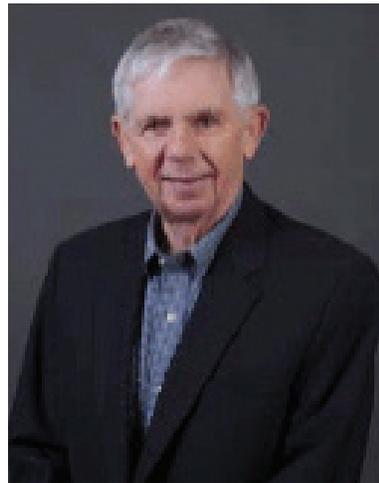


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# INTRODUCTION



Over the past six months, Dr. Thornton and her team have worked with volunteers to develop a comprehensive three-year strategic plan for the Learning for Life organization. Using the five strategic pillars as a starting point, her team and task force began the process by surveying LFL employees, volunteers, customers, and committee members. Following several reviews and revisions, our task force decided on 15 strategic goals, supported by 81 tactical steps, to be completed over the next three years.

The 2016–2019 Learning for Life strategic plan identifies the organization’s true customers (youth, parents, businesses/organizations, volunteers, educators, and schools) and their needs, while identifying the optimal channel and approach to satisfy those needs.

The LFL team has clearly identified the needs of 21st-century learners and has laid out comprehensive modernization plans beginning with rebranding the programs and updating the website.

We are excited to introduce the 2016–2019 Learning for Life strategic plan, and we have high expectations that it will enable us to serve more youth than we could have previously imagined.

**Fred Markham**

Chairman, National Learning for Life Executive Board



As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Learning for Life, I am pleased to share our 2016–2019 strategic plan. Although we have witnessed many changes and challenges in the U.S. education system over the past several years, the one constant we see is the need to provide a solution that educates the whole child and truly prepares children for the real world.

The combination of our pre-K to grade 12 integrated academic, leadership, and character development curriculum with our career-focused Exploring program is unmatched in providing the foundation necessary for college and workforce development.

We are updating our content while pursuing new markets and partnerships. Exploring has a new, refreshed look with a new logo and website. We've placed greater emphasis on the engagement of our volunteers.

We appreciate the support provided by our National Learning for Life Executive Board, the Exploring career field committees, the LFL Strategic Plan Task Force, the National Council's LFL/Exploring staff, and dozens of other field and National Council executives that allowed us to develop such a comprehensive plan.

**Dr. Diane E. Thornton**  
National Director, Learning for Life



## NATIONAL LEARNING FOR LIFE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Fred Markham** | Chairman  
**Mark Wiesenbahn** | Vice Chairman  
**Tom Whalen** | Secretary  
**Bray Barnes** | Treasurer  
**John Astrab**

**Keith Clark**  
**William "Bill" Grogg**  
**Larry Lewis, Ph.D.**  
**Marie Morris, Ph.D.**

## CAREER FIELD COMMITTEES

**Arts and Humanities**  
**Aviation**  
**Business**  
**Communications**  
**Engineering**  
**Fire/Emergency Service**

**Health**  
**Law and Government**  
**Law Enforcement**  
**Science**  
**Skilled Trades**  
**Social Services**

## NATIONAL LEARNING FOR LIFE STAFF

**Dr. Diane E. Thornton** | National Director  
**Tim Anderson** | Senior Team Leader of Exploring  
**Kristen Falatko** | Director of Exploring  
**Susan Fitzhugh** | Senior Administrative Assistant  
**Anissa Hicks** | Project Coordinator

**Justin Lewter** | Director of Exploring  
**Brooke Parkinson** | Senior Project Manager  
**Angela Sanchez** | Director of Curriculum-Based Learning  
**Bill Taylor** | Director of Exploring

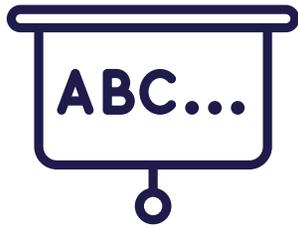
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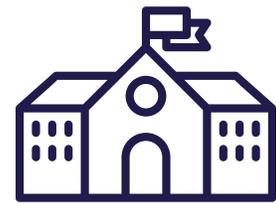
# HOW DO WE DEFINE STUDENT SUCCESS?

