



STRATEGIC PLAN – 2020-2022

ADOPTED BY THE NELF BOARD – 2019 NOVEMBER 20

For over 12 years, the North East Library Federation has been a partnership between libraries in the North East region of British Columbia. The public libraries in Chetwynd, Fort Nelson, Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope, Pouce Coupe, Taylor and Tumbler Ridge are members of the Federation.

WHAT IS INFORMING THE 2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Why is the federation still relevant?

- ✓ Buying power
- ✓ More voice
- ✓ We are stronger together
- ✓ We learn from each other / mentorship
- ✓ The connections we have build trust and confidence and help address the sense of isolation

What's different in the regional environment since the development of the last plan?

- The economy in the region
 - curtailments and mill closures,
 - the Cariboo Recovery Program will impact resource-based industries in our region as well as tourism,
 - there is not as much money in towns and a decline in population – people are fearing for the longevity of their communities,
 - More work is more part-time and casual and at the same time we are also seeing an increase in itinerant workers working out of camps,
 - the increase in the minimum wage has put pressure on many small and medium sized businesses,
 - there is more focus on Occupational Health and Safety matters
- Social media!
- More people want to have a say
- Mental health and addiction/the opioid crisis and pressure for libraries to provide safe spaces
- Service BC and Service Canada don't exist in small centres, banks continue to close – these agencies are directing people to the local public library for online access. Libraries are busier - more use of computers/printing – books are not #1 anymore, but programs are still important
- Increased gap between wages paid by local government and what library workers are paid
- Our population continues to become diverse and is also aging
- Technology

Areas of Focus for Our Key Funder:

- Making life more affordable
- Delivering quality programs that people count on
- Increasing opportunities for people to be involved and connected in their communities
- Fostering social inclusion and reducing the impacts of poverty and inequality

What the Board Hopes to See in the Next Plan:

- ✓ Continued support for shared resources and consortium purchasing
- ✓ A focus on professional development support for library trustees and staff
- ✓ Continued support for programming
- ✓ The federation manager continuing to play a key role

One Comment that Resonated with Everyone:

“We come from independent communities and serve on independent library boards. We share values and network regionally. We know each other and that helps address the sense of isolation we sometimes feel.”

OUR MISSION:

A collaborative network dedicated to creating opportunities to strengthen our libraries.

OUR VISION:

Strong libraries: Strong Communities

OUR VALUES:

- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Equality
- ✓ Community and Collaboration
- ✓ Being Accountable

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- ✓ Building Capacity
- ✓ Sharing Resources and Increasing Access
- ✓ Strengthening Relationships
- ✓ Increasing the Awareness of the Value of Public Libraries to the Communities They Serve
- ✓ Governance

Priority One: Building Capacity

Delivering and supporting board professional development – particularly in the areas of trustee orientation and training, advocacy, and fundraising

Working with the BCLTA to ensure that all trustees in the federation have the opportunity to complete the training offered through the BCLTA Governance Workshops

Supporting and delivering professional development for staff – online and in person
Continuing to deliver programs designed to meet the unique needs of library directors working in member libraries

Supporting effectiveness in grant report writing

Measures of success:

- ✓ Most trustees in the NELF region have participated in BCLTA Governance Workshops as well as in other trustee professional development opportunities.
- ✓ Boards are more confident and effective in matters relating to their governance role.
- ✓ Impact reports submitted by participants demonstrate the value of these programs.
- ✓ Pre and post evaluations show the affect of training.
- ✓ Feedback from the province on member libraries’ annual grant reports indicates improvement.

- ✓ The role of the federation is better understood.

Priority Two: Sharing Resources and Increasing Access

Expanding options for consortium purchases to include other database options and offer more products beyond library cards, labels, etc. used by libraries

Creating templates for developing, delivering and evaluating programs and other services, potentially using the **Measures that Matter** approach

Continuing to support initiatives such as the Book Club Set program as well as looking for other opportunities to share material resources

Exploring options to provide programming with a technology focus that will reinforce the idea of the library as a community technology hub – a travelling “Tech Petting Zoo” and/or AR related equipment

Measures of success:

- ✓ A comparison of prices for items purchased with and without consortium pricing quantifies the advantage of consortium purchasing for libraries.
- ✓ Member libraries have developed more consistent methods of reporting on patron feedback which better supports member boards’ advocacy efforts.
- ✓ Member libraries are recognized as community technology hubs – more than just places to access the Internet and print

Priority Three: Strengthening Relationships

Maintaining the annual face-to-face meeting and holding additional shorter, more strategically focused meetings via ZOOM.

Ensuring that NELF Board representatives report back to their boards on NELF activities

Facilitating communications among libraries and encouraging and supporting joint board meetings among neighbouring libraries – emphasizing the importance of “neighbour to neighbour” connections

Building relationships with BCLTA, BCLA and ABCPLD by working together with these organizations on professional development activities that support both member boards and library staff

Measures of success:

- ✓ Member libraries report that they are holding joint board meetings among neighbouring libraries.
- ✓ NELF is valued by BCLTA, BCLA and ABCPLD and is seen to be a supportive partner in improving board governance and deepening staff competencies.

Priority Four: Increasing the Awareness of the Value of Public Libraries to the Communities They Serve

Creating a communication plan for all libraries in the region to use for telling their library’s story to local and provincial government funders via the data collected, sample letters on a variety of topics including requests for funding, and a list of key contacts – ministers, ministry staff and the opposition critics

Measures of success:

- ✓ Resources are available and being used
- ✓ Member boards indicate that they are more confident in their communications with funders

- ✓ Funders demonstrate a greater understanding of the value of their local public library and there is increased interest in and engagement with the public library and improvements in support

Priority Five: Enhancing Governance

As the federation's only employee, the Manager is important to the success of the NELF. It is important that the manager have a current job description and that there is a performance evaluation process in place

Measures of success:

- ✓ The manager has a current job description
- ✓ The board has developed a board policy to address the performance evaluation process for the manager – ideally in collaboration with the NCLF
- ✓ A performance evaluation has been completed for the manager

Conclusion:

The North East Library Federation's 2020-2022 Strategic Plan is intended to guide our organizational priorities for professional development, resource sharing and increasing access, strengthening relationships, supporting advocacy and enhancing governance over the next three years. The Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that the intended actions are being completed in a timely manner and to accommodate any shift in priorities. The Plan has a three-year term and will be reviewed and renewed near the end of 2022.