The OhioLINK Program

FISCAL 2000-2001 BIENNIIUM OPERATING FUNDS REQUEST

Submitted:
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Preface

Each new biennium operating budget request finds the OhioLINK program at a new stage in its rapid development and dynamic evolution.

- In 1992 operations were still several months from inauguration.
- In 1994 the central catalog was only partially built and reference services were just developing.
- By 1996 we had blossomed into a robust, and vibrant, multi-faceted information system. In 1996 we paused to take stock of our progress to see if the original benefits envisioned were in reality being delivered. The answer was a resounding "yes!"
- In 1998 we find the OhioLINK program continuing to deliver dramatic increases in information access to higher education, at the most effective and cost efficient means possible. It is increasingly possible to contribute even more significantly to the instructional and research missions throughout the state. Having confirmed the OhioLINK program's legitimacy in 1996, continuing the benefits to-date will be highlighted. That the OhioLINK program continues as a world leader among library consortia and is looked to as a model is continuing evidence that the State of Ohio remains justified increasing its support for the growth of the program.

Every facet of society—home, work, government and education—is rapidly embracing new information technologies. Each sees these as a means to improve its ability to accomplish its mission. With the OhioLINK program, the State is poised to take its educational information system to a new level of quality, effectiveness and efficiency not seen before. With this budget submission we seek the means to not only keep pace, but to lead the way, worldwide.
Executive Summary

Performance Review

The OhioLINK program continues to deliver extraordinary benefits to the state as anticipated at inception and confirmed based upon the oversight of the OhioLINK Governing Board.

- The central catalog has grown to include 56 institutions, growing to 74 by the end of 1998, including 33 Ohio private colleges.

- From the growing central catalog, over 1.6 million patron book requests have been made since the 1994 inauguration of the service.

- A coordinated book purchasing plan is being phased in to enhance our cooperative buying power.

- Use of 66 reference databases continues to grow but we lack coverage in many disciplines.

- The Electronic Journal Center began operations with over 1,300 scholarly journals in April 1998 and has already delivered over 40,000 articles. This complements the over 1,800,000 electronic business and general interest articles already delivered.

- OhioLINK is working with OPLIN and INFOhio to maximize information access at the best economics for all Ohioans.

Key to the Future

All segments of our society need more information to achieve our individual and collective goals. Even with the expenditures in OhioLINK, spending in higher education library services has not increased as a percent of institutional operating expenses. Further, the program requires an interdependency among each library budget across the state. This growing coordinating need must be factored into future expenditures and budgets for OhioLINK and libraries.

Program Objectives

OhioLINK will continue to focus on 6 key areas:

1. Continued focus on increased library collection utility through expanded patron borrowing of non-book material and improved coordination of material purchases.

2. Provide access to reference databases across a complete core of academic disciplines. Continue to improve retrievability and links to full text and image-based resources. Further integrate private college access.

3. Expand statewide licenses to commercial and society scholarly journals to equip all schools with expanded access to the latest in published information.

4. Initiate and develop into a robust state resource a multi-media center for images, data, audio and video for preservation and increased access.

5. Promote the coordinated funding and access to information of common interest to OhioLINK, OPLIN and INFOhio.
6. Continue active coordination with other higher education technology initiatives and with library consortia worldwide if advantageous to our interests.

Financial Request

For F00 the request totals $7,457,000; for F01, $8,755,000, a combined total of $16,212,000. Our current F99 appropriation is $6,290,947; our current biennium appropriation $11,448,479.

93% of the increased funds are earmarked for database license expansion. Our historical cost effectiveness and economies of scale will continue to pay dividends both for public and private higher education. 7.9% of the budget request is earmarked for Ohio private college support which will achieve a standard of information access across the state as well as simplify OhioLINK operations and administration thus helping to control costs.

In combination with a stable ongoing capital appropriation, this budget request represents a 12% funding increase in each of the next two years. As we move beyond F01, the OhioLINK agenda will begin to mature and growth requirements moderate. We have yet several major steps to take before we can be satisfied we have used the program to maximum advantage.

