



**Rhode Island Library  
Information Network for Kids**  
c/o East Bay Educational  
Collaborative  
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## **RILINK – where we’ve been, and where we are going (see page 2)...**

***In the beginning...*** RILINK began with an OLIS/LSTA grant in 1998 to the founding members, Middletown High School and South Kingstown High School. Using grant funds, the South Kingstown High School library put its holdings online. The two libraries established a combined listing of their library materials online using the Follett Software Company’s server to start interlibrary loan between the two schools. Students and teachers could place their requests online, and their librarians, Paul Venancio and Linda Wood, could also request materials through the libraries’ membership in the statewide library network. And RILINK, the Rhode Island Library Information Network for Kids, was born.

### ***Over the course of the next 9 years RILINK moved ahead.....***

- ★ The RILINK domain name was established at [www.rilink.org](http://www.rilink.org).
- ★ Every year, additional libraries joined (in 2008, there are 91 members !)
- ★ Librarians with vision – Paul Venancio, Linda Wood, and Hope Houston, with member library media specialists sharing their expertise, ideas and enthusiasm - led RILINK forward.
- ★ With grant funds through the Rhode Island Department of Education, RILINK purchased its own server, maintained in the Cooperating Libraries Automated Network (now called Ocean State Libraries) office which also graciously shared its technical expertise and Internet access.
- ★ RILINK became part of the East Bay Educational Collaborative, our nonprofit, Local Educational Agency (LEA) home.
- ★ RILINK created and adopted a new logo and produced a promotional video tape with the help of Jennifer Long.

- ★ To address local technical support issues in individual schools and districts, RILINK decided to offer complete web-based library automation services using Follett's Destiny software, and RICAT was born !
- ★ RILINK added subject-based web links to the shared catalog to point students and teachers to K-12 appropriate, curriculum-based resources on the web.
- ★ RILINK began working with online database vendors, such as Thomson Gale and World Book to provide discounted subscriptions for member libraries.
- ★ With generous support from LSTA grant funds through OLIS and funding for Newport school libraries through the federal grant program Improving Literacy Through School Libraries, RILINK members began moving over to RICAT. Today, 90 out of 91 members are online with RICAT.
- ★ Starting in 2006-2007 RILINK, paid for a group-wide subscription to World Book Online, so that now every member has access to online information for students at every level to begin their research projects and reports. In 2007-2008 the subscription was upgraded to include primary source documents with support from a federal Library Services and Technology Act grant through the state Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS).
- ★ In January 2008 RILINK started offering a two-page monthly newsletter which member libraries can distribute to their teachers. Teacher/Librarian provides an introduction to the resources available through school libraries and RILINK and is designed to foster collaboration between library media specialists and classroom teachers.



### *Here's what we need to do...*

- ★ **Facilities and equipment**
  - Continue to maintain and upgrade current servers and other equipment as needed. (The upgrade of the current servers to 64-bit and the Microsoft Enterprise version of server software to increase the capacity of the current equipment is projected to cost \$20,000.)
  - Secure additional bandwidth as needed for Internet access to provide capacity for new RICAT member libraries and Big6 Turbo Tools (see below).

**★ Resources**

- Continue to provide links to thousands of curriculum-based, authoritative sites on the Web through the library catalog. All are K-12 educator-evaluated and checked regularly for availability. (This is currently available as an option for individual member libraries at an annual subscription cost of \$345; almost all members are currently subscribing to this service.)
- Explore ways to provide increased access for all middle and high school students to online subscription databases, such as those available through vendors such as EBSCO, ProQuest and Gale, for research and portfolio development. (These services could also be part of statewide online access to information initiatives in conjunction with public and academic library communities.)
- Explore options for federated searching of resources to provide a “Google-like” option for searching local, web-based and subscription databases with one search. (This is currently available as an option for individual member libraries at an annual subscription cost of \$345.)
- Offer access to research tools and web-based storage of student work in progress, using Big6 Turbo Tools. (The cost for this program is projected to be \$495 per participating member library.)
- Add resources for cataloging audiovisual materials. (The cost for this service is projected at \$75 annually per current number of member libraries.)
- Incorporate the ability to view book covers, table of contents, and sample book pages into RICAT. (This service is currently available as an option for individual libraries at an annual subscription cost of \$122.)
- Interface with reading programs, including Accelerated Reader. (This functionality is currently available as an option for individual libraries at an annual subscription cost of \$210.)

**★ Student data and access**

- Update student information automatically through links to the shared SchoolMAX system at RINET or to local/district student information management systems. (RILINK currently does an annual update at the beginning of the school year using data files provided by each district/local student information coordinator.)

- Allow students to log in using their local or state usernames and passwords, storing only the usernames on the Destiny/RICAT server, and connecting to local and/or state servers to verify passwords. (RILINK currently creates library system usernames and passwords for each site, or loads them from a locally-provided file. The capacity for connection to other systems is already included in the Destiny software functionality.)

★ **Collaboration and interlibrary loan**

- Continue to explore, in conjunction with the state Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) and the public (OSL) and academic (HELIN) library consortia, best ways to share resources and do interlibrary loaning.
- Encourage Follett to add a software component to provide for interlibrary loan between Destiny systems, to facilitate interlibrary loan with Destiny district-based systems in Rhode Island (Providence, Middletown, and others).

★ **New members**

- Bring in the remaining current RILINK member that is not currently on RICAT. (Grant funds are currently available for this, but we are awaiting district commitment for ongoing costs.)
- Consider ways to bring the rest of the middle and elementary schools (total 92) online in those districts that have one or more schools already on RICAT. (The total cost for software licenses is estimated at \$350,000; costs/methodology for data conversion would also need to be addressed). Approximately twenty schools have indicated some interest/intent to join in 2008-2009. (To add all 145 public schools in districts that are not already using Follett Destiny the cost would be approximately \$550,000 for the software licenses; this does not include costs for data conversion or for local equipment needed.)
- (*Alternative to above*) Target remaining high schools and middle schools that are not currently using Follett Destiny software so that students will have access to additional books and other resources needed for research and meeting graduation proficiency requirements for an independent research project or activity demonstrating applied learning skills. (For a total of 30 schools, the cost of software licenses is estimated at \$115,000; the software license cost to add just the 11 remaining high schools would be \$42,000.)

DBF 2/6/2008

**As of January 27, 2008, RILINK is officially 10 years old!**