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|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| SPARWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION<br><b>STATEMENT of POLICIES</b> |                                   | Page:              | 1 of 4                  |
| Chapter:  | <b>GOVERNANCE</b>                 | SP No.             | <b>B.1</b>              |
| Subject:  | <b>B.C. Public Library System</b> | Date Approved:     | <b>February 5, 2024</b> |
| Issued by:  | <b>Board Trustees</b>             | Subject to Review: | <b>2025</b>             |
| Replaces:   |                                   | Dated:             |                         |

## POLICY

### BRITISH COLUMBIA PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Public Libraries Branch supports B.C.'s public library system, including the **SPLA**, by working with service partners, library-related organizations, and federations. The Library Act provides the mandate for the ministry's role, which is to promote the improvement and extension of public library services.

There are 71 public libraries in B.C and 6 library federations. B.C. has a mixture of five types of library systems.

#### Public library associations: 36

- Public library associations are the first type of library the Act recognizes. Most libraries throughout the province are a public library association, including the **SPLA**.
- A public library association board may consist of elected government officials and elected library members (residents).
- The Library Act no longer allows the creation of public library associations.

#### Municipal libraries: 30

- Any municipality may create its own public library.
- The municipality appoints members to the library board.

#### Regional district library systems: 3

- A regional library system service agreement is between two or more municipalities and one or more regional districts. Regional and municipal elected representatives from participating local governments make up the regional library system's board.

#### Integrated public library systems: 2

- Integrated library systems are a historic type of library that are recognized by the Library Act. They exist only in the Cariboo and Thompson-Nicola Regional Districts.
- These systems are departments within their regional districts and are managed by the regional district board through the regional district staff.
- The Library Act no longer allows the creation of integrated library systems.

#### Library Federations: 6

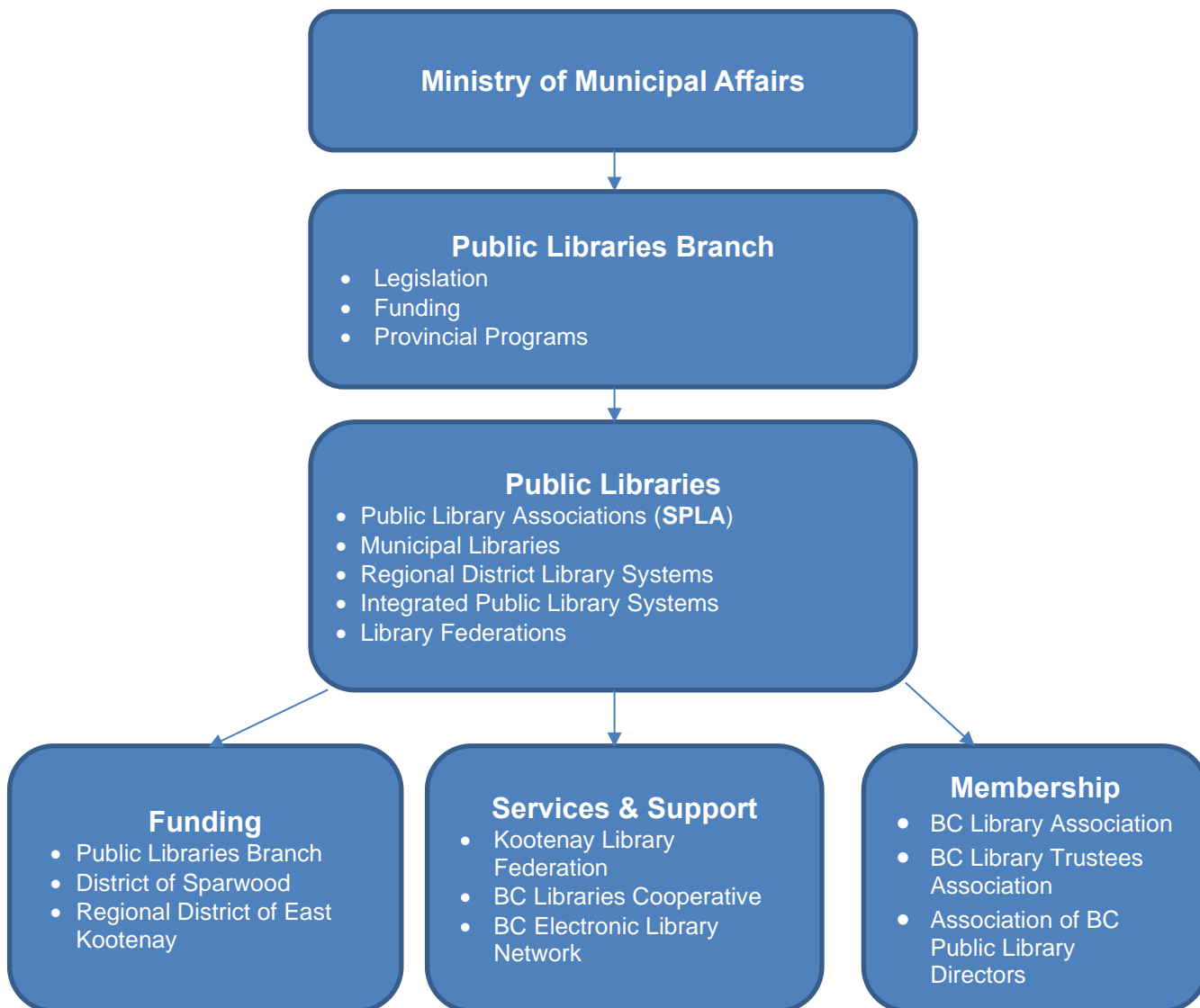
- A library federation is a group of library boards in a similar geographic area that came together to provide library service to its member libraries and communities. The **SPLA** is a member of the Kootenay Library Federation.
- A library board manages the library federation, while a coordinator or manager administers the operations of the federation.
- Library federations are created when two or more library boards enter into a written agreement, which must be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. (See [Section 49](#) of the Library Act.)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Director's Guide – A Guide for B.C. Public Library Directors April 2020 v.1 p.8, 10-11