Conclusion

An investment in expanded information access is a necessary one to maintain an effective and competitive higher education system. The good news is that through the combined efforts of the OhioLINK program and local libraries the yield on this investment is increasing. Ohio has the means to leverage every extra dollar spent to maximum utility. Rather than investing more to buy less, the OhioLINK program provides the means to spend a little more to get a lot more information.
The Impact of OhioLINK on Teaching and Research
From faculty around the State

"OhioLINK has been one of the most significant library changes in my tenure at this institution – 20+ years."

"I use it all the time as do my graduate students and undergraduate students. Searching OhioLINK tells you what is available in the world of scholarship. It's a vast improvement over the old interlibrary loan system."

"I require research for most of the papers I assign my students in my composition and literature classes, and I think it would be a grave disservce to them for anyone to deprive them of the OhioLINK system. It is truly an essential system for all OSU faculty, students, and staff – but, more importantly, it's an essential system for all Ohioans, especially those who aren't able to readily access huge systems like OSU's."

On Instruction...

"One of the most important skills we can teach students is how to find and evaluate information, and the efficiency and scope afforded by OhioLINK makes this possible."

"The research papers I received were significantly better than in the past, and all of my students used OhioLINK (25 in all) in some way. They were really impressed that they could receive the books on such short notice."

"I have worked with seven summer research students over the past three years. In each case it would have been impossible for the students to do the quality of investigation and analysis that they performed had they not had the book and journal resources of OhioLINK to rely upon."

"I assigned oral reports to the 20 people in the class and gave them a bibliography of about 40 books from which to choose. The students were able to access the works through OhioLINK. This project would not have been possible before the advent of OhioLINK."

"... students were allowed to choose their own scenes or one-act plays to direct for their final project. Every student in the class chose a play I had either not read recently or never read at all. OhioLINK made it possible for me to get a hold of the plays quickly and read them in order to advise my students adequately."

"OhioLINK has opened up a world of information to our small campus library. Before we were members of OhioLINK, what you found on our shelves was what you could use for your term paper. Now, even the students who don't plan very far ahead, have access to millions of items across the state."

"I think it is not only important to me, it's even more important to my students, who are trying to complete their work within the confines of the quarter. In addition, having the collections of all Ohio institutional libraries available is a big money-saver: it's less necessary for each institution to invest in multiple copies of heavily used books. Quite often the single OSU copy of a book on my graduate students' reading list is checked out, but they can order a copy which is not much in demand from, say, Cleveland State."

"I am creating a new course called the 'Fantastic and Supernatural in Russian Literature.' I have been particularly surprised that the best holdings for Russian science fiction have not been the standard place for me to look. Ohio State, because of the major Slavic section there, but in some Community Colleges that I've never heard of."

"I am planning for the first time to have students in my Korean Society course write research papers this fall. Our own collection is so limited I have never felt it was reasonable to expect them to do it before. Now, since I know they can get books in a matter of days through OhioLINK, I think I can raise my expectations."

On Faculty Recruiting...

"OhioLINK was valuable to me (and the Economics Department) in recruiting. One of our assistant professor candidates had concerns about the quality of the library, and as a graduate student at Northwestern, she had to
obtain many items through interlibrary loan. I challenged her to find within the system all items she had to obtain through interlibrary loan at Northwestern. All were available within OhioLINK. She was impressed and I think the quality of the library system is one of the things that convinced her to accept our offer."

On Research...

"Being at a teaching university, the time available to engage in research activities is relatively limited. OhioLINK has been a critical resource for facilitating my ability to actively pursue research agendas in addition to meeting teaching demands."

"Without the service, my research productivity would drop off and that would greatly reduce my ability to be competitive in research circles within geography and planning."

"I find the convenience of access to the library 24 hours a day from school or from home so compelling, that I have become a better academic. Research is much easier logistically, therefore one can spend much more time of implementing it into classes, or beginning it in the first place."

"... most of my research is on Iran and I need to use Persian books which in no way I could expect our library to have. Over the years I had to operate in a state of isolation. But now all the entire collection of Ohio State University (which is one of the best in the country for Middle East Studies) is at my disposal."

"As a junior faculty member, I use this resource at least twice weekly as part of literature searches for clinical and research issues. Loss of this service would create a large gap in my productivity!"

