TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Electronic Participation Update

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Information.

CONTACT: Keith Michael Fiels, Executive Director, ALA
Mary Ghikas, Senior Associate Executive Director

DATE: April 17, 2009

BACKGROUND:

At the 2009 Annual Conference, ALA Council approved in principle a number of recommendations of the Council Task Force on Electronic Member Participation. These recommendations addressed a number of policy and practical issues related to increasing member participation in ALA governance and non-governance activities through the use of new technologies. This is an objective of the Association’s Ahead to 2010 strategic plan; Goal V: Membership, Objective 3: Increase opportunities for electronic and virtual participation in association activities.

Since then, ALA staff and members have been moving ahead on a number of fronts to implement the recommendations - and spirit - of the report:

1. A number of policy recommendations which permit and encourage electronic participation have been referred to appropriate committees for incorporation into ALA policies.

2. The Executive Office and Conference Services are working on a comprehensive overview of virtual options and their costs for discussion by BARC, the Executive Board and Council. (A current draft of the Options Costs spreadsheet is included as appendix 2).

3. Ahead to 2010 initiative funds have been allocated to provide wireless access at selected conference hotels and/or meeting rooms in order to support both virtual participation and the “active experimentation” recommended by the Task Force.
4. A group of LITALibrary2.0 members has organized an eParticipation Implementation Task Force that will be providing information and support for those groups seeking to involve members in governance and discussion group activities at the upcoming Annual Conference. (general information on the group and the contents sheet from the draft Tool Kit Options Handbook are attached as Appendix 3: the full Tool Kit is available at: http://wikis.ala.org/lita/index.php/EParticipation_Task_Force_Recommendations ).

5. A “Virtual Conference” option will be available at Annual Conference this year for attendees who cannot participate in person. A series of selected programs will be available, along with interactive features. The concept is based on successful virtual conferences offered by ACRL and PLA. An estimated 350 participated in ACRL’s virtual conference this spring.

6. A master matrix has been created that will provide for tracking of follow up activities to the Task Force recommendations. (A draft of this Implementation Report is attached as Appendix 1).

Attachments:

Appendix 1: Implementation Report April 2009
Appendix 2: Electronic Participation Options Costs Spreadsheet April 2009
Appendix 3: LITALibrary2.0 eParticipation Implementation Task Force Tool Kit Options Handbook