



## BC ELN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, July 6, 2021

**9:30 am to 12:30 pm**  
**Virtual Meeting**

### **In Attendance:**

Jonathan Bengtson, University of Victoria  
Gwen Bird, Simon Fraser University  
Ali de Haan, Acsenda School of Management, *Associate Members*  
Natalie Gick, Simon Fraser University (Host Site Officer)  
Darcy Gullacher, Trinity Western University, *Small Universities*  
Brenda Mathenia, College of the Rockies, *Rural Colleges*  
Susan Parker, University of British Columbia (Chair)  
Trish Rosseel, Douglas College, *Urban Colleges*  
Debbie Schachter, Capilano University, *Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions*

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Ben Ferrel, AEST  
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

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BC ELN Staff:  
Anita Cocchia  
Leah Hopton  
Jane Jun (Recorder)  
Sunni Nishimura (Moderator)  
Cristen Polley  
Vaughn Postgate

### **Regrets:**

Julie Mitchell, University of British Columbia

### **Introductions**

S. Parker opened the meeting with a self-introduction, welcomed and introduced attendees, and made a land acknowledgement, stating that she was joining from the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) People. B. Ferrel, Executive Director, Post-Secondary Digital Policy and Programs Branch, and BC ELN's new Ministry representative, was welcomed to the committee.

## 1. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as approved.

## 2. Ministry Report

B. Ferrel shared the Ministry report.

The Ministry received an updated Minister's (four-year) Mandate Letter, which communicates priorities for the Minister and expectations for what the Ministry will deliver.

All post-secondary policy areas were consolidated under Assistant Deputy Minister Nicola Lemmer (Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division) providing an opportunity to consolidate who in the Ministry was supporting the sector organizations and agencies such as BC ELN.

Return-to-campus COVID-19 guidelines were posted July 5<sup>th</sup>. These reflect the re-start plan from a public health officer perspective.

Post-secondary education is a critical component of the Province's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly given that the majority of forecast job openings require some level of post-secondary credential.

B. Ferrel explained he is currently acting Executive Director for the Post-secondary Digital Policy and Programs Branch. The branch's focus is on how Ministry services are being delivered via digital platforms and will be developing a strategic vision for how digital platforms support the delivery of public services supporting post-secondary learners and job seekers.

The three main buckets of work for the branch are:

- Developing and implementing a Post-secondary Digital Services Strategy
- Working with the post-secondary system to develop a Digital Learning Strategy
- Supporting the administration of four organizations supporting the post-secondary system (BC ELN, BCCAT, BCcampus, and EducationPlannerBC)

For the Digital Learning Strategy, the Ministry is collaborating closely with 15 post-secondary institution sector representatives and has formed the Digital Learning Advisory Committee. The committee will work on areas such as quality assurance, digital literacy and skills, and how to improve access and success in post-secondary education using digital learning models.

B. Ferrel expressed a desire to foster more collaboration between the four sector supporting organizations and believes there is a lot of potential to leverage the

interesting work of the organizations to collectively improve access and outcomes in post-secondary education in BC.

In response to a question about priorities of the Digital Learning Advisory Committee and who was on it:

- B. Ferrel listed names of committee members and mentioned that they were seeking to involve individuals in a range of system roles specializing in online technology, including senior administrators as well as faculty and practitioners in the instructional design space.
- He then noted that the Ministry was working to understand what the role of the Provincial government is in supporting system-level and institutional needs.
- Some immediate priorities included establishing a common lexicon (e.g. what is digital learning), identifying guidelines and policies to support quality assurance, and ensuring policies are in place to ensure digital safety in an online environment.

### **3. Interlibrary Loans for Associate Members**

S. Parker introduced and provided context for this agenda item. She reiterated that while Associate Members are eligible to join most BC ELN services, decision-making on whether they could join Illume was on hold until Interlibrary Loan (ILL) structural improvements were in place. With those pieces now complete, the Steering Committee identified at the May 27th meeting the information it required to support decision-making on ILL for Associate Members.