"OhioLINK gives me access to resources that I would otherwise have to travel to Columbus to use: that translates to four hours of research time not wasted in the car! ... the searchable databases make possible a kind of data searching that is simply not possible by referring to printed copies of these resources. Breakthroughs in research techniques have been fairly rare in the humanities, but these computer resources have truly revolutionized my field. ... my students respond enthusiastically to the opportunity to search the corpus of early drama with the Chadwyck-Healey literature databases, ... and to discover what professional scholars have written about the literature we are studying ..."

"Simply put, I could not function as a scholar without OhioLINK, since the OSU collections in classical archaeology are not adequate for my scholarship, and OhioLINK gives me access to the excellent collections in Cincinnati. I use it almost every day, and without it would probably seriously think of employment elsewhere."

"... the biggest benefit for me has been in locating possible books to use in fall courses. I was able to order 10-12 books that looked of interest and really assess what I wanted to use."
Review of OhioLINK Program Performance To-Date

The Ohio Board of Regents has charged oversight of the OhioLINK program to a Governing Board of nine universities Provosts, three Chief Instructional Officers of two-year colleges, and a Provost from the Ohio private colleges. This group meets regularly with OhioLINK management and library directors. Every two years it holds a planning session to focus on progress and plans. The session in 1996 generated a major review that affirmed the validity of the OhioLINK program and set forth major objectives for the future. NOTE: Copies of the 1996 report are available at request. From that 1996 report six major areas of focus were identified. Here we note our progress for each of the six objectives.

1. Continued focus on increasing the utility of library collections across the State.
   
a. The continually growing central catalog now represents over 6.6 million titles representing over 27.2 million items from libraries serving 56 institutions. By early 1999 the central catalog will grow to include 74 institutions, 33 of which are Ohio private liberal arts colleges. With the addition of a majority of the Ohio private colleges, our system has reached near comprehensive inclusion of Ohio higher education resources (see list of participating universities and colleges).

b. New software has been installed to enhance our record quality maintenance capabilities.

c. We are completing an RFP process that will result in the selection of a common book vendor across the State for a large portion of our book purchases. This will enhance the value of our investment in books by:
   - Better service requiring less library staff time
   - An electronic book order management system that will result in improved coordination of purchases
   - Lower book prices for many libraries.

The adoption of the single vendor will be evolutionary across the State, but will have long-term advantages in meeting the growing demand for an ever-expanding body of published material.
d. We are currently adding to each local catalog and the central catalog, records for each of the +1,300 journals in our Electronic Journal Center (EJC). We will continue to do so as we add journals to the EJC.

e. Since the inauguration of patron online borrowing from the central catalog in January 1994, more than 1.6 million requests for books have been filled. Annual requests exceed 500,000, an unprecedented level.

f. In early 1999 we will begin testing of patron borrowing for audio, video, and other non-book materials within library collections.

2. Enhancements of and selective expansion of journal citation databases.

a. A dramatically improved web-based search engine is being installed in two phases over Fall 1998 and Winter 1999 to deliver access to 25 current journal citation databases and all future journal citation databases mounted at the central site. This change will improve searching and enable widespread linking to full-text resources. It also has a positive impact on our annual operating costs versus current levels.

b. Total reference/research databases usage continues to grow. Costs to upgrade or expand computer capacity continue to drop. This remains a cost-effective endeavor and will become more effective as we make service improvements.
Annualized Database Searching
(some gateway databases estimated, several missing)

1. Since the end of 1996 only 3 citation databases have been added for all core members. Due to limited funding we remain without core reference database coverage in disciplines such as history, political science, economics, business, mathematics, geography, chemistry, physics, and the humanities.

Several reference databases have been added on an elective basis at less efficient costs and not on a universal basis. We have not been able to integrate private college database access to simplify operations and broaden accessibility.

A full list of current databases is attached.

