

**Department of Education**  
**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**  
**Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request**

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**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

For carrying out the Act of March 3, 1879, as amended, [~~\$24,551,000~~] \$24,505,000.

*(Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2012.)*

**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

**Amounts Available for Obligation**  
(dollars in thousands)

	2011	2012	2013
Discretionary appropriation:			
Appropriation .....	\$24,600	\$24,551	\$24,505
Across-the-board reduction (P.L. 112-10) .....	49	0	0
Across-the-board reduction (P.L. 112-74) .....	<u>0</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>0</u>
Total, direct obligations .....	24,551	24,505	24,505

**Obligations by Object Classification**  
(dollars in thousands)

	2011	2012	2013
Grants, subsidies, and contributions.....	<u>\$24,551</u>	<u>\$24,505</u>	<u>\$24,505</u>
Total, direct obligations .....	24,551	24,505	24,505

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**Authorizing Legislation**  
(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2012 Authorized	2012 Estimate	2013 Authorized	2013 Request
American Printing House for the Blind <i>(20 U.S.C. 101 et seq.)</i>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,505</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,505</u>
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total appropriation		24,505		24,505

**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

**Appropriations History**  
(dollars in thousands)

	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2004	\$14,000	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,403
2005	16,403	17,000	17,000	16,864
2006	16,864	17,000	18,500	17,573
2007	17,573	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	17,573 <sup>1</sup>
2008	17,573	17,573	22,000	21,616
2009	21,616	22,697 <sup>2</sup>	22,500 <sup>2</sup>	22,599
2010	22,599	22,599	24,600 <sup>3</sup>	24,600
2011	24,600	24,600 <sup>4</sup>	24,600 <sup>4</sup>	24,551
2012	24,600	24,551 <sup>5</sup>	24,551 <sup>5</sup>	24,505
2013	24,505			

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

<sup>3</sup> The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action on the regular annual fiscal year 2010 appropriation bill, which proceeded in the 111th Congress only through the Senate Committee.

<sup>4</sup> The level for the House allowance reflects the House-passed full-year continuing resolution. The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only.

<sup>5</sup> The level for the House allowance reflects an introduced bill; the level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Committee action only.

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### American Printing House for the Blind

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

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: Indefinite

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$24,505	\$24,505	0

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### 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 measures, 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 conducts 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 blind students with 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 Partnership activities; and production of a variety of communication vehicles, such as catalogs,

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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 June 2010, APH had 205 Federal Quota accounts administered by 145 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 appropriation that are allocated on the basis of the annual census of blind students to the ex officio trustees in the form of credits. 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 and approved 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.

The States are required to provide a free appropriate public education, including appropriate related materials and supplies, to all students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Materials provided through this 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.

Funding provided through the Act for educational materials in fiscal year 2011 represented approximately 70 percent of the Printing House's total sales income of \$23.6 million. Total funding provided through the Act represented approximately 86 percent of its total budget of \$28.4 million. Federal grants and contracts from agencies such as the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped's Talking Book program represented about another 10 percent of APH's total budget for fiscal year 2011. The remaining portion of APH's budget came from nongovernmental contracts and revenue from unsubsidized product sales 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.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(dollars in thousands)
2008 .....	\$21,616
2009 .....	22,599
2010 .....	24,600
2011 .....	24,551
2012 .....	24,505

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#### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Administration requests \$24.5 million for activities to be conducted by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) in fiscal year 2013. The request would maintain funding for APH at the fiscal year 2012 level. Over the past 10 fiscal years, from 2002 to 2012, funding for this program increased by \$10.5 million, or 75 percent. However, during the same years, the number of students estimated to be served by APH increased by only 2,831 or 5 percent. In light of these trends, the Administration believes the request provides sufficient resources to support a robust level of service in each of the three program areas: educational materials, advisory services, and research.

