
Plan

August 1, 2015
to
July 31, 2018



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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Authorization | 3 |
| Acknowledgements | 3 |
| Board Members | 3 |
| Organizational Overview | 3 |
| Core Services / Activities | 3/4 |
| Foundational Elements / Strategic Philosophy | 4 |
| Vision | 4 |
| Mission | 4 |
| Values (and Guiding Principles)..... | 5/6 |
| Strategic Direction..... | 6 |
| Goals | 6 |
| Objectives/Strategies | 6 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation..... | 7 |
| Conclusion | 7 |
| Appendices | 8 |

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Authorization

This three year strategic plan was developed and approved by the Board of Literacy for Life Foundation on June 16th 2015.

Acknowledgements

Literacy for Life Foundation Board would like to acknowledge and thank the following people for their support, assistance and participation in developing this plan:

Staff, contractors and volunteers of Literacy for Life Foundation
Jennifer Stark, Alberta Culture and Community Services
Board of Literacy for Life Foundation

Board Members

| | |
|------------|----------------|
| Chair | Doug Howard |
| Vice Chair | Drew Karavos |
| Treasurer | Ann Boldt |
| Secretary | Barb Eagles |
| Director | Angela Jackson |
| Director | Amber Marechal |
| Director | Tyler Foley |

Organizational Overview: About Literacy for Life Foundation

Literacy for Life provides a broad range of programs and services within the Municipal District of Foothills that are free or at minimum cost. The programs are open to all with the understanding that all families and individuals are vulnerable depending on the diverse factors that impact a person's or family's life. The organization does not receive core funding from a single source of funding and relies on grants, fundraising, donations and some fee for service programs.

The main office is situated in High River. Programs are offered in the communities of High River, Okotoks, Longview, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, and the rural areas within the MD of Foothills #31. Partnerships are developed for program delivery within the community and are valued as an integral component of providing service to community members.

Core Services / Activities

Programs fall under two main categories –Family Literacy and Adult Literacy. These programs are managed under the Program Coordinator. In actual practice programs are integrated and provide a continuum of service to families and learners.

The family programs focus on the parent as a learner with the secondary impact of influencing the literacy and learning of the children. Adult programs focus on foundational learning and literacy.

Literacy for Life Foundation also provides awareness and knowledge to the community and agencies on literacy, the essential skills, and its impact on the social, emotional and economic wellness of individuals, families and the community.

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

- Books for Babies – Bag with books and information on early literacy for parents of newborns, and a second package is given to parents at the 18 month milestone checkup with Public Health.
- Parent and Preschool Oral Language Group programs (Birth to 36 months – Includes Movers and Shakers, Rhythm and Rhyme, Toddler Time, Senior Rhythm and Rhyme)
- Parent and Preschool Early Readiness Group programs (Age 3 to Age 5 - includes Natured Kids)
- Community "Dog Tales" - Reluctant school aged readers - (Aged 7 - 12) with a secondary impact on parents.
- (School) Dog Tales and Beyond - Reluctant school aged readers - (Aged 7 - 12)
- Building Blocks In Home Program – Parents/caregivers and Children (Birth to 17 yrs.)
- General Equivalency Diploma Readiness course (high school diploma) – for adults
- English Language Learner Instruction – includes classroom and/or Volunteer Learning Coaches
- Volunteer Learning Coaches for basic literacy and learning with a focus on essential skills
- Basic computer courses for adults (includes Basic Computer Plus, Computer Café)
- Development of curriculums for use by other literacy and learning programs.
- Awareness and Education activities.
- Building Blocks Provincial training.
- Fee for Service - Instruction in English Language Learners, computers and customer service
- Essential Skills Training as identified by community needs.

Check out our website at www.litforlife.com for more information on programs and services

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Foundational Elements / Strategic Philosophy

Our Vision

“Literacy and learning are integral parts of the community where everyone has the essential skills to live a fully engaged life.”

Our Mission

Literacy for Life (LFL) is a registered charitable organization in the M.D. of Foothills that facilitates, designs, and delivers literacy and learning programs and services to improve the lives of community members and their families.

WE VALUE:

INTEGRITY - We employ the highest ethical standards, demonstrating honesty and fairness in every action we take.

COMMUNITY – The acceptance of our organization by our community is vital for our success.

COLLABORATION – We promote and develop effective partnerships to maximize our resources and potential to achieve the best results for those we serve by working together, sharing ideas and recognizing the contribution of others, all the while leveraging our collective knowledge.

EXCELLENCE – Our staff and volunteers are committed in heart and mind, consistently demonstrating professional behaviours exemplifying objectivity, impartiality, creativity, and innovation in the pursuit of literacy and learning in every context.