3. Accelerate the effort to build a critical mass of electronically retrievable text.

NOTE: In 1996 this activity was noted as the single most important step to massively expand access to information. In as much as journals represent over 65% of library material expenditures, it is critical to transform this expenditure into a highly leveraged purchasing tool that results in dramatically increased levels of journal access.

a. In April 1998 the Electronic Journal Center (EJC) quietly began operation with the full-text from over 1,300 journals (Elsevier Science and Academic Press). Additional publishers are to be added. The first quarter of use indicates that the EJC will be both broadly and heavily used. Already 1160 of 1325 titles have had article downloads. As examples of expanded access the EJC makes possible, 50% of the titles from which articles were downloaded by University of Cincinnati patrons and, 75% of the corresponding titles downloaded by the University of Toledo patrons, were from titles that had not previously been available on the campus through traditional print subscriptions.
b. The titles of Springer-Verlag and the MUSE Project will be added next in Fall 1998. Discussions are underway with other commercial journal publishers (e.g. Wiley, Blackwell, Kluwer, Sage) and scholarly societies (e.g. APS, AIP, ACS, ACM) to continue to build the EJC collection. No other library consortium has a site equal to the EJC and it can continue to be a strategic advantage if expanded.

c. In Fall 1998 we will activate an EJC feature that allows users to be informed of newly added articles in their self-designated areas of interest. Also, we will activate links between the EJC and the citation indexes of the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) integrating and reinforcing the use of two critically important scholarly research tools.

d. Access to general and business journals full text via linked access from two journal citation databases is being expanded to 1700 titles this fall. From this collection we have delivered over 1,800,000 articles via the internet since its inception in January 1995.

e. Since the end of 1996, 6 additional full text American and English literature databases have been activated, bringing our total to 8. Two additional social issues and government information full text databases have also been added.

4. **Take advantage of rapidly advancing technology to expand into image, map, numeric, and other non-text-based data sources.**

a. We undertook and completed an RFP process to select software to support a robust, statewide Electronic Image and Data Center (EIDC). We are collaborating with the Ohio Supercomputer Center to integrate with their computer facilities for cost effective operations and use of state-of-the-art data storage. Initial purchase and system installation has been delayed by the absence of a new F99/F00 capital appropriation. We are implementing contingency plans that will still allow us to proceed with initial activities but full deployment is not possible without new capital funding.

b. We are currently negotiating with several suppliers of digital image collections for statewide access through the EIDC. These will be ground breaking licenses demonstrating the benefits of the EIDC. The accessibility of digital images will have a direct affect on instruction and classroom activities.
c. In Fall 1998 we are completing negotiations with ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) to facilitate affordable statewide access to GIS software as well as provide OhioLINK access to software tools as we add GIS files to the EIDC.

d. In Fall 1998 we are completing negotiations with ICPSR (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research) to facilitate affordable statewide access to social research data sets. OhioLINK will load selected files to the EIDC for enhanced access across the state.

e. A program of pilot projects begins Fall 1998/Winter 1999 to enter digitized data and metadata for image-based materials from library collections across the state. We have already identified projects from universities, two-year colleges and private colleges.

5. Where overlap of interests exists with OPLIN, INFOhio and Schoolnet, OhioLINK will seek, within its resources, ways to extend access to its collections and facilitate access to other information resources.

a. OhioLINK has formed with OPLIN, INFOhio and the State Library a collaborative initiative to promote and foster our common information needs. Libraries Connect, as it is called, is promoting a concept critical to the long-term success of Ohio. We believe the state must invest in a common Statewide Core Electronic Collection (SCEC). This concept is explained on pages 2-3 of the attached newsletter. It is the only way to provide universal access to core information at an affordable price. Most of the resources within the SCEC are not being addressed by the funds requested here. The SCEC benefits all participants but on balance the majority of the SCEC funds are in support of the large numbers of schools and public libraries who have very limited information access to begin with.

b. The managers of the Libraries Connect participating programs meet regularly. The SCEC is one result. Also we have already begun pilot projects at both school and public libraries (see page 1 of the newsletter).

c. As apart of the SCEC Libraries Connect submitted a $975,000 grant request (25% match required) for funding from the federal LSTA program (Library Service and Technology Act). If funded, 15 literature databases, 13 of them full text, will be provided to all schools, public libraries, and higher education institutions via the OhioLINK central system. OhioLINK already has 10 of the 15 databases, but the schools and public libraries have none. There would be a massive expansion in access to English and American Literature across the state with a tremendous opportunity to enhance instruction at all levels of education. We have been told, just recently, that this proposal will not be funded.