Educational Materials. The Administration's request includes \$18.4 million for educational materials, an amount level with funding for this area in fiscal year 2012. Excluding non-quota funds from the Braille Improvement Project, which is discussed in further detail below, the requested funding level provides an estimated \$300 per eligible student, a slight decrease from \$303 per student available in fiscal year 2012. The per student allotment would decrease while the total funding level would remain the same because of a slight increase in the number of students eligible to receive educational materials produced and distributed by APH. 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 2011, 947 distinct educational products were available for purchase with Federal quota funds. The materials produced and sold by the Printing House offer States an additional resource to assist them with providing a free appropriate public education, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and to 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 timely delivery of textbooks in accessible media formats for braille-reading students is crucial to ensuring that children who are blind have the same access to a free appropriate public education as their non-disabled peers. In order to address this need, APH produces thousands of braille and large print textbooks each year 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 also includes \$1.5 million for the Accessible Textbook Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is to quickly deliver custom-produced accessible textbooks in an assortment of media formats.

Advisory Services. The Administration requests \$1.5 million for advisory services for fiscal year 2013. This amount is the same as the estimate for fiscal year 2012. 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 meetings, the annual census of students who are blind, printing and distribution

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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 2013 include the National Instructional Partnerships program, Homegrown video product training series, Expert Database and Weblog, APH Research Library, APH Web Site, Accessible Media Producers Database, and National Instructional Partnership with Teacher Training Programs. The APH website 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 the blind and visually impaired. The request provides sufficient funds to cover all advisory services activities the Printing House plans to conduct in fiscal year 2013.

Research & Product Development. The Administration's request for research in fiscal year 2013 is \$4.6 million, which is the same as the amount allocated for research in fiscal year 2012. APH undertakes applied and developmental research with the goal of developing innovative educational products for students who are blind or have low-vision. Major research initiatives include developing a full-page refreshable braille/tactile graphic display and a pedestrian-focused navigation system for visually impaired students. The refreshable braille display is an electronic tool that enables blind students to independently access information provided through text, charts, and pictorially presented data. The navigation system will utilize global positioning system (GPS) technology and other technologies to facilitate outdoor and indoor independent travel. These new products will represent major improvements over existing tools.

The Department 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 blind and visually impaired, particularly as the technologies for producing accessible educational materials evolve rapidly. The request will provide funds for APH to conduct over 140 research projects in a wide range of content areas, including development of new products for use with infants, toddlers, 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.

Two examples of products recently developed by APH are the Building on Patterns program and the Light Box. Building on Patterns is a complete primary literacy program designed to teach beginning braille users reading, writing, and spelling through a package of lessons, practice activities, and assessments. The Light Box is a tool developed as an instructional aid for children who still have some sight. APH recently released a digital version of the Light Box

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that can be used in conjunction with computer programs to provide extension activities for the Light Box and/or provide familiar images for children who transition from Light Box to computer activities.

Product development activities planned for fiscal year 2013 are categorized into eleven content areas: Adult Life, Braille, Core Curriculum, Cortical Visual Impairment, Early Childhood, Emergent Literacy, Low Vision, Multiple Disabilities, Tactile Graphics, Technology, and Tests & Assessments. The request includes \$275,000 for APH's Accessible Testing Program, which is the same as the amount allocated for this program area in fiscal year 2012. The goals of this initiative are to:

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

### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Measures:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
<u>Distribution of funding:</u> <sup>1</sup>			
Educational materials	\$18,371	\$18,371	\$18,371
Advisory services	1,500	1,500	1,500
Educational and technical research	<u>4,680</u>	<u>4,634</u>	<u>4,634</u>
Total	24,551	24,505	24,505
Number of eligible students	58,939	59,500	60,000
Average per student allotment (whole dollars) <sup>2</sup>	\$306	\$303	\$300
 <u>Services and products provided:</u>			
Products available with Federal funds	947	955	963

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<sup>1</sup> The figures for fiscal years 2011 are actual data. The figures for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 are the best available estimates from APH. For comparison purposes, the figures displayed reflect the original allocation of the appropriation and do not include subsequent reallocations of unused funds. The amounts displayed for fiscal year 2011 do not include unused funds of \$3,670,248 from Educational Materials. These funds were reallocated from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2011, which resulted in an additional \$62.27 per student in fiscal year 2011. Within fiscal year 2011, APH reallocated \$765,000 from Research to Educational Materials, which resulted in an additional \$12.98 per student.