CARING – We care about those we serve, our fellow staff and volunteers, and their families.

TRUST & PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY – We hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards and are accountable for our actions and decisions.

COMMUNICATIONS – We communicate in a constructive, open and supportive manner, listening carefully to those with whom we serve and work.

OUR ACTIONS, BEHAVIOURS, AND DECISIONS ARE GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

AUTONOMY - A person’s literacy impacts his or her social, emotional and physical health, and ability to make choices in life. Literacy and learning choices should lead to self-reliance and independence.

ACCESSIBLE - Literacy and learning programs and resources should be available locally to all families and individuals who need them.

LEARNER CENTERED – Our programs and resources should be learner centred and create opportunities for people to discover and reach their potential in everyday living. Our role is to provide opportunity as the learner knows their needs and desires best.

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

RESPECT – Our interactions with the people we serve and work with should include acknowledgement and the utmost respect for personal differences.

INCLUSIVE – Our programs and services should be available to everyone, regardless of his or her background, beliefs, and lifestyles.

PLAY – Play is a critical element in learning and should be integrated, whenever possible, with our programs and services and the message we share with individuals, families and the community.

AFFORDABLE - Basic literacy and learning programs should be affordable for all who need them.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY – Individuals and families should, whenever possible, take personal responsibility to meet their literacy and social needs.

LITERACY DEFINED - Literacy is more than reading and writing. It should include all aspects of communication and human interaction including listening, reading, document use, numeracy, speaking and writing, computer use, playing and working with others, and critical thinking and reflection.

Strategic Direction (2015) – (2018)

The following goals and strategies define areas of emphasis and focus for (2015 – 2018):

| 3 Year Goals (2015 to 2018) |
|---|
| Our programs continue to reflect and meet the needs of the community. |
| We have the human and financial resources to support the delivery of high quality programs. |
| Community members recognize LFL as a vibrant and valuable service to the community. |
| LFL thrives in the community through strong leadership. |

Objectives/Strategies for accomplishing the goals of the organization: (2015 - 2018)

1. Programs will adhere to vision and mission of organization.
2. The organization will stay informed of demographic changes in the communities it serves and use this knowledge to ensure the needs of the learner are met.
3. The organization will base evaluation on logic models to ensure quality best practice methods, consistency in programs and the programs meet learner/family needs.
4. The needs of the community will be identified through community dialogue with community agencies and community members¹.
5. Strong partnerships will be built, enhanced and maintained with local community agencies.

¹ (Agencies includes but not limited to: 3 interagency, Foothills Children’s Wellness Network, Inclusive Education Partnership, FCIS Advisory Committee, Foothills Continuing Education member, libraries, McBride, Bow Valley, Social Sustainability Collective) This will also include program evaluation based on input from families and research.

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

6. Literacy programs and resources will be integrated into day to day living of community members and they will have an awareness of the importance of the nine essential skills.
7. Strong connections and networks at the regional, provincial and federal level of government will be built, enhanced and maintained.
8. Connections and networks with literacy and learning groups within the province and federally will be built, enhanced and maintained².
9. A philanthropic culture will be built within the organization.
10. Build, enhance and maintain a strong fund development process and team to build financial resources. (Refer to Fund Development Plan)
11. The people within the organization will have the skills to be leaders in supporting families and individuals in the building of literacy and foundational learning skills.
12. Processes for internal and external communication will be user friendly, easily understood, efficient, and current technology will be implemented as needed.

| Areas of Focus |
|--|
| <p>Program audit, alignment and documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √Program review/audit to determine forward focus – needs assessment √Based on program audit align programming to meet needs of community √Explore future program possibilities √Program manuals completed for all core programs √Program Manual Familiarization and Training - for existing/new staff on core elements and appropriate facilitation of each program. √Review of logic models and evaluation process for all programs. |
| <p>Review and execute communication plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √Improve internal and external communication √Based on review of communication tools – fill gaps and improve √Expand marketing, including stories on website √Complete communication plan √Execute communication plan |
| <p>Revenue generation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √Explore and develop methods to generate significant new revenue - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build on existing signature fund raiser - Raffle - over \$10,000.00 √Increase visibility within the Donor Sector - (i.e. Alberta Promise, Community Knowledge Center) √Explore cost recovery pay for service model |
| <p>Human resources planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √Investigate and acquire resources and strategies to implement succession plan for Executive Director, Board and other staff. √Streamline policy and procedures for future board and staff √Document knowledge transfer of roles √Increase focus on staff development |

² Centre for Family Literacy, Community Learning Council, ABC Life Literacy, other literacy and learning councils.

