1. The Task Force convened at 10:00 a.m. with welcome and introductions

2. The Task Force reviewed its charge:
   The Educational Portal Task Force is charged with the mission of developing a shared Web site dedicated to providing information and tools to teachers K through 12, drawing from materials provided by the various colleges, departments, and programs of the UA research universities.
   a. Identify programs and resources at each institution, wherever curriculum is developed.
   b. Identify opportunities for partnerships with K-12 groups.
   c. Determine how the portal should be maintained and monitored.
   d. Develop a promotional plan.
   e. Recommend a consistent web presence in all institutional library web pages.

3. Discussion of the current portal:
   Elizabeth talked about the work involved in keeping the site current, including adding new links and updating links that had either died or changed, work that had consumed many hours recently. Members agreed that the portal, with its 118 linked sites, is well organized and has good visuals and descriptions.
   Our site has focused on resources specific to Arkansas. In recent years, the portal of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has become much more comprehensive, and it now duplicates many of our links. Also, the Arkansas Traveler website includes databases purchased for statewide access.

4. Concerns:
   a. How much is our portal used? Elizabeth distributed statistics showing 3,188 views last year, a 33% decline since 2013, when the site had 5237 views. Initially the portal showed statistics that supported the efforts to develop it. When initially released in 2008-09, the portal had 11,369 page views, and even the following year had 6,317 views.
   b. As currently set up, our portal is housed at Fayetteville and all of the upkeep – updating, checking links, adding new sites, etc – must be done by UAF personnel, using content identified by each campus. This imposes a large burden on one institution and does not permit the rest of us to share in the work or make updates. We suspect that resources available at each campus are not sufficiently represented with the current system, in spite of efforts by the task force over the years to be inclusive.
   c. How much should we be duplicating the work of the ADE? Are teachers not more likely to turn first to the ADE rather than to CUARL? Creating awareness of Arkansas
associations, agencies, and websites that offer education resources is now well-covered by the ADE site.

d. Most teachers will know about events, camps, lesson plans, speakers, etc, from other resources such as listservs, and will not be looking for that information from us.

e. How many portals will teachers be willing to use, especially if there are portals hosted by the ADE, CUARL, and individual universities? The portal is likely to be used a few times as educators identify relevant sites, but they will then probably bookmark those sites and return to them directly, rather than going through the portal.

5. Alternatives:
The group looked at two portals, one for the state of Georgia (www.galileo.usg.edu/guest/?welcome&welcome), which has a list of “guest resources” that link to a variety of free content, state and national, that anyone can browse and connect to, and one produced by the University of Michigan (http://open.umich.edu/). Both sites are intended for statewide use and are large projects, the results of statewide consortial activity. Michigan’s site is produced by UM as a way for faculty to push their Open Access materials out to teachers, other faculty, and UM students.

6. Consensus:
   a. We need to make sure our subject headings mesh with those of the ADE.
   b. We need to promote worthwhile Arkansas sites.
   c. Resources from the Arkansas State Library, such as Arkansas Traveler and Learning Express, deserve to be promoted.
   d. We need to promote unique resources from our campuses, especially resources not available elsewhere.
   e. A statewide effort makes the most sense, including being open to participation by libraries outside the UA system.
   f. It is too much work for a single campus to host the Portal. This needs to be a collaborative effort.
   g. Another platform, perhaps LibGuides, might offer us all the chance to participate.
   h. We can expand our vision of what our portal should include, perhaps including such services as statewide telephone reference or chat.
   i. Overall statewide needs should be addressed, with this task force cooperating with other CUARL committees that may include efforts to provide services such as statewide telephone reference, chat, Open Access resources, or digital initiatives at various campuses. We could then bring these together under one roof as Michigan and Georgia have done.

7. Action Items:
   a. Elizabeth will speak with Beth Juhl at UAF to try ascertain if there is a way to use LibGuides that would allow all of us to participate as administrators. If so, we will explore the costs involved.
   b. Task Force members will be looking at portals from other states to see what might – and might not – be useful for our work.
   c. After Dan reports to the CUARL Deans, he will report back to the Task Force members and schedule another meeting.
8. Task Force members thanked Carol for her gracious hospitality, noting that the chair had consumed more than his fair share of both nuts and coffee. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

9. **Recommendations for the CUARL Deans**

The Task Force respectfully suggests:

a. That we NOT maintain the portal in its current form, since it is too difficult to keep updated. It is too labor-intensive for a single campus, and does not permit collaborative effort.

b. That we move to a platform that does permit collaboration and can easily be linked and managed through each institution’s website. Members will be looking into alternatives that allow all of us to participate with our unique resources.

c. That we work toward a statewide consortium, and possibly a website, perhaps in cooperation with other CUARL committees or ARKLink. Since our focus is on Arkansas materials, this would be more efficient in bringing them all together. A single portal would also simplify options for the K-12 teaching community.