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**The Florida Library Association Releases
Outcomes and Standards for Public Libraries**

Tallahassee, FL, June 6, 2016 -- The Florida Library Association has completed its work on a new set of Outcomes and Standards for Florida Public Libraries. Librarians, policy makers and governing boards can use the Outcomes and Standards to gain a better understanding of the vital role libraries serve in their communities and as a tool to help them make decisions regarding staffing, operations, new construction, programming and funding.

The Florida Public Library Outcomes and Standards Committee began its work in November 2014. In consultation with Dominion Library Associates LLC, the committee reviewed data from the following sources: The Library Edge - Benchmarks, The Aspen Institute's, Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries, Florida Public Library Directors' Survey (2013), Institute of Museum and Library Services data specific to Florida, and peer state standards.

"These new Standards are so important because they truly reflect how public libraries have evolved; they have become community anchors of culture, economic development, education and a safe place to gather." Gene Coppola, President, Florida Library Association.

In April 2015 the committee presented draft outcomes and standards to the FLA board. They were approved in draft form so they could be presented to the FLA membership of 1000 librarians for review and feedback. Comments were taken from May to August and revisions were made. In January 2016 the Florida Library Association Board approved the final version.

The Outcomes section is a new addition to FLA's traditional Standards model. The new progressive approach, moves from quantitative measures indicating services provided, to outcomes that indicate what happens when community members use the library. The Public Library Association is also working on such a document and will be finished in 2018. Outcomes show the transformative nature of public library work, demonstrating the changes in attitudes of patrons, their perceptions, satisfaction or level of confidence in library services, and patron knowledge and skills gained as a result of using the library.

The Standards section measures 8 categories of library service and programming: Customer Centered Institution, Community Collaborator, Access Point, Center of Knowledge, Education and Lifelong Learning, Popular Culture and Civic Engagement Community Center, E-Government and Economic Development, Center for Child and Teen Literacy Development, Sustainable Organization. The standards also include important facilities and collection requirements information.

“The new Outcomes and Standards will allow public libraries not just to quantify numbers of individuals that partake of our services and attend our classes and events but will allow us to demonstrate how we transform our community one person at a time.” Susan Dillinger, Chair, Florida Library Association Standards and Outcomes Committee.

As a result of on-going advances in technology and the modern necessity to communicate through online channels libraries continue to be essential community centers for digital literacy, lifelong learning, youth education, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement and empowerment. Staffed by librarians who are information, literacy and technology specialists, libraries foster community cohesion, stability and sense of place, and individual growth and enlightenment.

The Florida Library Association is a statewide organization that promotes excellence in Florida libraries by advocating strongly for libraries and providing high quality professional and leadership development for a diverse community of library staff, volunteers, and supporters.

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