<sup>2</sup> Funds used for the Braille Improvement Project support planning committees, staff certification courses, focus groups, and team meetings/workgroups related to the improvement of braille materials produced by APH. As such, the project is shown under Educational Materials. However, this \$350,000 of funding is not included as part of the calculation of the average per student allotment because it is not directly available to ex officio trustees for purchasing educational products for eligible students. The funds for the Accessible Textbook Initiative are included as part of the calculation of the per student share.

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (continued)

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Advisory committee meetings	5	5	5
State educational agencies visited	16	12	12
Residential programs visited	10	10	10
Rehabilitation programs visited	4	5	5
In-service training programs & webcasts	30	33	35
Product training presentations & exhibits	118	115	115
Visits to Ex Officio Trustees	17	12	12
Total employees (full-time equiv.)	300	300	300

#### **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 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

The Department 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 blind students to allow them to benefit more fully from their educational programs.*

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**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
2008	98	100					
2009	98	99					
2010	98	100	55	41	4	0	0
2011	98	99	59	36	4	1	0
2012	98						
2013	98						

*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
2008	100	100					
2009	100	98					
2010	100	100	66	31	3	0	0
2011	100	100	67	33	9	0	0
2012	100						
2013	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
2008	96	99					
2009	96	99					
2010	96	98	49	43	6	2	0
2011	96	100	56	35	9	0	0
2012	96						

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2013	96						
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*Teachers - Percentage who agree:*

Year	Target	Actual Extremely Mostly Somewhat	Detail				
			Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2008	97	99					
2009	97	98					
2010	97	98	52	40	6	2	0
2011	97	99	56	38	5	1	0
2012	97						
2013	97						

**Additional Information:** APH gathered the data for these measures by administering an online survey to 334 respondents during fiscal year 2011. 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 above for each measure are composed 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 Department 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 Act to Promote the Education of the Blind 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 blind 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. Therefore, in fiscal year 2010 the Department revised these measures to exclude what was formerly the last phrase of the measures (“...and allow blind students to benefit more fully from their educational programs”). The rest of the text of these measures remains unchanged.

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

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	12	27
2009	15	27
2010	15	35
2011	15	25
2012	22	
2013	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 APH research department and introduced by the Printing House, which is determined by measuring the extent to which sales of new products surpass a minimum level of products sold. This measure is based on an examination of sales revenue data reported by the Printing House. In fiscal year 2011, the Printing House exceeded the minimum level established as the target. The targets represent a sustainable level of new product sales that should be achieved to ensure that the products developed by APH reflect consumer needs. 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 2011. Actual data from recent years indicated 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.

**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
2008		4.5
2009		4.2
2010	4	4.7
2011	4	4.6
2012	4	
2013	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

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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 2011, the panel’s average rating continued to exceed the “meets criteria” rating but decreased slightly as compared to the prior year. 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. We expect to obtain fiscal year 2012 data in October 2012.

**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
2008		4.0
2009		3.7
2010	4	4.3
2011	4	4.2
2012	4	
2013	4	

**Additional Information:** The panel of experts annually reviews a random 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 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 2011 the average rating exceeded the “meets criteria” rating but slightly decreased from the prior year. During the most recent rating process, the panel members identified two concerns that could affect the quality review: (1) the continuing need for additional research and empirical data to support product development decisions; and (2) criteria were difficult to apply because of the diversity of products produced by APH. In response, the Department is working with APH to develop new and more precise criteria for the panel to use to evaluate the quality of research supporting the sampled products. Data for fiscal year 2012 will be available in October 2012.

