



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026

Since 2007, the North Central Library Federation (NCLF) has been a partnership among libraries in the North Central region of British Columbia. The public libraries in Burns Lake, the Cariboo Regional District, Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, Granisle, Mackenzie, McBride, Prince George, Valemount and Vanderhoof are members of the Federation.

### WHAT IS INFORMING THE 2024-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN?

#### *Changes in the operating environment since the last plan*

- Reopening following the emergency phase of COVID; in-person services
- Static provincial operating grant not keeping pace with inflation
- One-time COVID and enhancement grants from the province
- Regional economic factors:
  - mill closures and curtailments
  - there is not as much money in towns and a decline in population - people are fearing for the longevity of their communities
  - rise in part-time/casual labour, and camp-based itinerant workers
  - increased minimum wage pressure on many small and medium sized businesses
- More government and community services, including Service BC and Service Canada, directing clients to libraries, creating more demand for public access computers and expectations for library staff assistance
- Climate change
  - Increased potential for service interruption due to forest fires
  - Greater emphasis on emergency preparedness knowledge and planning
  - Demand on libraries for such non-traditional services as cooling centres
- Technology issues, including greater reliance on virtual environment despite ongoing connectivity issues
- Growing mental health needs and the opioid crisis challenge libraries to balance access with safety
- Increased gap between wages paid by local government and what library workers are paid
- Northern population continues to become diverse, and is also aging
- Increased collaboration between all federations
- NCLF director based outside federation region

### *Areas of Focus for Our Key Funder*

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

### *Our Mission*

The North Central Library Federation: working together to strengthen libraries, improve literacy and build stronger communities in the north central region of BC.

### *Our Vision*

Vibrant libraries; thriving communities.

### *Our Values*

- Transparency
- Equality
- Accountability
- Collaboration

---

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Priority 1: Building Capacity

Goal 1.1: Deepen Library Director Knowledge Through Interaction and Networking

a) Develop a funded peer-to-peer program to support library director learning and sharing of best practices.

❖ Responsibility: Director and LDAG; Timeline: 2024-2026

Goal 1.2: Plan, Deliver and Evaluate Professional Development Opportunities for Library Staff

a) Conduct a needs assessment for training and investigate learning possibilities including those through inter-federation collaboration.

❖ Responsibility: Director and LDAG; Timeline: Ongoing

Goal 1.3: Streamline Operational and Administrative Processes to Maximize Fiscal and Organizational Resources

a) Conduct an operational review of the federation to identify and simplify processes

b) Explore merging the NCLF with the North East Library Federation to reduce administrative duplication and create a stronger, larger organization for the north.

❖ Responsibility: Director, trustees, LDAG; Timeline: 2024-2025

*Measures of success:*

- *Library directors report developing a stronger sense of teamwork, and incorporate new perspectives and approaches in their work*
- *Library staff report expanding their knowledge and skills and successfully applying them in the workplace*

- *Federation director increases available time for exploring new initiatives and higher level activities*
- *Board makes a decision on merger that is informed by a written report/evaluation*

## Priority 2: Sharing Resources and Expanding Access

### Goal 2.1: Expand Shared Resources Among Member Libraries

a) Strengthen NCLF OverDrive Advantage Collection (OAC) through a dedicated budget line and a new staff-comprised selection committee.

- ❖ Responsibility: Director and LDAG; Timeline: 2024

b) Investigate new databases and services, and coordinate trial opportunities for LDAG

- ❖ Responsibility: Director, LDAG; Timeline: Ongoing

c) Explore the feasibility of shared professional services in such areas as legal and human resources

- ❖ Responsibility: Director, LDAG; Timeline: 2024

### Goal 2.2: Maintain Support for Higher Priority Consortium Purchases

a) Continue budget allocation for book club sets and summer touring performers

- ❖ Responsibility: Director; Timeline: Ongoing

b) Review 2024 budget priorities survey and draft evaluation of products to retain or eliminate

- ❖ Responsibility: Director and LDAG; Timeline: 2024

#### *Measures of success:*

- *Expansion of NCLF OAC, and higher patron satisfaction from further reduced hold queues*
- *Libraries offer new digital products that reflect changing patron needs*
- *Report prepared for LDAG on possible professional services models*
- *Existing products evaluated and report prepared for LDAG*

## Priority 3: Strengthening Relationships

### Goal 3.1: Increase Trustee Interaction

a) Encourage and support joint board meetings among neighbouring member libraries and federations

- ❖ Responsibility: Director and trustees; Timeline: Ongoing

### Goal 3.2: Expand Communication Between Libraries

a) Create a regular newsletter highlighting regional events, training opportunities, advocacy initiatives, and information of interest to member libraries

- ❖ Responsibility: Director and LDAG; Timeline: 2024 and ongoing

b) Maintain one in-person board/LDAG meeting per year, and shorter, more strategically focused meetings virtually

- ❖ Responsibility: Director, board and LDAG; Timeline: Ongoing

c) Establish joint NCLF-NELF monthly roundtable discussions with topics contributed by LDAG

❖ Responsibility: Director, LDAG; Timeline: 2024-

*Measures of success:*

- *Trustees express increased confidence and engagement through shared knowledge and experiences*
- *Libraries contribute newsletter content and acquire new ideas; public awareness of the federation's role increases*
- *Series of roundtable topics scheduled, and session recordings shared with libraries*

## Priority 4: Governance, Leadership and Accountability

Goal 4.1: Strengthen Trustee Knowledge and Engagement

a) Conduct a needs assessment of trustee training, focusing on orientation, recruitment and advocacy; and plan and deliver training

Responsibility: Director; Trustees; Timeline: Ongoing

Goal 4.2: Complete a NCLF Policy Review

a) Evaluate existing policies and identify policy gaps

b) Draft revised and new policies as appropriate for board review and approval

Responsibility: Director; Trustees; Timeline: 2024

Goal 4.3: Explore Initiatives Related to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, and to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

a) Identify and coordinate training opportunities

b) Work with other federations to coordinate speakers

Responsibility: Director, trustees, library directors; Timeline: 2024-2026

*Measures of Success:*

- *Trustees complete training that supports effective governance, and post-training evaluations demonstrate positive impact*
- *Board approves a new policy manual that reflects current governance best practices*
- *Trustees, library directors and federation director participate in learning opportunities and express positive impact in post-training surveys*

## Conclusion

The North Central Library Federation's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan is intended to guide our organizational priorities for building capacity, sharing resources and increasing access, strengthening relationships, supporting advocacy and enhancing governance over the next three years. By the end of 2026, the completed goals will ensure the federation and its member libraries continue to be an effective organization in the support of northern BC public library services. 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 will be reviewed and renewed near the end of 2026.