The BC ELN Office shared the information requested via email in advance of the meeting and A. Cocchia was invited to provide a brief synopsis of how the information was gathered and what was learned:

- Associate member information was collected through individual phone calls, a survey, and a group virtual meeting on current and future Interlibrary loan needs, as well as their interest and ability to participate in the Illume Service.
- 3 of 6 Associate members have both interest in joining the Illume service and the stated ability to meet both the Benefits & Responsibilities and Best Practices for SHAREit Academic Libraries.
- This includes a commitment to work within the load-leveling framework that has been agreed to by all Illume participants. The load-leveling approach is that all ILL requests go first to the smallest institution that has the item, and only go to net lenders, typically our largest participants, last.
- Another key finding was that currently Associate Members provide very limited interlibrary loans (less than 15 per year for one institution) or have no interlibrary loans service.

- Projected Borrowers will primarily consist of Faculty & Staff, with one institution including research students (approximately 5 students).
- Projected usage range per site was approximately 10 to 50 non-returnable loan requests (articles) a year and 5-20 returnable (loan) requests.

The Office also carefully reviewed the Benefits & Responsibilities, and one additional criterion was added which addresses the need for adequate and trained library staff to support the service.

Support to allow Associate Members to join Illume was expressed by T. Rosseel and G. Bird.

**MOTION: To approve amending the Illume Benefits & Responsibilities as presented.**

Moved: B. Mathenia

Seconded: D. Gullacher

**Motion carried.**

**MOTION: To allow Associate Members that meet criteria outlined in the Benefits & Responsibilities to join the Illume Interlibrary Loan service.**

Moved: D. Schacter

Seconded: T. Rosseel

**Motion carried.**

#### **4. AskAway Report**

D. Schachter, Chair of the AskAway Advisory Committee, shared the report on recent AskAway's activities:

- To meet increased usage, participating libraries contributed additional hours to the collaborative schedule using tiered staffing commitments endorsed by the Advisory Committee.
- Service start and end dates were extended in response to the needs of libraries and their users, and the service remained open for an additional 30 days in 2021.
- Looking ahead to the Fall term, participating institutions have expressed interest in opening two weeks early in September when classes begin; a survey will be sent out to gather input on term dates from all libraries. Work is being done by the Advisory Committee on setting staffing commitments for the Fall term.
- A Proactive Chat Pilot is planned for Summer 2021. Proactive chat is a way to reach out to students and offer research help as they navigate the library website or a database and has proven through similar pilot programs to increase student engagement. Recommendations from the pilot are anticipated to be shared out with institutions in the case that they move forward with proactive chat.

D. Schacter commended libraries for stepping up to accommodate the new schedules and maintaining strong staffing levels. She brought attention to positive feedback from students that AskAway is a core service that keeps them connected and helps them succeed.

B. Ferrell inquired if there was an opportunity to see any metrics in terms of the number of chat sessions and mentioned that the team he works with would be interested in this data. C. Polley shared a link to AskAway statistics and noted that there is a researcher at UBC examining AskAway transcripts that will be including library researchers across the province. She welcomed anyone with questions to contact her.

T. Rosseel commented that proactive chat was very effective at the University of Alberta, and she anticipates it will be a successful pilot. She had a question about how AskAway would handle traffic should it increase significantly. C. Polley responded a summer pilot was intentional as traffic is slower. There are various options in place to filter and manage traffic should there be any significant increase. Recommendations from the pilot will be shared first with the Advisory Committee, and then AskAway participants.

## **5. Strategic planning: Needs, Wants, Approach**

L. Hopton from the BC ELN Office facilitated discussion around Strategic Planning. With the current strategic plan to wrap up in 2021, the purpose of this session was to provide the Steering Committee with an opportunity to discuss expectations and ideas for the upcoming strategic planning process and future plan.

Through small group conversations, the committee discussed points put forth in the article "[The Strategic Plan is Dead. Long Live Strategy.](#)" and how these might relate to BC ELN strategic planning. The committee brainstormed ideas to guide both the process leading up to the plan and the plan itself. Some general themes that emerged from the conversations were: desire for a more flexible approach to the plan, interest in including a broad range of stakeholders (including adjacent service agencies), desire for transparency and consideration of social contexts (e.g. looking to Ministry mandate letters, decolonization work, anti-racism movements, etc.), and using the plan as a tool for engagement both with partner library staff and with committee members.

L. Hopton thanked everyone for their participation and noted that this conversation would be followed up with opportunities for all partner libraries to be involved in the strategic planning process.

## **6. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **7. Wrap Up**

S. Parker noted that next Steering Committee meeting would be a Zoom Meeting following the All Partner meeting in early December and the date and details of the meeting would be shared in September.