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation (outcomes, measures, success indicators as well as plans for monitoring and evaluation)

1. Staff Work Plan will be developed that include objectives (if required) that connect to each goal with strategies, actions, and performance indicators. This component will be monitored and reviewed to ensure strategies and activities continue to work towards meeting the vision, mission, and goals of the organization.
2. Board Work Plan will be developed that include objectives (if required) that connect to each goal with strategies, actions, and performance indicators. This component will be monitored and reviewed to ensure strategies and activities continue to work towards meeting the vision, mission, and goals of the organization
3. Board will review plan on a yearly basis.

Review 1 – May 2016

1. Strategic planning review was held May 2016 and facilitated by Kim Rowe.
(Community Development Unit, Alberta Culture)
Board Members present: Doug Howard, Deb Janzen, Laurie Hunka, Barb Eagles,
Staff Members present: Nicole Levesque, Candace Bergen and Sue Stegmeier
2. Based on review the areas of focus outlined in this strategic plan are still relevant and fit the desired direction of the organization.
Identified Priorities for 2016 - 2017:
 - a) Human Resource Planning (succession of Executive Director)
 - Functional Review of Executive Director Position as it exists in 2016
 - What attributes and skills are needed for the Executive Director Position in the future.
 - What other human resources are needed to meet the priority focus areas based on the functional review and identification of future skills and attributes.
 - b) Program Audit and Alignment (needs assessment)

The completion of the Communication Plan and Revenue Generation plan will flow from the result of the work that will be done to address the Human Resource Planning.

Conclusion

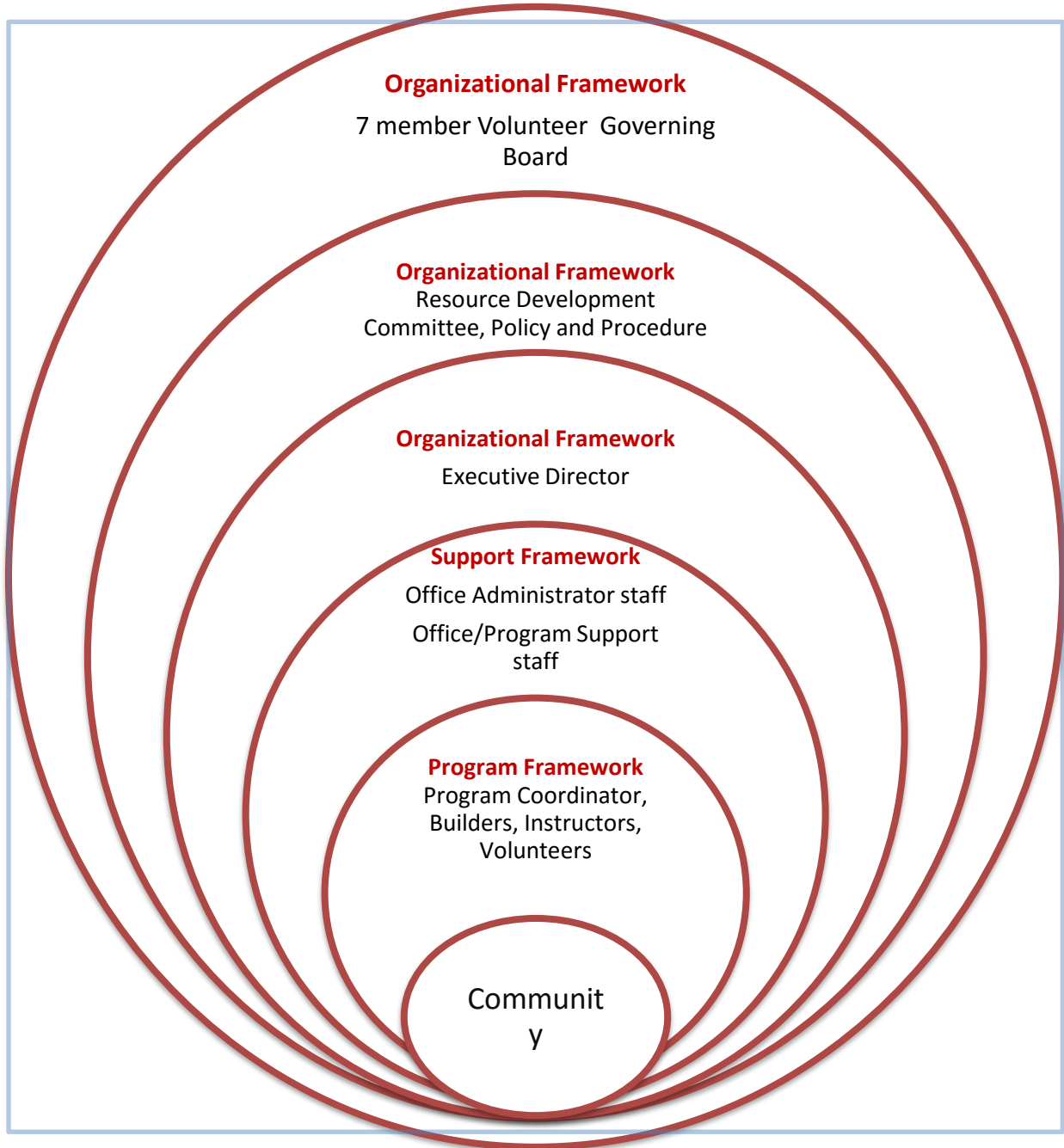
This Strategic Plan provides a useful roadmap to guide our organization and Board over the next three years, but at the same time offers flexibility to ensure adaptation to future challenges and opportunities. This work will set the overall direction of the organization in the next 3 years ensuring the community and its member's literacy and foundational learning needs are met.