|   |                                   |                    |                         |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| SPARWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION<br><b>STATEMENT of POLICIES</b> |                                   | Page:              | 2 of 4                  |
| Chapter:  | <b>GOVERNANCE</b>                 | SP No.             | <b>B.1</b>              |
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### British Columbia Public Library System



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|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| SPARWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION<br>STATEMENT of POLICIES |                                   | Page:              | 3 of 4                  |
| Chapter:   | <b>GOVERNANCE</b>                 | SP No.             | <b>B.1</b>              |
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## Library-Related Organizations

### B.C. Libraries Cooperative

All B.C. libraries are members of the B.C. Libraries Cooperative (known as the “Co-op”); a national member-owned social enterprise with a mandate to make it easier and more affordable for libraries to access the technology and expertise needed to deliver services to their communities. The B.C. Libraries Cooperative’s core funding is provided by the Public Libraries Branch. It provides IT infrastructure including:

- The Sitka Evergreen Integrated Library System (ILS). Sitka Evergreen is an open-source software that helps library users discover resources and helps library staff to manage, catalogue, and circulate those resources. It is similar to a “point-of-sale” system for the library. The **SPLA** uses the Sitka Evergreen system.
- LibPress website hosting and coordinated licensing of electronic resources. The **SPLA** uses LibPress to host its website.
- The National Network for Equitable Library Services (NNELS); digital platforms for special collections including accessible digital materials for print-disabled users. It also supports interlibrary loans. The B.C. Interlibrary Connect Zone allows patrons in libraries that use the Sitka library system to borrow items across the province.

### B.C. Electronic Library Network (BC ELN)

The B.C. Electronic Library Network operates with core funding from the Public Libraries Branch and provides support is provided for Illume; an interlibrary loan service between public and post-secondary libraries in B.C and Yukon. The **SPLA** uses Illume.

### B.C. Library Association (BCLA)

The B.C. Library Association is a non-profit member association that furthers the interests of libraries and represents individual and institutional members. BCLA receives core funding from the Public Libraries Branch and offers opportunities for discussion, debate, and activities pertinent to libraries and the Association. It provides professional development for members and advocates for issues that support members, libraries, and the community. It is a leader in B.C.’s library community in advocacy, professional development, and support of intellectual freedom. BCLA organizes the B.C. Library Conference, the province’s largest conference for librarians, board trustees and library workers.

### B.C. Library Trustees Association (BCLTA)

The B.C. Library Trustees Association is a non-profit society and the professional association of trustees governing public libraries across the province. Funded by the Public Library Branch, it supports effective library governance, represents the shared provincial interests of library boards, and connects board trustees with each other and with other library-related organizations (known as “the Partners”.) BCLTA delivers governance workshops throughout the province, helping library board trustees better understand the role of library boards, the provincial and legislative context and board mechanics. The **SPLA** is a member of the BCLTA at an estimated annual cost of \$350.00. Resources for board trustees are located on its website at

<https://www.bclta.ca/>

|   |                                   |                    |                         |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
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### **Association of B.C. Public Library Directors (ABCPLD)**

The Association of B.C. Public Library Directors is a non-profit society and the professional association of library directors governing libraries across the province. The annual fee is based on the area population. The ABCPLD provides an online communications network and hosts in-person events for library directors to connect, ask questions and support one another. It provides leadership for representing the public library sector to governments; it provides a venue for sharing knowledge of practices; and it provides idea generation for cooperative solutions among libraries.<sup>2</sup>

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Statement of Policies is to outline the role of the **SPLA** in the BC Public Library System including an explanation of the supporting organizations and associations.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Board has the responsibility for ensuring this policy is made known to and understood by any person who is assigned to revise this Statement of Policies.

### **PROCEDURE**

The Board of Trustees to confirm in writing that they have been provided and are familiar with the policy manual and the bylaws.

The **SPLA** Policy Committee to do an annual review of the policy manual and the bylaws.

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<sup>2</sup> Director's Guide – A Guide for B.C. Public Library Directors April 2020 v.1 p.20-21