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**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
2008		4.5
2009		4.4
2010	4	5.0
2011	4	4.7
2012	4	
2013	4	

**Additional Information:** For this measure, a panel of experts annually reviews a random sample of new products developed 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 2011, the average of the scores decreased but still exceeded the targeted “meets criteria” rating, indicating that the utility of APH products is generally acceptable. The Department expects to receive new data for this measure in October 2012.

### 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
2008	13.92	11.3
2009	13.63	11.5
2010	13.34	9.9
2011	13.05	9.4
2012	10.8	
2013	10.8	

**Additional Information:** The cost per page in fiscal year 2011 decreased by 5 percent and was well below the target. A number of factors affect the cost per page, including the costs of raw materials and equipment, demand for products, and efficiency of operations. Compared to fiscal year 2010, the pages of color large type textbooks produced increased by 2.8 percent and production expenses decreased by 5.8 percent in fiscal year 2011, yielding a significant decrease in cost per page. Large print materials constitute approximately 25 percent of APH total sales. APH anticipates reduced demand for color large type textbooks in future years as a result of schools beginning to offer digital books on tablet computers, such as the i-Pad, and

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other electronic devices. The projected reduction in the volume of production of color large type textbooks will increase unit costs. To reflect both the reductions in production costs APH has already achieved and the projected demand, the Department has established a new target for fiscal year 2012 to be maintained subsequent years. The Department anticipates receiving data for fiscal year 2012 in October 2012.

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	9.12	9.8
2009	8.93	10.3
2010	8.74	10.4
2011	8.55	10.5
2012	10.5	
2013	10.5	

**Additional Information:** In fiscal year 2011, the cost per page slightly increased and APH did not meet the target. APH noted that investments in new equipment increased production costs but increased quality. The numbers of braille pages produced, based on consumer demand, are not directly under APH's control, but affect the cost per page. For example, demand for braille textbooks declined by 9.2 percent in fiscal 2011 while the number of pages produced increased by 1.8 percent, meaning that each book was longer and more costly to produce. Braille materials represent approximately 15 percent of APH total sales. In the context of the higher per page costs associated with APH's recent equipment upgrades, the Department has adjusted targets for this measure for fiscal years 2012 to 2016. APH expects demand for Braille materials will remain steady during the next few years. Data for fiscal year 2012 will be available in October 2012.

### Other Performance Information

The Department conducted an on-site monitoring visit to APH on May 25, 2011. The purpose of the visit was to examine compliance with applicable requirements, the use of Federal funds, the quality of GPRA and other program data, and the performance of selected programs. This included inquiries into the role of Federal funds in APH's Leaders to Leaders Program, the responsibilities of APH's Ex Officio Trustees, and the activities and results of the Braille Improvement Project. 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 Ex Officio Trustees, in accordance with the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, are responsible for authenticating the results of the annual census of the number of students who are blind and visually impaired, confirming that books and materials are fairly distributed, providing advice on product development, and administering the Act within their respective States. We identified small amounts of unallowable costs stemming from the use of Federal funds for advocacy activities conducted by the Leaders to Leaders Initiative. In response, APH made corrective accounting adjustments and the Department provided guidance on the use of funds for advocacy, public relations, and

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advertising.

In addition, APH reported that the Braille Improvement Project has streamlined the production of textbooks (braille, large print, and electronic textbook files) by centralizing all new textbook orders through its Accessible Textbook Department, expanding the pool of certified transcribers through hiring and training additional staff, and developing specifications for braille and large print to ensure consistency in production.

A review of APH's GPRA data highlighted the need for new performance targets for many of the measures. APH agreed to propose new targets for Department review based on an examination of production trends and possible further improvements. The new targets cover fiscal years 2012 to 2016. APH also reported that it had simplified its customer satisfaction survey to focus on the questions needed to collect GPRA data. The Department issued its final report on the monitoring visit in September 2011.