

Department of Education
American Printing House for the Blind
Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request

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AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

For carrying out the Act of March 3, 1879, \$24,931,000. (*Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2015.*)

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Appropriation, Adjustments and Transfers
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriation/Adjustments/Transfers	2014	2015	2016
Discretionary:			
Appropriation	\$24,456	\$24,931	\$24,931

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Authorizing Legislation
(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2015 Authorized	2015 Estimate	2016 Authorized	2016 Request
The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind (20 U.S. C. 101 et. seq.)	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,931</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,931</u>
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total annual appropriation		24,931		24,931

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Appropriations History (dollars in thousands)

Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2007	\$17,573	N/A ¹	N/A ¹	\$17,573
2008	17,573	\$17,573	\$22,000	21,616
2009	21,616	22,697 ²	22,500 ²	22,599
2010	22,599	22,599	24,600 ³	24,600
2011	24,600	24,600 ⁴	24,600 ³	24,600 ⁵
2012	24,600	24,551 ⁶	24,551 ⁶	24,505
2013	24,505	24,505 ⁷	24,508 ⁷	23,223
2014	24,505	N/A ⁸	24,456 ³	24,456
2015	24,456	N/A ⁸	25,000 ⁹	24,931
2016	24,931			

¹ This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

² The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 110th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

³ The levels for the Senate allowance reflect Committee action only.

⁴ The levels for the House allowance reflect the House-passed full-year continuing resolution.

⁵ The level for appropriation reflects the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10).

⁶ The level for the House allowance reflects an introduced bill and the level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Committee action only.

⁷ The level for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2013 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 112th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

⁸ The House allowance is shown as N/A because there was no Subcommittee action.

⁹ The level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Subcommittee action only.

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(Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, 20 U.S.C. 101 et seq)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2016 Authorization: Indefinite

Budget Authority:

<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$24,931	\$24,931	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind authorizes an annual appropriation for the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) to produce and distribute educational materials adapted for students who are legally blind and enrolled in formal educational programs below the college level. The Printing House, located in Louisville, Kentucky, has received Federal support under this Act since 1879. Materials produced by APH include textbooks in braille and large type, educational tools such as braille typewriters and computer software and hardware, teaching aides, including tests and performance assessments, and other special supplies. The materials are distributed, through allotments of funds to the States, to programs serving students who are blind. The allotments are based on an annual census conducted by APH of the number of students who are legally blind in each State and are provided in the form of credits. State educational agencies and programs serving persons who are blind may order materials free of charge up to the amount of funds allocated to each State for educational materials. Approximately 75 percent of the appropriation is used to cover the cost of operations to produce these materials. The Printing House uses the remainder of the appropriated funds to conduct research related to developing and improving products and to provide advisory services to professionals and consumer organizations on the availability and use of materials produced by APH.

The Printing House conducts research necessary to develop and improve educational materials in core curriculum areas such as science, mathematics, English language arts, and social studies and adapts testing materials related to these subject areas. In addition, APH undertakes research in product areas specific to the visually impaired population, such as braille reading, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology. Special materials are also developed for use in teaching students who are blind and have additional disabilities and in areas such as early intervention and early childhood education, prevocational training, and the functional use of residual vision.

Educational and Advisory Services are provided to consumers primarily through three departments: Field Services, Communications, and Resource Services. Examples of advisory services include administration of the Student Registration System, Louis Database of Accessible Materials, Electronic File Repository and Expert Database; National Instructional

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Partnership activities; and production of catalogs, brochures, videos, and a wide variety of web-based information. APH also convenes expert advisory committees and focus groups to address specific issues, as necessary.

As of August of 2014, APH had 199 Federal Quota accounts administered by 142 ex officio trustees who represent State educational agencies, schools for the blind, rehabilitation programs, and other agencies responsible for the education of blind students in each State. The Quota accounts consist of funds from the APH appropriation in the form of credits that are allocated on the basis of the annual census of blind students to the ex officio trustees. Trustees may use the credits to order materials from APH. These materials are available for purchase by the trustees and the general public at <http://shop.aph.org>. The ex officio trustees are responsible for the administration of the Federal accounts in each State. Items to be produced and distributed by APH are reviewed by a six-member Educational Products Advisory Committee. The purpose of this committee, made up of ex officio trustees, is to ensure that all educational materials produced and research undertaken by APH are effectively focused on meeting the needs of students who are blind. In addition, a second five-member advisory committee of ex officio trustees, the Educational Services Advisory Committee, provides oversight and accountability regarding APH's outreach and support services.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the States are required to provide a free appropriate public education, including appropriate related materials and supplies, to all students with disabilities. Materials provided through the APH appropriation supplement the various other resources available to the States to achieve this goal. In order to meet their responsibilities under the IDEA, many States make additional purchases from APH and other suppliers of materials for students who are visually impaired.