As indicated by the May 2016 review the roadmap is current and relevant.

Appendix

1. Structure / organizational chart
2. Process and Results Summary - Moving Forward Day (Staff and Board)
3. Summary of discussion Review Year 1 (Board and office staff)

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan
Organizational Chart



Process and Results Summary

*Vision without action is just dreaming;
Action without vision is just passing time;
Vision with action can change the world.*

Purpose: To review Literacy for Life Foundation’s past and present situation; have a conversation about future possibilities; talk about how to ‘tell our story’; and generate ideas for consideration in preparation for a new planning cycle.

Participants: LFL board members, senior management and staff

Facilitator: Jennifer Stark, Community Development Officer, Alberta Culture and Tourism

LITERACY FOR LIFE OVERVIEW

Executive Director Sue Stegmeier gave a brief overview of Literacy for Life including structure, scope, programs and plans.

BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY: “WHAT IF.....”

Vision:

The LFL vision (desired ideal future) was reviewed: “Literacy and learning are integral parts of the community where everyone has the skills to live a fully engaged life.”

‘Bowl of Popcorn’ Brainstorming Activity:

Participants were posed the following question and asked to:

1. Brainstorm individually and anonymously by writing their responses on pieces of paper and putting them in the ‘popcorn bowl’.
2. Pass around the bowl and take turns picking and reading the ideas to their table groups.
3. Record all ideas, and build on the list as a group.
4. Report back to the whole group to share their table’s ideas.
5. Follow the brainstorming guidelines below.

Creative Brainstorming Guidelines:

- Generate as many responses as possible
- Think about quantity not quality at this stage
- All ideas are welcome and valid – there are no ‘wrong’ answers
- No criticism or judgment
- Record ideas visibly
- Build on others’ ideas

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Focus Question: “If we were told Literacy for Life will be given \$2 million each year for the next 5 years, what could or should we do to further progress towards reaching our desired ideal future or vision?”

Responses:

Table 1

- Get lots of dogs – more Dog Tales
- Recruit more staff – wider audience
- Improve staff compensation
- Additional access → facilities / space across the M.D.
- Increased marketing, expand reach
- Create more programs / initiatives, manage future needs
- Develop comprehensive program manuals for all programs
 - consistency
 - continuation

Table 2

- Enhance programs
- Build electronic library for E-Reader
- Increase wages and benefits
- Dog tales in more schools ✓✓
- Help employees with funding for more education
- Participate in more province/nation/world wide conventions
- Computer literacy for seniors
- Expand programs in each community
- Increase resources
- Work readiness programs: Microsoft Office....
- Offer more programs
- A free learning early childhood centre
- Expand the LFL facility
- Annual literacy conference in Cuba
- Building Blocks for French and Spanish families

Table 3

- Hire:
 - Resource development person
 - Community liaison officer
 - → well known
 - → “go to” place i.e. Apple Store
- Partner with book publisher for online learning tools
- Kindle / tablet per household
- Continue → add and expand programs with population growth
- Reach more at-risk families (prevention)
- Needs identification of communities → meet needs of adult learners

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

- Parent groups in each community → early years knowledge sharing
- Adult learning / testing tools
- More school partnerships → outreach schools
- Core programs that are unique LFL
- Community learning network with groups to prevent duplication
- Senior leadership support for E.D.
- Invest the money → endowment fund
- Go digital
- Teen programs in the evening with variety (youth programs)
- Pilot new programs
- Flexible program delivery schedules / options
- Financial literacy / budgeting
- Cooking and literacy
- Immigrants and established resident partnerships
- 'freemium to premium'

