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State Superintendent of Schools

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August 1, 2013

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller
H-107 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
H-101 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Deaf Culture Digital Library (MSAR #9249)

Dear Governor O'Malley, President Miller and Speaker Busch:

Pursuant to Chapters 540 and 541, I am pleased to submit the final report of the Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL).

This task force was charged with implementing a feasibility study on the establishment of a Deaf Culture Digital Library. This study included consideration of initiatives that encourages best practices in the delivery of high quality library service for the deaf and hard of hearing in the areas of education, training, partnership, leadership, and communication and the development of recommendations at the state level. The members of the task force looked at ways that the DCDL can best strengthen available resources. In this study, the task force was careful not to include duplication of services. In addition, task force members identified potential funding sources for a Deaf Culture Digital Library through a public-private partnership, the establishment of a Friends of the Library organization which will support the Deaf Culture Digital Library. The mission of DCDL is to educate individuals about deaf cultures in the United States and other countries, including reference material and links to other resources.

The vision and mission that guided the development of this report states that "All customers shall have equitable access to deaf cultural information through the Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL) in a centralized location in the State of Maryland. The DCDL is dedicated to providing leadership and guidance in offering resources on deaf culture, acquiring and preserving a comprehensive collection of deaf resources, providing deaf cultural programs, and furnishing access to information regardless of

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location and, providing highly competent assistance to Maryland residents and library staff in local public library systems, academic librarians in colleges and universities, and other libraries in the state of Maryland.”

The findings and recommendations of this task force include nine strategic directions to guide the development of the Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL). These strategies include establishing the DCDL as a “first stop” information center on deaf resources for library customers and library staff in the state of Maryland. Other strategies include:

- Development of a strategic plan
- Development of a sensitivity awareness training program for state and county library staff on how to best serve deaf library customers
- Development of a website that will provide links to deaf-related resources, deaf related programs and materials to assist librarians in serving customers who may seek such resources
- Formation of partnerships and strategic alliances with key organizations to support deaf cultural programs, disseminate information about DCDL and acquire sustainable funding for DCDL
- Encouragement of partnerships and collaborations with information service providers to help provide virtual access to information and research
- Formation of a DCDL Advisory Board, and
- Establishment of a DCDL Friends of the Library group to promote community involvement, advocacy and funding.

A complete copy of the report is attached along with an estimate of the start-up costs to establish the Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL) and a list of task force members.

Please contact me or Ms. Irene M. Padilla, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Library Development and Services, for additional information. Ms. Padilla may be reached at 410-767-0435 or ipadilla@msde.state.md.us. She will be pleased to assist you.

Thank you for your commitment to libraries, education and the deaf or hard of hearing citizens of Maryland.

Sincerely,



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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Attachments: Recommendations to the Governor
Estimated Start-up Costs
Task Force Members