residents who have difficulty using traditional services.

Public Libraries in your Districts Receiving LSTA Funds

- 1. North Baltimore Public Library**
- 2. Pemberville Public Library**
- 3. Way Public Library (Perrysburg)**
- 4. Wood County District Public Library**
- 5. Columbus Metropolitan Library**
- 6. Grandview Heights Public Library**
- 7. Morley Library (Painesville)**
- 8. Chillicothe and Ross County Public Library**
- 9. Herbert Wescoat Memorial Library (McArthur)**

The State Library understands the important role reading plays in education and lifelong learning. We want to ensure that all children in Ohio enter Kindergarten ready to read and to learn. The State Library is partnering with the Ohio Library Council, the Department of Education, the public library community and others in a program entitled Ohio Ready to Read. Through this program, librarians are trained to work with parents and caregivers to ensure that they understand the importance of introducing children to books early in their lives and helping children develop the skills that will help them be ready to read when they begin school.

The State Library also assists public libraries across the state to administer Summer Reading Programs. Children who do not continue to read when they are out of school on summer break often lose ground in their reading comprehension and reading level. The State Library is a member of a Summer Reading Collaborative with 47 other states so that we are able to save money as we collectively choose a theme, commission an artist to create artwork, and buy supplies. In your packet, I have included a

newsletter from Lorain Public Library System which has a very nice article about the Summer Reading Program. I have visited 109 libraries across Ohio in an effort to better understand the issues facing public libraries and how the State Library can be of assistance. I create a log of each visit and if you are interested you can see these at the website <http://www.library.ohio.gov/Marketing/Visits> I see at my visits that Summer Reading Programs are well-attended and I believe successful across the state.

Reading is an important lifelong learning skill and so this year the State Library is working in partnership with the Ohioana Library and several public library staff members across the state to develop a program entitled Choose to Read Ohio. We will roll this program out at the Ohioana Book Festival in May of this year. The program features Ohio authors who write for three specific age groups: young children, young adults and adults. Each age group will have 5 titles from which to choose to read. Study guides and questions for discussion groups will be available for each title.

You probably have noticed that much of what the State Library does involves partnerships. I think that it is essential that we make these connections because so many organizations are working toward the same goal with the same audience. Another example of successful partnerships benefiting our residents is the State Library's subscription to a service called LearningExpress Library. This service includes academic and career practice tests as well as tools such as resume builders, job search and workplace skill development which aid unemployed individuals. We tracked the usage of the Job Search and Success Skills Courses and saw a dramatic increase from November and December 2007 to November and December 2008 of over 300%.

Increase in Job Search and Success Skills Courses (Nov – Dec 2007 to Nov – Dec 2008)

Date Range: 11/1/08 to 12/31/08		Date Range: 11/1/07 to 12/31/07		Increase in Usage 2008 over 2007
Category	Usage	Category	Usage	
Job Search and Success Skills	716	Job Search and Success Skills	178	302%

This is an indication of how useful these tools are to our residents during these difficult times and also an indication of how important it is to work in partnership with a multitude of partners to get the word out about these resources. Our partners include people in the school community, at the Department of Education, in the Department of Job and Family Services, at the Department of Administrative Services, and others.



“I have worked in many different libraries, both public and academic, over the past 20 years and this may be one of the best databases I’ve come across.”

- Robert C. Antill, Director of the Carroll County District Library

“The unemployed are finding that they can visit the library and practice taking the civil service tests required for many government positions. We are constantly inter-library loaning (borrowing from other libraries) ACT, SAT and nurses aide practice tests. LearningExpress provides instant access to these and a wealth of other practice tests.”

- Susan Pieper, Library Director of the Paulding County Carnegie Library

“Study guides and test books never stay on the library’s shelves for very long. They’re constantly being checked out, and sometimes, unfortunately, they’re never returned. The study guides for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), is especially popular. With LearningExpress, people don’t have to worry about returning a book on time.”

- Linda McDonald, Public Relations Manager at the Fairfield County District Library

“It is especially helpful to our rural clientele since using LearningExpress eliminates costly travel to study sites.”

- Linda Slaninka, Director of Swanton Public Library

“It seems lately that I show a student about every other day, how to get in and use it for not only ACT and SAT practice, but also for the GED practice. Just today I showed a young man how he could take a GED practice test, and if he didn't do well in one area, he could go into the GED course, also from LearningExpress, to get the help that he needs. He was very grateful for this help.”

- Jane Puleo, Garfield Hts. High School

“We’ve been using LearningExpress Library for staff development on computer-related topics, and have found it a very helpful resource. Teachers have been able to set up their own accounts and monitor their learning—they like the 24/7 availability and the ability to track what you’ve done. It’s a tremendous cost-saver to give reinforcement of face-to-face instruction.”

- Kathy Fredrick, Shaker Heights Schools

In addition, this year the State Library initiated a statewide subscription to a set of computer skills classes which are available to all Ohioans via the Internet. These include courses on various versions of Microsoft products and are especially helpful to our residents who find themselves unemployed or

underemployed. We have also found that state employees are turning to these courses in place of face-to-face classes or classes which are provided at a high cost by commercial continuing education providers.

The goal of the State Library is to assist libraries in providing excellent library service to all Ohioans. We believe in equity of access – regardless of where a resident lives, rural or urban, he or she should have access to the information and library resources he or she needs or wants at any time, in any place. For this reason the State Library works with OhioLINK (the academic network), INFOhio (the K-12 network) and the Ohio Public Library Information Network to purchase electronic databases in addition to funding the statewide services I mentioned earlier in my testimony.