In fiscal year 2014, funding provided by the Federal Government for educational materials represented approximately 70 percent of the Printing House's total sales income. Funding provided through the APH appropriation represented approximately 80 percent of APH's total budget of \$30.8 million. Federal grants and contracts from agencies such as the National Library Service for the Blind, Social Security Administration, and Veterans Administration represented 10 percent of APH's total budget for fiscal year 2014. Sixteen percent of APH's budget came from nongovernmental contracts and revenue generated from the sale of unsubsidized product to State and local agencies, direct sales to individuals who are blind, private sector contract sales, corporate and individual donations from the private sector, and interest income from endowments and other investments.

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(dollars in thousands)
2011	\$24,551
2012	24,505
2013	23,223
2014	24,456
2015	24,931

FY 2016 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$24.9 million for activities to be conducted by the American Printing House for the Blind in fiscal year 2016. The request would maintain funding for APH at the fiscal year 2015 level. APH provides crucial educational aids at no cost to students who are visually impaired. The materials developed, manufactured, and distributed by the Printing House offer States an additional resource to assist them with providing free appropriate public education to visually impaired students, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Federal support of the APH also helps ensure that students who are visually impaired receive the accessible educational materials they need to succeed in school and prepare for college and careers. The Administration believes the request provides sufficient resources to support an adequate level of service in each of the three program areas: educational materials, advisory services, and research.

Educational Materials. The Administration's request includes \$18.7 million for educational materials, the same as the fiscal year 2015 level. The requested funding level provides an estimated \$302 per eligible student. Materials produced by APH include textbooks in braille, large type, and audio recording formats; educational aides such as braille typewriters, raised (tactile) graphics, and computer software and hardware; teaching tools such as tests and performance measures; and other special supplies. APH manufactures these instructional materials for a broad range of academic subjects and grade levels. In fiscal year 2014, 1,026 distinct educational products were available for purchase with Federal quota funds.

The timely delivery of textbooks in accessible media formats for braille-reading students is crucial to ensuring that children who are visually impaired have the same access to a free appropriate public education as children without disabilities. In order to address this need, each year APH produces thousands of braille and large print textbooks on demand, including instructional materials featuring tactile graphics. APH issues industry standards for tactile graphics, manufactures and distributes graphics to students across the country, and maintains a Tactile Graphic Image Library in order to increase the variety and lower the cost of pictures and graphics included in accessible educational materials. Tactile graphics are particularly essential for teaching subjects such as geography and geometry. The funds requested for educational materials support APH's production of teaching modules and associated instructional materials in these subjects. The request for educational materials includes \$1.5 million for the Accessible Textbook Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is to deliver quickly custom-produced accessible textbooks in an assortment of media formats.

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Advisory Services. The Administration requests \$1.6 million for advisory services for fiscal year 2016, the same as the fiscal year 2015 level. Advisory Services include a variety of activities that support the administration of the educational materials program area by the ex-officio trustees. These funds provide for the annual meeting of the ex-officio trustees; advisory group panels; the annual census of students who are visually impaired; printing and distribution of catalogs of available materials; and field services such as consultation, in-service training, webinars, and workshops. Staff in the advisory services area provide ongoing consumer information and technical support to customers and establish and maintain communication with APH's network of ex-officio trustees. APH also provides support and information to staff and teachers at schools around the country. In order to maximize the availability of its training and technical assistance activities, APH frequently conducts training through the Internet. These web-based training sessions have given the Printing House the ability to reach a wide audience of those who want information and training in an efficient, low-cost manner.

Projects that would continue to be funded in fiscal year 2016 include the National Instructional Partnerships program, webcast product training series, APH Research Library, APH Accessible Media Producers Database, and National Instructional Partnership with Teacher Training Programs. The APH Web site offers the public convenient on-line ordering of products, manuals and directions for using products, downloadable catalogs and newsletters, information on training events, online surveys, and online reference services such as the Louis Accessible Materials Database and APH file repository. In recent years, APH has integrated these unique databases and online tools to make them cross-searchable, user-friendly, and comprehensive sources of specialized information and resources on accessible instructional materials for individuals who are visually impaired. The request provides sufficient funds to cover all advisory services activities the Printing House plans to conduct in fiscal year 2016.