6. OhioLINK must be an active participant in the wide world in which it operates.

a. OhioLINK has participated for the past 18 months as a voting member in NISO but we believe other organizations will play a more vital role in the future of standards setting. We will continue to look for the most productive and necessary avenues of participation in standards developments.

b. OhioLINK has been a key organizer of the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC). This informal group has grown in two years to include over 80 library consortia including those from Australia, South Africa, United Kingdom, Israel, and a variety of European countries. Our purpose is to improve the economics of information purchasing through consortium-based buying. Through common action, negotiations with information providers can be made more effective.
c. OhioLINK has funded in 1997 and 1998 small grant programs to faculty across the state for instructional web site creation. 85 proposals were received and 17 awards have been made @ $5,000 each.

d. OhioLINK, OSC and OARnet are active collaborators in serving Ohio education with computing, networking, and information services. (See attached report to legislators).
F00/F01 Key to the Future

It is heard from every sector of our society that the need for and use of information is increasingly important in determining future success. Application of this mandate to the education sector is even more critical if we are to train students to be effective performers in a more information intensive age and to conduct timely, relevant, and quality research. Both of these activities require more, better, and faster information resources.

The Ohio Board of Regents realized in the 1980's that trying to meet these information needs conventionally could not be done, and in the regional depositories and the OhioLINK program we see the innovative means to bridge the gap between these needs and limited resources. Through innovation the demand for more information can be met by doing so more cost effectively.

But is Ohio higher education investing more in its library resources to see that this opportunity continues to develop? A comparison of F93 to F98 reveals that library operating budgets have lost ground slightly as a percent of the institutional E & G budgets of higher education institutions. With estimated library spending of $160 million, library budgets averaged 3.1% of E&G, slightly down from 3.2% 5 years ago.

Universities and stand-alone medical colleges lead the way at 3.8%, followed by private colleges at 3.5%, branch campuses at 3.4% and two-year colleges at 2.65%.

The picture varies greatly across institutions. The attached tables show significant variation in levels and changes in funding.

Two observations can be made:

1. At less than $10 million per year, combined operating and capital, the OhioLINK budget is a small fraction of the total cost of library services. Even at requested increases, it remains a very minor portion. The impact of the OhioLINK investment has been far in excess of its share of the library service costs. No single investment of this magnitude can achieve similar results.

2. Library budgets no longer act independently of one another. Whether its fulfilling an increasing number of patron book requests or funding electronic licenses or digitizing image collections, significant local library resources are required. Moreover, and critical to our success as a statewide group, each library must be able to pull its weight in a coordinated fashion.

Campus administrators must recognize that we will not achieve our information goals without a certain amount of coordinated library funding policies. To the extent that such coordination is ultimately limited, a strong OhioLINK budget will compensate by allowing maximum use of central funds if local funds across all accessory institutions is lacking.
F00/F01 OhioLINK Program Objectives

Our tactics and technologies change rapidly. But since the first visions and objectives for OhioLINK were established in the late 1980's, and refined in the 1990's, the broad directions and scope for the program have remained constant. The 6 objectives outlined in 1996 remain valid and reflect the breadth of the services that will enable the OhioLINK program, in concert with local libraries, to enrich the instructional and research missions of Ohio higher education.

1. Continued focus on increasing the utility of library collections across the state.
   - Expanding patron online borrowing to non-book materials so that traditionally inaccessible materials can now be used as primary instructional and research tools.
   - Activating and coordinating the statewide book purchasing program will move us closer to fulfilling the original expectations of the program.

2. Enhancements of and selective expansion of journal citation databases.
   - Our goal is to complete the “core” set of databases that should be universally accessible at all institutions. We have identified the disciplines and databases that we are lacking.
   - Our funding request seeks to increase the allocation for private colleges to support availability of “core” databases.
   - We will focus on the addition of several value added services. Single search-multiple database retrieval is important given the wide breadth of resources available. Linking to any available full text in the EJC or images in the EIDC is critical in meeting rising user expectations.

3. Accelerate the effort to build a critical mass of electronically retrievable text.
   - We will continue to pursue our discussion with major commercial and non-commercial publishers to increase journal availability on each campus through electronic access.