“It’s a long-term process that educates the whole child.”





“It begins in the pre-K and elementary years ...”



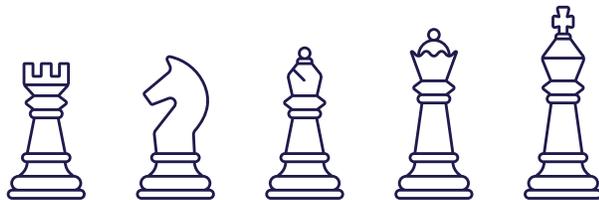
“... and continues through the middle grades, ...”



“... and is measured by how well we’ve prepared children for the real world.”

## LEARNING FOR LIFE 2016-2019 STRATEGIC PILLARS

- I. Developing Partnerships for Learning for Life Programs
- II. Exploring
- III. Governance and Finance
- IV. Learning for Life Curriculum-Based Program
- V. Marketing and Technology





## MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS



### MISSION

To develop and deliver engaging, research-based academic, character, leadership, and career-focused programs aligned to state and national standards that guide and enable all students to achieve their full potential.



### PRE-K-12 VISION

To provide engaging and relevant pre-K-12 solutions that positively impact academic performance, social and emotional maturity, character development, and career education for all students.



### CAREER EXPLORING VISION

To shape the workforce of tomorrow by engaging and mentoring today's youth in career and life-enhancing opportunities.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



YOUTH FOCUSED



CUSTOMER ORIENTED



PROACTIVE



INNOVATIVE



PROFESSIONAL



QUALITY DRIVEN



FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE



CLEAR AND DIRECT  
IN OUR COMMUNICATIONS

# PILLAR 1

## DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING FOR LIFE PROGRAMS (Curriculum-based and Exploring)

The development of national partnerships for both the Exploring and Learning for Life curriculum-based programs will be vital in the overall success in growth for both programs. This pillar will specifically focus on:

1. Identifying pathways for both programs.
2. Creating levels of support with a focus on national organizations to drive membership growth.
3. Identifying and developing a process that will empower the executive board and LFL staff to recruit local, area, regional, and national partnerships to help deliver the programs.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### 1. Identify pathways to each of the 12 career fields to grow the Exploring program and the curriculum-based programs.

- a. Develop relationships with the following 12 career fields to grow Exploring membership: arts and humanities, aviation, business, communications, engineering and technology, fire and emergency services, health, law and government, law enforcement, science, skilled trades, and social services. **August 2017**
- b. Identify out of those career fields the point of contact to start a conversation for potential partnership with LFL, focusing on four career fields per year for three years. **December 2019**
- c. Develop relationships with three new education partners for the Learning for Life curriculum-based program. **December 2018**

**2. Create appropriate levels of support with national-level organizations and businesses to drive Exploring membership growth.**

- a. **2016–2017:** Skilled trades, health, business, and engineering and technology
- b. **2017–2018:** Aviation, law and government, science, and communications
- c. **2018–2019:** Law enforcement, fire and emergency services, social services, and arts and humanities

**3. Identify and create a process that will empower the Learning for Life executive board and LFL staff to recruit and deliver on the LFL programs for partnerships.**

- a. Identify, vet, and recruit a team of volunteers to assist in the initial stages of the development of the process plan. **December 2016**
- b. Create the customer service process for continual engagement to the developing partnerships committee. **December 2016**
- c. Define and develop an internal process for success, owned and delivered by the national-level volunteers. **December 2016**