Research and Product Development. The Administration's request for research in fiscal year 2016 is \$4.7 million, the same amount that would be allocated for research at the fiscal year 2015 level. APH undertakes applied and developmental research with the goal of developing innovative educational products for students who are visually impaired. Major research initiatives include the *APH SMART Braille by Perkins*, which is an electronic braille that provides the user immediate feedback through text-to-speech, and a screen that displays SimBraille and large print of what is brailled. There is an audio and visual component that provides access to non-braille users. APH has also partnered with Orbit Research® and Texas Instruments® to create the *Orion TI-84 Plus Talking Graphing Calculator*. The modified TI-84 Plus has attachments that add accessibility controls allowing the student to participate fully in STEM-related academics. A calculator to assist younger students is currently in development. These new products represent major improvements over existing tools. APH also continues to invest in the development of the file formats, software, hardware, and production infrastructure necessary to produce and deliver braille books through electronic files and e-readers rather than through paper books.

The Administration recognizes the need for APH to conduct developmental and applied research, so that it can continue to meet the changing needs of students who are visually impaired, particularly as the technologies for producing accessible educational materials evolve rapidly. The request will provide funds for APH to conduct over 350 research projects in a wide range of content areas, including development of new products for use with infants, toddlers,

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and preschoolers who are visually impaired, materials for students who are visually impaired with secondary disabilities, equipment to assist students with low vision, materials for braille literacy, classroom learning aids, tactile graphics, and tools to aid in the transition from school to postsecondary educational or job settings.

Product development activities planned for fiscal year 2016 are categorized into eleven content areas: Adult Life, Braille, Core Curriculum, Cortical Visual Impairment, Early Childhood, Emergent Literacy, Low Vision, Multiple Disabilities, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Tactile Graphics, Technology, and Tests and Assessments.

The Administration's request also includes funding for APH's Accessible Tests Department initiative. The goals of this initiative are to:

- Provide tests, practice tests, examination administration manuals, and other assessment related materials, including full-color large print assessments, in high quality accessible media in a timely manner.
- Promote the inclusion of visually impaired individuals during the development of assessments.
- Enhance the test performance of visually impaired individuals through research, education, and communication.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (dollars in thousands)

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
<u>Distribution of funding:</u>			
Educational materials	\$18,456	\$18,698	\$18,698
Advisory services	1,550	1,550	1,550
Educational and technical research	<u>4,450</u>	<u>4,683</u>	<u>4,683</u>
Total	24,456	24,931	24,931
Number of eligible students	60,393	61,867	61,867
Average per student allotment (whole dollars)	\$305	\$302	\$302
 <u>Number of services and products provided:</u>			
Products available with Federal funds	1,026	1,020	1,020
Advisory committee meetings	5	5	5
State educational agencies visited	12	12	12
Residential programs visited	13	12	12
Rehabilitation programs visited	5	7	7
In-service training programs and webcasts	30	33	33
Product training presentations and exhibits	120	125	125

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<u>Measures</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Visits to Ex Officio Trustees	20	15	15
Total employees (full-time equiv.)	303	305	307

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, performance targets, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, those requested in fiscal year 2016 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

The Administration and the Printing House have worked together to develop 10 performance measures for the activities carried out through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind. Four of the indicators are customer satisfaction measures. Two are efficiency measures. Four indicators measure aspects of product quality.

Goal: Pre-college level blind students will receive appropriate educational materials that result in improved educational outcomes.

Objective: *Appropriate, timely, high-quality educational materials are provided to pre-college level visually impaired students to allow them to benefit more fully from their educational programs.*

Measure: The percentage of American Printing House for the Blind trustees, advisory committee members, consumers, and teachers who agree that the educational materials provided through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind are appropriate, timely, and high quality.

Trustees - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual Extremely Mostly Somewhat	Detail				
			Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2011	98%	99%	59%	36%	4%	1%	0%
2012	98	99	52	44	4	0	0
2013	98	99	56	39	6	0	0
2014	98	99	61	35	2	0	0
2015	98						
2016	98						

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Advisory Committee Members - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual Extremely Mostly Somewhat	Detail				
			Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2011	100%	100%	67%	33%	9%	0%	0%
2012	100	100	60	37	3	0	0
2013	100	100	57	43	0	0	0
2014	100	100	63	33	3	0	0
2015	100						
2016	100						

Consumers - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual Extremely Mostly Somewhat	Detail				
			Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2011	96%	100%	56%	35%	9%	0%	0%
2012	96	98	58	34	6	2	0
2013	96	98	50	43	6	2	0
2014	96	99	61	33	2	1	0
2015	96						
2016	96						

Teachers - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual Extremely Mostly Somewhat	Detail				
			Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2011	97%	99%	56%	38%	5%	1%	0%
2012	97	98	54	38	6	1	1
2013	97	98	53	40	6	1	0
2014	97	99	56	37	6	1	0
2015	97						
2016	97						

