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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 22, 2009

To: Presidents of South Carolina's Public and Independent Colleges and Universities

From: Ruth Riley, Chair, Board of Directors, Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries,
Director of Library Services, University of South Carolina School of Medicine
Rick Moul, PASCAL Executive Director

Re: **Impact of 2008-09 Budget Cuts on Statewide Higher Education Electronic Library**

In our August 5, 2008 memorandum to you, we outlined PASCAL's survival strategy for 2008-09 given the 90% cut in state funding from \$2 million to \$200,000. This amount has been further reduced in the course of the year to approximately \$181,000.

As you know, since 2004, the \$2 million annual appropriation was used to develop a robust virtual library program built around rapid book delivery (PASCAL Delivers) and a large collection of annually licensed electronic databases for higher education. We accomplished this while leveraging each dollar spent seven-fold.

In response to the 90% cut this year, PASCAL was forced to cancel statewide access to key databases and electronic journals, including Lexis/Nexis which includes over 6,000 news, business, and legal sources; the journals Nature and Science; and two nursing databases which resulted in the loss of access to 800 electronic journals in nursing, allied health, and the sciences. The cut also forced a 40% reduction in the PASCAL Delivers delivery schedule from 5 days/week to 3 days/week.

The remaining databases due to expire on July 1, 2009 include Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, the Literature Resource Center and CINAHL Plus which provide access to over 7,000 journals in biology, chemistry engineering, physics, psychology, religion, business, literature, and nursing.

We certainly appreciate the current economic climate but unless we can address the huge cuts made in 2008-09, PASCAL will not remain viable.

As was pointed out in the Higher Education Study Group report, PASCAL is an exemplar of the effectiveness of cooperative action. We believe that the consequences of program dissolution would be dire for the state, especially in an environment where higher education and the overall state budget are under such stress. The evisceration of PASCAL's budget dramatically reverses progress South Carolina is making in building a foundation for ubiquitous statewide access to research and teaching materials. By 2007, the state was nearing parity with neighboring states like Virginia, Georgia and North Carolina, if not in terms of resources, then at least in our strategic approach to our challenges. Abandonment of the statewide academic virtual library will return us to the regional cellar.

Many in the higher education community have taken note of this possibility: Faculty and student government associations across the state have passed resolutions in support of the restoration of PASCAL. Over 700 students and faculty from your institutions have volunteered testimonials to PASCAL about the value of PASCAL to their studies, teaching, and research. Despite the decline in collections use of materials continues to grow. Taken together these are compelling indicators of the need for this program.

To restore PASCAL to the level of resource and services provided in 2007-08, \$2.3 million of additional funding is needed from either the General Assembly or the institutions. As you are aware, the Commission on Higher Education on behalf of higher education has requested \$2.3 million be restored for PASCAL in FY 2009-10.

We know you understand the value that PASCAL adds to your institutions and appreciate your support to date. While realizing the restoration of full amount for PASCAL will be difficult in the face of the state's current budget situation, we will not be able to restore any of PASCAL's funding without your help. **We urgently request that you strongly support the restoration of PASCAL's funding in your upcoming budget hearings and as you talk with legislators this session.** Attached is a PASCAL fact sheet which may be helpful to you in your preparations. Thank you for your efforts in support of PASCAL which benefits all students and faculty in the South Carolina higher education community.



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PASCAL and Statewide Higher Education

Fiscal Year 2009-2010

THE ISSUE

State funding for PASCAL was reduced by 90% from \$2 million to \$200,000 (recurring) for FY 2008-09. The dramatic level of this reduction will translate into the effective elimination of PASCAL programs. Their loss will undercut South Carolina's efforts to educate students and consequently our ability to compete in the knowledge economy.

THE PROGRAM

Since 2004, a \$2M appropriation from the state has been used to develop and sustain two initiatives:

- **PASCAL Delivers** -- a rapid book delivery service that expands access to print-based knowledge statewide. It leverages institutional collection expenditures using an efficient centralized system.
- **Electronic Resources** -- extremely cost-effective central annual licensing of core electronic resources for higher education.

THE IMPACT

At the end of June 2008, this virtual academic library contained millions of articles licensed from over 13,000 research publications and over 10 million print volumes owned by the state's academic libraries. These heavily used resources vastly increased the knowledge universally available for teaching, learning and research in the state's institutions.

Effectively, PASCAL guaranteed *every* one of the state's 230,000 college students and faculty fingertip access to a quality, university-level research library, and it also substantially enhanced the collections and capabilities at our leading research institutions.

THE VALUE

PASCAL has been an efficient steward of state funds. Overall, the state has seen a seven-fold return in value for each dollar spent, based largely on the capability to license materials at the statewide "enterprise" level and by leveraging investments made by individual institutions through the resource sharing system.

THE STAKES

Elimination of PASCAL programs would represent a serious contraction in the knowledge-base for South Carolina higher education. Without PASCAL, the research materials we have licensed simply will not be accessible to most of our 230,000 students and faculty, especially those served by rural or smaller 2 and 4 year institutions. Even at our research institutions, trade-offs are being made. Similarly, the loss of our efficient book delivery service will translate into lost availability of research collections to many at smaller and rural schools, and higher individual transaction costs for services.

THE REQUEST

The Commission on Higher Education has requested \$2.3 million in recurring funds in its FY 2009-10 budget submission in order to restore annual licenses and services that are being lost.

PASCAL is the Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries, a consortium of South Carolina's academic libraries working together with their parent institutions and state agency partners. For more information, please contact us or visit our website (<http://pascalsc.org>).