## PILLAR 2 EXPLORING

The overall goal of the Exploring pillar of the strategic plan is to grow and serve the Exploring program. The growth of Exploring will depend on our ability to collaborate with national, regional, area, council, and district volunteers, as well as professionals on all levels. This collaboration will ensure that we engage local councils, assisting them in methods to effectively conduct career interest surveys or gather existing data from youth-serving organizations, such as schools. Exploring growth will further the immediate need to update trainings, enhance Exploring resources, and develop new resources and meeting structures in order to meet the needs of potential community, business, and school partners.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Review the current Exploring program development process and enhance the use of the “All-in-One Program Planning Meeting” by creating specific lesson plans in targeted career fields.**

We have identified the most popular/relevant career fields with the greatest projected demand for the 21st century. Based on national data on workforce development, we are starting our online database with activities to support posts and clubs in these career fields first, as they have the greatest potential for growth. Included in this approach is the examination and review of activities to share that are currently being utilized by posts and clubs in the field, and the evaluation of new activities that could help to enhance the Explorers’ overall experience for posts and clubs in these respective career fields. These activities will include life skills lessons to round out the learning opportunities for every Explorer.



Our evaluation of post and club activities includes anecdotal and possible beta testing of other delivery methods, i.e., time of service, fee schedules, and online opportunities for rural Explorers.

- a. Create and deliver five to 10 activity plans in each career field for the Exploring Activity Library, an online collection of activity plans. **March 2017**
    - i. Create and deliver specific activities for careers in round one of the activity library development: engineering (general), automotive technology, and health care (general). **September 2016**
    - ii. Create and deliver specific activities for careers in round two of the activity library development: veterinary sciences, culinary arts, and business (general). **December 2016**
    - iii. Create and deliver specific activities for careers in round three of the activity library development, ensuring sufficient program content for each field: law enforcement, fire and emergency services, and aviation. **March 2017**
    - iv. Identify and consider creating and delivering additional activity plans for more career field activity development in rounds four and five, as needed. **April 2017**
    - v. Update and deliver the Career Opportunity Worksheet for each of the 12 career fields. **January 2017**
    - vi. Update and deliver the Career Achievement Award for each of the 12 career fields. **March 2017**
  
  - b. Provide opportunities for Exploring leaders to readily integrate leadership and character development into post or club meetings, utilizing the *Exploring Guidebook* and an online database, to include the following: life skill lessons, goal setting, time management, and conflict resolution. **Ongoing**
    - i. Provide an easy online tool for posts and clubs across the country to share best ideas for career-specific activity plans, allowing these activity plans to be rated and publicized by other post Advisors or club Sponsors. **September 2017**
    - ii. Create an Exploring Program of Excellence Award to recognize the top submissions and promote the use and support of the online tool by Advisors or Sponsors. **August 2017**
  
  - c. Research and recommend an eight- to 10-week intensive Exploring program as an alternative to the current option of meeting one to two times per month throughout the year, while ensuring that the \$24 registration fee is not compromised in the process. **January 2017**
- 2. Recommend and develop methods and content for training and resources for Exploring adults, youth, and professionals.**



Looking beyond 2016, our focus will be on continuing to sustain the momentum of the Exploring Explosion. This will be accomplished by providing crucial entry-level training for new adult volunteers—face to face and online as often as possible—and by making sure that training is appropriate to position and relevant to specific posts’ or clubs’ operations. In addition to trainings and certifications, we will provide updated materials for post or club operations, i.e., the *Exploring Guidebook*. Youth participants will also receive training and learning opportunities provided at the district, council, area, regional, and national levels. These will be developed through a functioning national Exploring Officers Association (EOA).

