

ODL Board of Directors Meeting of February 9, 2007
Director's Report

A new year and a new legislative session are off to a roaring start. While there were some organizational delays due to the transition of a new speaker in the House and the need to work out a power sharing agreement in the Senate, there is no doubt that the session is underway even though it hasn't officially started yet. So far, we have made two presentations to Legislative committees and have another scheduled for next week. There are some new faces on our committees thanks to term limits and some new committees. We are finding all of the legislators to be engaged and interested. For your information, I am including some of the material we have distributed to our legislative committees about ODL and about our budget request for next year.

A number of planning and evaluation efforts are underway. The Oklahoma Library Technology Network (OLTN) is an advisory organization that is composed of members of all types of libraries. This group recommends technology solutions to common needs of the libraries in the state. ODL uses this guidance to develop programs and initiatives funded by state, federal, local, and grant sources. I believe this coordinated effort has been key to the real success Oklahoma has had in serving all citizens of the state with technology that helps them achieve their life goals. Currently underway is the development of a new strategic plan. The OLTN Advisory Council began this process in earnest with a two day retreat at Quartz Mountain state lodge in December. I am very pleased with the dedication of the members of the Advisory Council and with the work the group has achieved so far. A meeting in early February will bring a technology futurist to Oklahoma to meet with the group and help spark new connections and priorities to the discussion of "what's next" for Oklahoma.

Another important evaluation effort is underway relating to the federal funds ODL receives from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Every five years we are required to evaluate how we have used these funds to achieve the goals identified in our plan filed with IMLS. The Office of Library Development is making this study a priority for the next three months. Vicki Mohr and Judy Tirey are coordinating this agency self-study. The report is due in Washington at the end of March, 2007. Two projects will receive special attention by an outside evaluator. The e-rate consulting to public libraries and the computer lab training are the projects which will be examined in more depth. We believe both areas have been successes and deserve greater attention.

Our major action item at our Board meeting on February 9th will be the approval of the projects using federal funds. These projects are basically the ones that continue each year. The Congress did not pass appropriation bills for federal fiscal year 2007 so we still do not know what the funding levels will be for the current fiscal year. In order to deal with the situation, Congress has passed continuing resolutions which provide funding at the previous fiscal year levels. The projects we are proposing for your approval are below the level of FFY06 amounts so we are confident that we will receive at least the funds necessary to carry out our statewide projects.