

Issue Brief:

Digital Library Resources for Community & Technical College Students (Supplemental Budget Request)



One critical aspect of 21st Century Learning is to provide all community and technical college (CTC) students with equal, timely, and direct access to the digital library resources to be prepared for future jobs and to compete in the global economy.

Online Resources

- Because of funding restraints, community and technical colleges haven't been able to license core digital resources long available in much of the higher education community.
- Students identify access to digital library resources as a high priority need
- Faculty identify timely and direct access to online academic journals and selected e-books as critical for their students' academic success
- Full-text online digital resources would be available in the high-demand and high enrollment areas of allied health; science, engineering, technology; business; information technology; arts, humanities; and social sciences.
- The combined purchasing power of the CTC system will provide these resources at lower cost than through individual institutions' procurement.

The Investment

A system-wide cost of \$1.5 million in permanent annual funding (\$3 million per biennium)

The Benefits

- Enhanced access through discipline-specific full-text digital resources available to all CTC students
- Equity of access, with the same resources available regardless of the size or the geographic location of the college
- Support for distance education through expanded, consistent resource availability for all distance learning students.
- Development of student expertise in the use of the same online resources they will later use on the job or at baccalaureate institutions.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education has included this funding in its January 28, 2008 budget proposal to the full Appropriations Committee.

The Washington Library Association supports this appropriation recommendation as one of its legislative priorities and encourages Legislative approval of its addition to the 2008 Supplemental Budget.