- a. Create and deliver new position-specific training for Exploring adults (Exploring adult training).  
**July 2016**
- b. Create and conduct virtual instructor-led trainings (VILT) for the four phases of starting a new post or club. **March 2016 and ongoing**
- c. Offer a series of monthly webinars covering Exploring “hot topics,” based on the monthly Exploring action plans. **Ongoing**
- d. Develop and post the new *Exploring Guidebook* online or create an electronic publication.  
**March 2016**
- e. Develop and launch the new Exploring Leadership Certificate program. **January 2017**
- f. Continue to update and develop the Exploring Certification and Road Show to ensure that each council has the ability to train its volunteers/professionals to grow Exploring. Continue to offer a minimum of one Exploring Certification and Road Show training in each of the 29 areas across the country. **Ongoing**
- g. Ensure Exploring is represented at each of the regional board meetings, providing opportunities for Exploring to become an integral part of each meeting. **January 2017 and ongoing**
- h. Develop and deliver the Exploring Officers Association guidebook (national, regional, area, and council). **February 2017**
- i. Develop and deliver a simple training, along with position descriptions, for each of the national, regional, area, and council Exploring chairs. **August 2016**
- j. Update and deliver the Youth Protection training, and include a specific face-to-face component.  
**January 2018**
- k. Increase the number of post Advisors and club Sponsors who are Youth Protection trained, employing a “100 percent trained” campaign. **January 2018 and ongoing**
- l. Work with traditional Scouting membership/commissioner teams to ensure Exploring is included in the development of all new resources for the field, as it pertains to commissioner/service team service and membership recruitment. **May 2016 and ongoing**



**3. Review, evaluate, and improve the career interest survey, available as paper Scantron tests and online at [www.exploringyourcareer.com](http://www.exploringyourcareer.com). Increase the usage of the survey by the field by 10 percent annually, while making each more affordable.**

The career interest survey is the leading indicator of success for organizing Exploring programs. Successful implementation of the survey requires ease of use, competent training, and constant awareness of changing national trends in schools and communities. Ease of use includes employing more formats, such as mobile compatibility, free use by councils, providing already decoded career interests for professionals, and relevant online trainings to promote and familiarize its use in diverse communities. Competent trainings include informative webinars, face-to-face seminars, and newsletters or updates highlighting best practices that professionals can adapt to their local circumstances.



- a. Create and promote the *Career Interest Survey Guidebook* to field-serving executives and volunteers. **July 2016 and ongoing**
- b. Create a specific online training that addresses all methods of utilizing the career interest survey. **February 2017**
  - i. Decrease the cost of the online survey to local councils and increase the number of councils using the online survey by 10 percent annually. **December 2016 and ongoing**
  - ii. Ensure that the online survey is mobile/iPad compatible and reports are easy to retrieve. **May 2016**
  - iii. Decrease the cost of the paper Scantron survey, and increase the number of councils using the online survey annually. **May 2016 and ongoing**
- c. Explore the possibility of creating a new paper survey, administered by the Boy Scouts of America/ Learning for Life, which will merge with the online survey results. **December 2017**
- d. When surveys are not allowed, teach field executives and volunteers alternate methods to the career interest survey. **December 2016 and ongoing**
- e. Explore the possibility of the career interest survey becoming a state/national standard with which career and hobby interests of all youth are measured and data is shared with other organizations. **December 2018**



#### 4. Increase the number of Exploring volunteers with professional support, and improve network/communication channels to help grow the Exploring program. (Provide volunteers with professional counterparts.)

Crucial to the sustenance of the gains that will be made with the Exploring Explosion campaign in 2016 will be the development of a stronger volunteer and youth structure with national-, regional-, area-, and council-level oversight and responsibilities. The long-term success of Exploring will hinge on a network of volunteers and youth representing all of our regions. This will enhance the quality of our local programs, offer more regional and national leadership opportunities for youth, and provide a powerful resource for securing partnerships, improving knowledge and contemporary information within each career field, and expanding funding and scholarship support for more career fields.