Additional Information: APH gathered the data for these measures by administering an online survey to 384 respondents during fiscal year 2014. An external research firm assisted with the design of the survey. Respondents rated their satisfaction on a 5-point rating scale with the following range: (1) Not at all satisfied, (2) Not too satisfied, (3) Somewhat satisfied, (4) Mostly satisfied, and (5) Extremely Satisfied. The percentages shown for each measure are composed

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of the respondents from each group that were “Extremely satisfied,” “Mostly satisfied,” or “Somewhat satisfied” with all three dimensions of product satisfaction (quality, timeliness, and appropriateness for targeted audience).

The Administration believes that a survey instrument is an appropriate vehicle to obtain data on consumer satisfaction with products, including whether the educational materials provided through the APH are appropriate to the consumer’s needs, delivered in a timely manner, and of high quality. However, the same survey is not appropriate for measuring outcomes, such as whether visually impaired students benefit more fully from their educational programs because of these products. A rigorous evaluation would be necessary to determine whether students are making progress and the extent to which that progress is attributable to the availability of these materials.

Objective: *To improve the quality of APH research and product usefulness.*

Measure: The percentage of APH product sales revenue that is from new products.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	15%	27%
2012	22	31
2013	22	45
2014	22	40
2015	22	
2016	22	

Additional Information: This measure was developed to help determine the efficacy of new products developed by APH. The purpose of the measure is to evaluate the reaction of consumers to new products created by the research department, which is determined by measuring the extent to which sales of new products surpass a minimum level of products sold. In fiscal year 2014, the Printing House significantly exceeded the established target level. APH established targets for the next several years based upon product development trends and an analysis of the average percentage that sales of new products represented of all APH product sales from 2005 to 2014. Actual data from recent years indicate that new products tend to be more technologically advanced, and, therefore, more expensive than older products. As a result, the percentage of sales revenue from newer products has consistently exceeded targets.

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Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on relevance, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	4	4.6
2012	4	4.5
2013	4	5.0
2014	4	5.5
2015	4	
2016	4	

Additional Information: To determine the average relevance rating, a panel of experts, who are proposed by APH and approved by the Department, reviews a random sample of new products developed each year by the Printing House to assess whether: (1) there is evidence of need for the product; (2) there is evidence that APH sought the opinions of knowledgeable individuals on the need for the product; (3) APH made the decision to produce the product based on a standardized process for product selection; (4) the product addresses an identified need for individuals who are visually impaired; and (5) the product is fully accessible for the intended population. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “does not meet criteria, 4 equals “meets criteria,” and 7 equals “exceeds criteria.” The average of the scores is the number reported in the actual column. In fiscal 2014, the panel’s average rating increased from the prior year and continued to exceed the “meets criteria” rating. The small variations in the average score from year to year may reflect the changing composition of the expert review panel and the sample of the products rated.

Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on quality of research, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	4	4.2
2012	4	4.3
2013	4	4.4
2014	4	5.3
2015	4	
2016	4	

Additional Information: The panel of experts annually reviews a purposefully selected sample of new products developed each year by APH to assess whether: (1) appropriate research methodologies are being used consistent with the type of product being developed; (2) sufficient supporting information and evidence is collected by research data methods; (3) data are

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gathered from a geographically diverse U.S. population and a variety of potential user groups; (4) evaluation data are gathered from appropriately qualified individuals; (5) research data are gathered from an adequate number of sources; (6) development demonstrates use of field-reviewed data for modification to the product prior to final development; and (7) data are gathered on student and consumer outcomes related to the use of the proposed product. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “does not meet criteria, 4 equals “meets criteria,” and 7 equals “exceeds criteria.” The mean of the scores is the number reported.

In fiscal year 2014 the average rating increased significantly from the prior year and exceeded the “meets criteria” rating. In response to concerns expressed by panel members in prior years, during the 2014 rating process, APH provided panel members with more specific information about the research supporting each sampled product. However, panel members continued to express the need for additional research and data to determine if product development took account of all relevant research.

Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on utility, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	4	4.7
2012	4	4.4
2013	4	5.2
2014	4	5.5
2015	4	
2016	4	

Additional Information: For this measure, the panel of experts annually reviews a purposefully selected sample of new products developed each year by APH to assess whether: (1) sales of the new products indicate demand; (2) new product indicators, such as field evaluations and other feedback, substantiate that the new product is meeting a need; and (3) the products are considered highly useful for individuals with visual impairments. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “does not meet criteria, 4 equals “meets criteria,” and 7 equals “exceeds criteria.” In fiscal 2014, the average rating continued to increase and the target “meets criteria” rating was once again exceeded.

