



**BC ELN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, December 5, 2025**

3:00 – 4:00 pm PT

Room 820

**British Columbia Institute of Technology
555 Seymour Street, Vancouver, BC**

In Attendance:

Gohar Ashoughian, Simon Fraser University
Jonathan Bengston, University of Victoria
Rita Cavaliere, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Rural Colleges
Mar González Palacios, Simon Fraser University, Host Site Officer
Tania Gottschalk, Thompson Rivers University, Small Universities (Past Chair)
Darcy Gullacher, Trinity Western University, Small Universities
Shirley Lew, Vancouver Community College, Urban Colleges
Brenda Mathenia, University Canada West, Associate Members
Christina Neigel, Capilano University (Chair)
Susan Parker, University of British Columbia
Kenley Neufeld, University of the Fraser Valley, Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions
(attending online)
Ben Ferrel, Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS)

BC ELN Staff:

Sunni Nishimura
Reba Ouimet [Recorder]

Regrets:

None.

Welcome

C. Neigel welcomed attendees as new Chair, noted the turnover in committee membership resulting in the election of a new Vice Chair at today's meeting and introduced K. Neufeld (University of the Fraser Valley) as the new Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions Representative.

1. Adoption of Agenda

B. Ferrel requested the PSFS Update on SFU Service Agreement be moved to the end of the agenda and held in camera without BC ELN staff present (except the Executive Director).

Agenda was adopted as revised.

2. Shared LSP Leadership Group

S. Nishimura provided a status update on the Shared LSP Leadership & Advisory Group membership. The callout for representatives of governance categories to sit on the group went out with the draft Terms of Reference (ToR). Representatives were confirmed during the All Partner Meeting.

The Steering Committee approved Shared LSP Leadership & Advisory Group governance category membership as follows:

- David Alexander – Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions
- Gregg Currie – Rural Colleges
- Ali De Haan – Associate Members
- Vanessa Kam – Small Universities
- Shirley Lew – Urban Colleges

One member from each library affiliated with the originating proposal (SFU/UBC/UVIC) as follows:

- Gohar Ashoughian – SFU
- Susan Parker – UBC
- Dean Seeman - UVic

The BC ELN Office will proceed with setting up the first meeting in the New Year. Outputs from today's All Partner Meeting conversations will be brought to the group for consideration. Initial tasks will be finalizing the ToR and receiving endorsement from the Steering Committee, and identifying funding for the feasibility study.

B. Ferrel noted that the ToR and the composition of the group are siloed within libraries, but it is important to include external stakeholders and bring awareness to specific groups (IT, Finance, etc.) and prepare a plan for how this will happen.

4. Removing Barriers Initiative Update

S. Nishimura provided an update on the Removing Barriers Initiative work to date and status of report:

- Reminder of the goal of the initiative: to identify and prevent barriers within BC ELN structures for Indigenous-led institutions, with funding from the Ministry to support this work.
- Initial consultation with the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) Board confirmed they would like to be involved in discussions around work involving IAHLA institutions and agreed to form a BC ELN-IAHLA Exploratory Group.
- Two Worlds Consulting has been working on a summary of findings to date which is currently completing rounds of feedback; the summary will be presented to the Steering Committee once it is finalised.

In response to a question from T. Gottschalk, S. Nishimura noted that the process thus far has been positive.

5. Library e-Resources Accessibility Portal (LEAP) Pilot

R. Ouimet outlined a proposal brought forward by the BC ELN office to participate in a one-year pilot term of the Ontario Colleges Library Service's (OCLS) Library eResources Accessibility Portal (LEAP) project:

- BC ELN understands the importance of accessibility to our partner libraries and took the opportunity to reach out to OCLS to discuss a potential partnership and leverage the existing infrastructure to support both our strategic goals and membership's needs.
- LEAP has been hosted by OCLS for the last five years and is both an assessment tool and a repository to document and track the accessibility of eResources for further evaluation and advocacy. The assessment tool is based on Ontario's current accessibility legislation which came into effect in 2020.
- Library staff benefit from workload sharing with colleagues and access a growing repository of standardized accessibility reports that library staff can review to make acquisition decisions, support library users, and advocate for accessible E-Resources.
- The pilot term has no financial cost attached, but if successful, there likely will be future financial costs associated with the partnership. Additional considerations are the impact on staff time for training and completion of required minimum assessments per year, and the necessity of completing infrastructure updates to reflect BC's accessibility legislation as the current template only reflects Ontario's legislation.
- If approved, the pilot term would begin on April 1, 2026 with 4-5 libraries participating.
- The LEAP project has strong potential for growth and development in terms of advocacy and potentially even national adoption in the future.

In response to a question about advocacy around vendor E-Resources from S. Lew, R. Ouimet confirmed that this was a future goal of the project, but concentrated advocacy is not yet in practice in LEAP.

There were further questions from C. Neigel and G. Ashoughian, who asked about potential future costs of the partnership and how the costs would be distributed among participating libraries. R. Ouimet clarified that the partnership was not yet formalized, and discussions around costs would happen if the pilot was successful, at which time the Steering Committee would be consulted again.

C. Neigel also inquired about how evaluation would occur for those libraries participating in the pilot. S. Nishimura noted that an evaluation process was not yet in place, but suggestions from the Committee were welcome.

Motion: That the BC ELN Steering Committee approve the recommendation to participate in a one-year pilot term of the Ontario Colleges Library Service's (OCLS) Library eResources Accessibility Portal (LEAP) project.

Moved: S. Lew

Seconded: T. Gottschalk

Motion carried.

6. Vice Chair Election

C. Neigel reminded members of the Steering Committee Terms of Reference procedures for selection of the Vice-Chair:

- The Vice Chair serves from the winter meeting until September 30 of the following year, then moves into the Chair position.
- The Vice Chair is a member of the Executive Committee along with the Chair.
- At end of their term, the Vice Chair becomes Chair and no longer represents a governance category.
- The governance category of the outgoing Vice Chair selects a new representative.
- Past practice is that the Chair identifies someone on the Steering Committee who would be willing to stand for Vice Chair.

C. Neigel noted that there were no nominations for Vice Chair in advance, but thanked B. Mathenia, who put her name forward at the meeting. As it is her second term, the Committee was required to confirm it would be permitted, which they did.

Hearing no objections or further nominations, B. Mathenia was elected as Vice Chair by acclamation.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Wrap Up

The Office will be in touch to schedule the next Steering Committee meeting.

C. Neigel thanked R. Ouimet, who was excused from the meeting.

9. PSFS Update on SFU Service Agreement

Discussion held in camera.