- a. Develop an approved nominating process for all levels of Exploring volunteers (national, regional, area), and create position descriptions for each level of Exploring chairs. **June 2016**
  - i. Create a specific onboarding training for each level of volunteer with an organizational chart to share with each volunteer.
  - ii. Fill all national, regional, area, council, and district chair positions as noted below. Ensure the plan is rolled out to councils to show how this will help support and grow their Exploring programs.
    1. Exploring regional volunteer chairs (regional directors) **July 2016**
    2. Exploring area volunteer chairs (area directors) **August 2016**
    3. Exploring council volunteer chairs (Scout executives) **September 2016**
    4. Exploring district volunteer chairs (Exploring executives/traditional district executives who also serve Exploring) **December 2017**
    5. Exploring Officers Association youth, mirroring all of the above positions with adults **March 2017**
      - Name committee chair for each of the 12 career fields. **May 2017**
      - Add committee members to each of the 12 career fields to also help coordinate new letters of support. **December 2017**
- b. Provide support to local councils in recruiting and training council Exploring chairs through site visits, trainings, webinars, and phone conferences. **Ongoing**
- c. Improve communications by conducting monthly or regular national conference calls to field-serving executives and volunteers. **March 2017 and ongoing**
- d. Work with human resources and local councils to identify an Exploring Champion to represent each council. **June 2016**
- e. Evaluate success and prospect for continuing the Exploring Explosion campaign ([www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org)). **January 2018**



## PILLAR 3 GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Define the roles of the National Executive Board and Advisory Committee. In addition, present an organizational structure for the regions and areas. Develop a national Exploring fundraising campaign and models for council funding campaigns.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Define the purpose and value for the Learning for Life Governance and Advisory Board, including a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of each participant.**
  - a. Review and update the National Learning for Life Bylaws. **May 2016**
  - b. Define the purpose and roles of the National Learning for Life Executive Board and associated subcommittees. **August 2016**
  - c. Define the size and composition of the National Learning for Life Board and subcommittees. **September 2016**
  - d. Define the qualification criteria, selection process, term, responsibilities, and expectations of individual board members. **October 2016**
  - e. Develop written guidelines for regional, area, and council Exploring chairs. **November 2016**
  - f. Review and update the National Learning for Life Nominating Booklet. **December 2016**

2. Develop and generate the financial resources to offset the operating expenses of the national Learning for Life programs. The funds would be for new Exploring posts and clubs and school-based programs, marketing materials, recognition items, and administrative costs. The goal is to raise \$50,000 by December 2017; \$60,000 for 2018; and \$70,000 for 2019.
- a. Create a finance/development position on the national Learning for Life staff by **August 2016**. The goal is to fill the position by **September 2016**.
  - b. Ensure that the finance chair coordinates the recruitment of the Fund Development Committee by **March 2017**. For the first year, the committee should be made up of five volunteers who have the resources and contacts to raise the financial goal. By **March 2018**, the committee size should increase to six members. By **March 2019**, the committee should have seven members.
  - c. Develop a prospect list for financial contributions by **June 2017**. The list should have 60 prospects from corporations, foundations, and individuals. Align prospects with development of the career field activity database in order of importance.
  - d. Assign volunteers to meet with the donor prospects by **August 2017**. The Fund Development Committee will review the prospect list. Each member is assigned to contact prospects or to find the most effective people to make the contact.
  - e. The goal is to have each Fund Development Committee member contribute or secure \$10,000. Campaigns for 2017, 2018, and 2019 should set a goal to conclude by December of each year.
  - f. The Fund Development Committee needs to continue to increase the funding. Goals should be established to cultivate current donors and identify and cultivate new donors and to accomplish this responsibility by November of each year starting in **November 2017**.
  - g. Research into leveraging (for funding and program outreach) the worldwide partnerships that have been established by the Boy Scouts of America with Scouting associations around the world.
- Ongoing**



## PILLAR 4

# LEARNING FOR LIFE CURRICULUM-BASED PROGRAM

The Learning for Life curriculum-based program has developed a faithful group of users dedicated to providing character development education to youth across America through diverse avenues. Thus, this strategic plan focuses on three things:

1. Updating the product and its delivery
2. Expanding usage and markets
3. Increasing revenue

The success of this strategic plan is critical in determining if the curriculum-based program should be continued beyond 2019.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. Assure high-quality and relevant LFL character education program through the review, revision, update, and delivery of the pre-K to high school programs.**
  - a. Update and distribute the pre-K through fifth-grade LFL curricula, replacing the current editions. **October 2016**
  - b. Assemble a team to revise and distribute materials for sixth grade through high school and Champions. **December 2017**
  - c. Complete a feasibility study for on-demand delivery of the teachers guides. **December 2019**

