



WriteAway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 26, 2026

9:30-11:00 am PT

Virtual Zoom Meeting

In Attendance:

Julia Lane, Simon Fraser University, Chair

Ignacio Albarracin, College of New Caledonia, Two-Year Representative (Alternate)

Melinda Dewsbury, Trinity Western University, Four-Year Representative

Erin Howard, Camosun College, Two-Year Representative

Rob McTavish, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Four-Year Representative (Alternate)

Trish Rosseel, Douglas College, Member-at-Large (Alternate)

Rachel Tait, University of the Fraser Valley, Member-at-Large

Garima Yadav, Thompson Rivers University, Member-at-Large (left 10:30)

Administrative Centre:

Sunni Nishimura (she/her/hers), BC ELN Executive Director

Cristen Polley (she/her/hers), AskAway Coordinator (Zoom moderator)

Alena Rosen (she/they), WriteAway Support (Recorder)

Regrets:

Gregg Currie, Selkirk College, Two-Year Representative

Nancy Johnson, Douglas College, Member-at-Large

Dennis Stavrou, Northern Lights College, Two-Year Representative

Kim Tomiak, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Four-Year Representative

Tracey Woodburn, Coast Mountain College, Two-Year Representative

1. Introduction and Welcome New Members

J. Lane welcomed committee members and introduced three members joining as alternates for this meeting: Ignacio Albarracin, Rob McTavish, and Trish Rosseel.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted with no changes.

3. BC ELN Administrative Transition Update

S. Nishimura reported that the provincial government has provided direction to transition BC ELN and other program offices (BCcampus, EducationPlannerBC, and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer) to a new public sector organization, with a target date of April 2027. The rationale is to provide a stronger foundation for innovation and collaboration among the sector organizations and help mitigate risk in the current model of hosting at a single institution. The news has been shared with Presidents of public post-secondary institutions and BC ELN library directors.

In response to a question about the involvement of committee chairs in these conversations, S. Nishimura confirmed that chairs of Steering Committees at the four program offices, including BC ELN, have been brought into discussions with PSFS.

4. Service Sustainability

J. Lane introduced this agenda item, noting that institutions are experiencing a range of budget, staffing, and enrollment pressures, that usage patterns are changing, and that students' writing is being affected by the availability of AI tools. J. Lane clarified that the goals for this agenda item were for the committee to understand the context and timeline for sustainability work, and to decide on an option to move forward with as presented in the WriteAway Technical Infrastructure report, included in the agenda package.

4a. Service Context Update

S. Nishimura provided context for the discussion:

- Trend of decreasing student usage post-pandemic has continued and is ongoing.
- Institutional participation has dropped from 21 institutions in 2024 to 17 in 2026/27, with three more (Alexander College, KPU, VCC) leaving by April 2027, bringing the total to 14 participating institutions by May 2027.
- Reasons for withdrawals from the service include budget and staffing pressures, and some note low usage.
- Participation changes affect the Service Support Fee, available staffing hours, and representation in governance categories such as Four-Year Institutions.
- Staffing and fee impacts are expected to begin May 2027, and governance category impacts are expected beginning October 1, 2026; the Admin Centre will report back with further analysis on both.

In discussion, members shared mixed observations on usage at their own institutions, noting both growing reliance by students on AI tools and continued demand for tutors alongside ongoing budget and staffing pressures. S. Nishimura noted that this anticipated context was part

of why the committee undertook its sustainability work to ensure the service stays relevant to changing student needs.

4b. Service Sustainability: Progress Update

S. Nishimura reviewed the sustainability work completed to date:

- Sustainability work was initiated by the Advisory Committee in May 2024 in response to funding availability and the capacity of participating institutions.
- A survey of WriteAway institutions was conducted in summer 2024, informing subsequent sustainability action planning.
- A Service Model Working Group was struck to review the service model; they proposed eight recommendations to the Advisory Committee in November 2025, which the committee approved unanimously (with friendly amendments) for further exploration toward an implementation plan.
- Two recommendations are being worked on concurrently: the Admin Centre has increased tutor response times from 45 to 60 minutes, as recommended, and will report on whether this has affected turnaround times; and the Admin Centre is investigating how tutors can provide feedback on PDF, JPEG, and PPT documents to expand options and access for students.
- The Technical Infrastructure Working Group began work in February 2026 to address recommendations on the technical functionality of the service's software platform.

4c. Technical Infrastructure Working Group Report

J. Lane presented the report of the Technical Infrastructure Working Group, whose members are J. Lane, Evan Daigle (Writing Centre Manager, Alexander College), K. Beres, and S. Nishimura. The working group was tasked with determining whether existing technical infrastructure could support the Service Model Working Group recommendations, including exploring additional Springshare tools. Three options were presented for the committee's consideration:

1. Continue using Springshare's LibAnswers for asynchronous support, and explore synchronous service using LibChat, LibCal, and a centralized video conferencing platform.
2. Design a synchronous pilot using LibChat, LibCal, and a video conferencing platform with a small subset of WriteAway institutions and initiate a software selection process.
3. Make no changes to WriteAway technology and initiate a software selection process.

During the ensuing discussion, members: asked for clarification on how the options related to the working group's recommendations; noted challenges around misuse and monitoring of

synchronous service; and noted that a centrally hosted video solution would be required which might be costly.

T. Rosseel suggested that a more measured approach may be appropriate given current uncertainty, while noting that even Option 3 represents significant work. I. Albarracin commented that maintaining the status quo does not seem sustainable, and that it is important to demonstrate WriteAway's willingness to evolve. In response to a question about capacity, S. Nishimura confirmed that, with Ministry transition funding, the Admin Centre has the capacity to support this work.

MOTION: To move forward with Option 2, as presented in the WriteAway Technical Infrastructure Working Group report.

Moved: E. Howard

Seconded: T. Rosseel

Motion is carried unanimously.

5. Service Update

The Admin Centre will send the detailed service update out with the approved minutes via email.

6. New Business

No new business was raised.

7. Next Meeting

The Admin Centre will follow up by email to schedule a special purpose meeting to discuss the next steps following the approved motion.

The next regular Advisory Committee meeting will be held in November 2026.