4. Expand into image, map, and numeric and other non-text-based data sources.
   - This is a significant opportunity to impact on instruction and research. These materials inherently have great value in enhancing classroom and instructional activities. We can dramatically increase access to traditionally inaccessible images and data sets. There is no question this strategic effort will lead to a much stronger set of relationship among libraries, media and instructional centers, and faculty activities.

5. Coordinate overlapping interests with OPLIN, INFOhio, and Schoolnet.
   - We have proposed a broad comprehensive concept, the Statewide Core Electronic Collection to achieve this goal. To the extent that the State embraces it with dedicated funding we can move ahead.
6. An active participant in the world in which it operates.

- We continue to coordinate closely with OSC and OARnet to provide the best combination of information, computing, and technology.

- The OhioLINK program must be coordinated with the emerging TEClink initiative. Our multimedia system, EIDC, will be an important instructional tool. Our agenda's for use of this tool must be coordinated.

- The ICoLIC looks to be an important tool in achieving our goals. We will continue to foster its development and relationships with other organizations as needed.
F00/F01 Financial Requirements

Summary

The premise behind the F00/F01 appropriation request mirrors that made in 1996 for F98/F99. At that time we requested $15,000,000 but received $11,481,000. At that time we projected a F00/F01 request of over $17,000,000. The current request for F00F01 is $16,212,000, putting us back on track to complete our targeted objectives. This breaks down to $7,457,000 in F00 and $8,755,000 in F01.

In combination with a stable capital appropriation the OhioLINK program will begin to mature during the 2003-2006 time frame. Once we achieve a generally complete set of “core” resources the need for significant additions will diminish. The long-term expectation is summarized in the chart below. While F00 and F01 require accelerated growth, this diminishes in the years beyond as our agenda matures.

To-date, the Ohio Board of Regents has shown unwavering support for the program during its initial years, which has enabled aggressive program planning and advancement. The premise of our funding request is four-fold:

1. OhioLINK has proven to-date that it is dramatically effective, economically, as a means to greater information delivery. We are moving from a world of information rationing and inaccessibility to one of widespread accessibility and use.

2. Even given what has been accomplished, we have yet to fully implement the OhioLINK program by leveraging our collective investment in all the varied material formats of primary use beyond books (journals, microfilm, maps, slides, artwork, etc.)

3. As we have not yet begun to see diminishing returns on the OhioLINK investment, funding expansion is justified to continue current services and to expand with new services. New projects suggest our economic leverage will continue and probably improve as we move forward evolutionarily.
4. It is cheaper and less economically volatile to maintain steady progress as we build to maturity rather than cease or progress slowly only to find that catch-up costs are far greater. Speculating, maturity may be reached at about $15 million per year (total capital and operating funds).

Details

Predicting specific program financial needs is most difficult in that our negotiations for statewide information resources reflect unique and new vendor pricing. We have built up a body of experience though to guide us.

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<th>F01</th>
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<td>Projected baseline budget (to maintain existing program)</td>
<td>$6,205</td>
<td>$6,555</td>
<td>$12,760</td>
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<td><strong>Growth</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Software maintenance growth</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Core database expansion</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td>2,255</td>
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<td>Increased private college allocation (supports current and expanded core database access)</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>959</td>
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<td>Staff to support expanded activities</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total Growth</strong></td>
<td>1,252</td>
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<td>3,452</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total Requested Funds</strong></td>
<td>$7,457</td>
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<td>$16,212</td>
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Key Points

- Over 95% of Growth funds are targeted for direct operation expenses, 93% for database licenses. This will raise our overall Operations percentage to over 82% (see attached charts)

- The total private college allocations will grow from the $267,000 to $1,283,000, 7.9% of the total appropriation. Of this allocation, $251,000 helps support basic OhioLINK administrative costs, courier services, and CRL membership. Over 80%, $1,032,000 will support access to the same set of core reference databases as provided to the universities and two-year colleges. This provides a standard of quality statewide information access across the State’s higher education community. It improves our negotiating position and simplifies administration and operations.

The detailed charts and tables of annual expenditures are attached.
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<td>ABI/Inform *</td>
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* Some or all materials in this database are full-text.