- d. Update and develop new teacher training material for teachers and local LFL executives to align with the special needs curriculum for pre-K through high school and Champions. Include formats such as webinars, online training, etc. **June 2017**
  - e. Upgrade digital format for the LFL curriculum. **June 2017**
- 2. Beginning in 2017, increase LFL character education curricula usage by local councils, schools, and youth-serving organizations by 3 percent. Usage will be measured by the number of schools, programs, and students.**
- a. Support the National Partnership Committee's effort to partner with other community organizations to expand use of LFL into nontraditional markets such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, etc. **December 2019**
  - b. Seek funding of \$25,000 to provide LFL program for free or a reduced cost to economically challenged local councils so they can start the program as outreach in their community. **December 2018**
  - c. Strategically select states in which LFL will develop and deliver a model LFL program for other schools in the state to visit and emulate. **December 2018**
  - d. The national LFL office will continue to provide support to the local councils in Florida while LFL character education is supported with a line item in the state budget. Support includes: working with state lobbyists to apply for the request for applications, reviewing council applications and reports, working with the Florida Department of Education to provide trainings, etc. **December 2019**
  - e. Provide a template for an outdoor character education program to enhance local council programs. **December 2018**





### 3. Increase revenue for the LFL curriculum-based program through license agreements and curriculum sales.

- a. Customize content, delivery method, packaging, and pricing of select lessons for integration into the Exploring program. **September 2017**
- b. Establish a development committee consisting of key stakeholders (Scout executives, council volunteers, and educators) to evaluate, simplify, and deliver the license agreement and pricing structure. **August 2016**
- c. Seek, develop, and deliver other revenue-producing products that complement and enhance the LFL character education program materials. **August 2017**
- d. Update the quality of the LFL website and marketing materials in order to help educators and local staff understand the benefits of using the products with their student populations. **September 2017**
- e. Solicit yearly feedback and evaluation from teachers and local council staff to improve the products(s). **June 2017**



## PILLAR 5 MARKETING AND TECHNOLOGY

The growth of the Learning for Life curriculum-based and Exploring programs is dependent on the communications tools that are made available to the field and the adoption of technological resources. Maintaining current messaging and relevant advancements in technology will be vital to membership growth efforts.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Deliver timely and thorough communications with all appropriate audiences to drive growth in Learning for Life and Exploring.**
  - a. Recruit a professional marketing and communications committee to support the vice president of marketing on the executive committee. **December 2016**
    - i. Update Exploring and LFL sales kits. **September 2016**
    - ii. Develop guide for newly committed organizations. **June 2017**
  - b. The national LFL team of staff and volunteers will utilize the standard rollout plan that will ensure the team member identifies and selects the appropriate audiences and communication channels for each message or announcement. **Ongoing**
  - c. The national LFL team of staff and volunteers will write a formal marketing and communications plan for both programs defining local versus national outreach; strong versus weak councils, areas, and programs; and the need for digital versus print collateral items. **May 2017**



## 2. Improve the brand awareness and identity of Learning for Life and Exploring with internal and external audiences.

- a. Utilize the brand architecture vendors to define the purpose, vision, and mission of LFL's curriculum program and to develop a consistent brand identity. **September 2017**
- b. Evaluate all Exploring products and assets regarding the timeline for transitioning to improved brand identity. **September 2016**
- c. Evaluate all Learning for Life curriculum program's products and assets regarding the timeline for transitioning to improved brand identity. **September 2017**

## 3. Improve technical resources to better serve volunteers and professionals in the field.

- a. Overhaul MyParticipation.org.
  - i. Transition to a new platform that speaks to BSA platforms. **December 2018**
  - ii. Rebuild and deliver the online renewal system for posts and clubs. **December 2019**
- b. Evaluate feasibility of a Scoutbook platform for Exploring. **December 2017**
  - i. Support designers in building an Exploring interface. **December 2018**
- c. Offer online registration to participating organizations, youth participants, and adult participants. **December 2019**