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Efficiency Measures

The Department worked closely with the Printing House to develop appropriate efficiency measures for the Federal program at APH.

Measure: The cost (in cents) per page to produce color large type textbooks.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	13.0¢	9.4¢
2012	10.8	8.1
2013	10.8	9.3
2014	10.8	8.2
2015	10.8	
2016	10.8	

Additional Information:

There are three variables used in calculating the cost per page for both the production of color large type and braille textbooks. These three variables are: (1) the actual cost of manufacturing the pages; (2) the total number of pages produced annually; and (3) the average number of pages per volume. Factors that can affect these variables include the costs of raw materials and equipment, demand for products, and efficiency of operations.

In fiscal year 2014, the total number of large type color pages (9.62 million) decreased by 281,000 or 2.8, percent, and textbook volumes increased by 27,000 or 14.9 percent compared to production in fiscal year 2013. However, the total production costs of large type color pages decrease by \$126,000. As a result of these factors the actual cost per page decreased to 8.2 cents per page and the performance target was met. While, actual performance has exceeded targets in recent fiscal years, the Department has not revised its targets because APH anticipates a reduced demand for color large type textbooks in future years as a result of schools beginning to offer digital books on I-Pads, Kindles, and other devices to students in elementary and secondary programs. The expected reduction in production is expected to increase costs.

Measure: The cost (in cents) per page to produce braille textbooks.

Year	Target	Actual
2011	8.5¢	10.5¢
2012	10.9	10.6
2013	11.0	15.2
2014	11.0	17.1
2015	13.0	
2016	13.0	

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Additional Information: In fiscal year 2014, the total number of braille textbook pages (6.167 million) decreased by 824,000 or 11.9 percent, and the number of volumes decreased by 14,000 or 15.8 percent compared to production in fiscal year 2013. The total production costs of braille textbook pages decreased by \$38,000. As a result of these factors, the actual cost per page raised production cost of braille textbook pages to 17.1 cents per page and the target was not met. The Department plans work with APH to revise performance targets for fiscal year 2016 and future years, during its planned March on-site visit.

Other Performance Information

The Department conducted a 2-day on-site monitoring visit to APH on June 10 -11, 2013. The purpose of the visit was to examine APH's compliance with applicable requirements, its use of annual Federal appropriations "to manufacture and furnish books and other materials especially adapted for instruction of students who are blind," as authorized by the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind of March 3, 1879 (Act), 20 U.S.C. §§ 101-106a, review the quality of GPRA and other program data, and the performance of selected programs. Topics covered during the on-site monitoring visit, included inquiries into the link between APH's Strategic Plan: 2012-2014, the proposed use of Federal funds for Resources with Enhanced Accessibility for Learning Plan (the REAL Plan), and the usefulness of current indicators used to measure APH's activities. The review was conducted as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of APH programs and administrative operations funded by the annual Federal appropriation.

During the on-site monitoring visit, APH reported that the APH's Strategic Plan: 2012-2014 has four objectives: (1) identification of blind and visually impaired consumers' needs; (2) solicitation of ideas and development of products to meet consumer needs; (3) efficient management of manufacturing, marketing and distribution of products; and (4) the continuous review and evaluation of APH products and other products available for visually impaired consumers.

In addition, APH reported that it created the Resources with Enhanced Accessibility for Learning (REAL) Plan in response to rapid transition of traditional textbooks to digital products delivered online, that are not accessible to students who are blind and visually impaired. APH's REAL Plan proposes four key strategies: (1) conversion of digital (XML-based) source files into multiple formats; (2) discovery tools through storage of the Louis Plus Database, Tactile Graphic Image Library, and APH Libraries in Amazon Cloud and Internet Archive; (3) content distribution through DAISY Online and partnerships with online libraries (Open Library); and (4) continuous improvement through ongoing feedback from the field. APH is expected to keep the Department fully informed of the institutions' activities as it implements the Strategic Plan 2012-2014 and the REAL Plan and the implications for the Federal program and Federal funding.

A review of APH's GPRA data highlighted the need for new performance targets for many of the measures. APH has proposed new targets for Department review based on an examination of production trends and possible further improvements. APH also reported that it had simplified its customer satisfaction survey to focus on the questions needed to collect GPRA data. APH has submitted to the Department a proposal for new performance measures on the timeliness of braille textbook production. The Department will continue to work with APH to finalize any new measures. Additionally, an on-site monitoring visit is scheduled for March 11, 2015, to review

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APH's technology strategic plan, and the production of APH's braille education materials, and products.