The State Library supports resource sharing because no library can be expected to meet all the information and material needs and wants of the members of its library community. In your packet I have included maps to illustrate the various resource sharing mechanisms that we have in place across Ohio.

These maps are designed to lay over one another to illustrate the multitude of consortia in our state and the resource sharing mechanisms. The last map is one of OhioLINK. The State Library is a founding member of OhioLINK and we share our library materials and commercial electronic resources with the other academic institutions within this network.

The second map lists 11 consortia and illustrates the membership with colored dots on the map. The consortia are identified in a key in the pocket of the handout. I will not go into the consortia in detail. I just wanted to illustrate the richness of our resource sharing solutions. In this case, richness is not a desirable as it illustrates separate systems. The State Library would like to see all these systems communicating with one another so that the collections of all libraries across the state are available to all residents. This is our dream and vision.

To that purpose, the State Library has created a statewide resource sharing system called Ohio Libraries Share MORE. When this system was introduced, the State Library believed that this system

would allow disparate systems to communicate with one another seamlessly but this has not been the case. The dots you see on the uppermost map in your packet indicate those libraries which participate in the Statewide Resource Sharing system. The system does allow patron-initiated search, request and delivery of library material and patrons are happy with this service. But we have not seen this system grow because of the labor intensity of the process on the participating libraries.

Based on the success the State Library has had with Open Source Software, we hope that we can overcome this problem with an Open Source Software solution. To that end the State Library has entered into a partnership with 6 other states to issue and fund a Request for Proposal for a statewide resource sharing system based on Open Source. We are in the process of working through the RFP. We are on a very aggressive timeline and if we find a solution we believe will work we hope to have it in place by February 2010.

One of the consortia represented on the map is SEO, Serving Every Ohioan, which is part of the State Library and is located in Caldwell, Ohio. SEO has two parts: It houses a collection of library material which is available for use by anyone in the state and it also runs an automated catalog system for 71 libraries all over Ohio. This shared automation system is more efficient and cost-effective than having each one of these libraries have its own server and technology support person on site.

In the coming year, SEO will also be testing some Open Source automation software in partnership with libraries across the state. The State Library hopes that this option will allow libraries to save money by migrating from their commercial system to this locally controlled and state supported system.

While it is my intention to be positive about what we have done and what we plan to do, I must acknowledge the toll that budget cuts have taken on the State Library. We have taken cuts in our staff numbers – from 130 in 2000 to 75 by the end of Fiscal Year 2009.

The State Library tried to save filled positions so most of the positions were eliminated through attrition. This saves people's jobs but sometimes leads to the elimination of positions that are still

necessary. This is certainly the case with regard to our reference and research staff. This department has been reduced to three librarians where once it was more than double that number. These three research librarians get kudos from all who use them for research and reference – I have inserted just a few comments for you to see. I hope in the future to be able to add more librarians to this department.

“I would like to extend my appreciation for the fine service that the State Library of Ohio provides. As a State of Ohio contractor for the Teacher Advancement Program, data and current educational theory and practice are critical to our success. Time after time, the associates at the library are always more than willing to assist me with an extremely high level of efficiency and effectiveness. Information, and an accurate connection to it, are essential as we work to improve the quality of Ohio teachers. I am appreciative of the services that the State Library of Ohio offers. It benefits both Ohio teachers and Ohio students.”

- Greg Paulmann, Ohio Teacher Advancement Program Director

“You guys are tremendous. If every organization ran like the State Library, it would be amazing.”
- Cheryl Straker, Deputy Director of Museum and Education for the Capital Square Review and Advisory Board after receiving research on Ohio legislators from 1803 on for an interactive kiosk planned for the new museum at the Statehouse.

Finally, I would like to speak very briefly about other line items in our budget: the Ohio Public Library Information Network known as OPLIN, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Regional Library Systems, and the Ohioana Library.

OPLIN provides high speed Internet connectivity to the main library of each public library in the state. In addition, OPLIN subscribes to electronic resources on behalf of the public library community. It is an essential service to the public libraries in Ohio and to the residents who are served by those libraries.

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped will undergo a change this year. You may recall that the State Library supplies the Talking Book machines to approximately 16,000 residents who are blind or physically handicapped in Ohio. In the past, the content which plays on these machines has been supplied to those residents by two public libraries: the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and the Cleveland Public Library. This year it is proposed that Cleveland

Public Library supply reading material to residents in all 88 counties. I believe that this will be more efficient and cost-effective and will not be a reduction in customer service.

I was happy to see the Governor recognize the importance and value of OPLIN and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped by funding them at 95% of the adjusted 2009 budget.

Three years ago, the Regional Library Systems in Ohio underwent a re-organization and the number of Regional Library Systems was reduced from seven to four. These are multi-type membership organizations which serve all libraries as geographic members and offer additional services to paid members. The Regional Library Systems are most valuable to our smaller and more rural libraries. The cuts to the Regional Library Systems have been most dramatic. Their funding has been reduced by more than 50% since Fiscal Year 2002.

The Ohioana Library is a line item in our budget for their rental and subsidy expenses. They will be giving a separate testimony so I will not go into any detail about that service. The State Library is pleased to partner with them on many projects and assist them in achieving shared goals.

Thank you again for your support of the State Library and for your attention during my testimony. At this time I will be happy to answer any of your questions.