Table 4

- Advertise to the community about programs – TV and radio
- Do more Building Blocks training all over Alberta → get it out there → more families
- Grow programs so demand does not exceed capacity
- Meet literacy and foundational needs of more people
- Hire one or more staff persons to handle HR and financial needs
- Enhance promotion of literacy and foundational learning in Foothills
- Develop new literacy and foundational programs → impact of technology and social media (parent programs)
- Develop yearly newcomer program
- Consider second round with Building Blocks families after 1 – 2 years → progress? new needs? new stages?
- Computer training classes – generate or capture more adults at any age for this service
- Year round programs
- More Dog Tales capacity outside school

TELLING OUR STORY

Branding and non-profit organizations

Jennifer provided a brief overview on 'branding' and the importance of telling a compelling story as a part of branding. Following are a few of her key points:

- We are bombarded, inundated and interrupted with information more than ever before.....in addition to the traditional phone, mail, TV, radio, and advertising, we also have email, texts, voicemail, Twitter, Facebook, Linked In, etc.
- The 'do good' marketplace is crowded, cluttered, and complicated. Canada now boasts more than 86,000 charities (65% increase in the past decade alone). All these groups

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

are trying to get our attention for their causes: social service, environmental, arts and culture, health, education, recreation. They are local, regional, provincial, national, and international.

- Branding is essential to an organization's ability to thrive in today's highly competitive non-profit world.
- 'Brand' is the proprietary visual, emotional, rational, and cultural image that is associated with an organization, product, service or program, setting them apart from the competition.
- Brand is the impression, perception and feelings people have about your organization that goes beyond your visual and verbal identity. It's not just your name or what you do or why you do it or your tag line or catchphrases or pretty colours or logo or professional look – it is a set of expectations and beliefs the marketplace has about you – it is your image and your reputation.
- A brand is what people say, think, and feel about your organization.
- Questions to ask yourselves:
 - What does your organization stand for that people care about, recognize and believe in?
 - How are you meaningful and relevant?
 - What differentiates you and makes you unique?
 - Do you clearly communicate who you are, what you do, and why you do it?
 - How does your organization stand out?
 - Do you inspire a growing body of supporters?

What is our story and how do we tell it?

- Many decisions are made at an emotional level, not just a rational level.
- People look for shared values, meaningful engagement, relevance, results, outcomes, solutions, value, accountability and an emotional connection.
- Stories can break barriers, connect emotionally, and move people from not understanding to understanding.
- Storytelling speaks more to 'why' rather than 'what' or 'how'. Why should they care, why are you important, why do you deserve their time and attention, why should they engage with you? It's time to stop selling what you do and start selling why you do it.
- Getting attention and being noticed is not enough – you need to hold that attention by telling your story in a way that is compelling and connects people emotionally.
- "Warm the heart and stir the mind" by telling your stories
- "Whoever tells the best story wins!"

Storytelling Activity

Participants were given time to talk about and share some compelling stories with their table groups demonstrating the impact of LFL. Following the small group conversations, a few shared their stories with the larger group. This was followed by a discussion about the importance and value of capturing and using LFL's stories.

How can LFL capture and use our stories?

The following ideas were put forward by the participants:

- Collect and put together the stories that have already been shared (newspaper clips, etc.) and continue to add to that collection
- Document the stories we can tell now (we have great stories to tell, so let's capture them so they don't get lost)
 - Each of us commit to writing up our stories

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

- Develop video clips with instructors telling success stories
- Create a book (folder) collection of stories – case for support
- Post things on our website that show our impact
 - Stories (written, video)
 - Have a spot specifically for ‘media coverage’
 - Use comments from our evaluation surveys – take photos of the actual written comments
- Share stories through news/media
 - Submit stories to newspaper for publishing
 - Suggest and arrange interviews
 - Letters to the editor
- Testimonials
 - Ask people who have used our services if they would be willing to tell their story on video or if they would be willing to do a media interview
 - ‘How it changed my life’
- Post stories on YouTube
- Community champions – identify formal ambassadors
- Story contest
- Connect and align with our communications plan
- Clip for “Joeys Only”
- Clips shown at schools etc.
- Create a short 2 – 5 minute ‘general’ video / promotional clip that tells the story of the impact on individuals, families, communities and society (Jennifer will email example: ‘The Girl Effect’)

SITUATION ANALYSIS / STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

The participants spent some time reviewing and analyzing the organization’s situation; taking stock; taking a look at what is happening both within and outside the organization and how that will impact their planning and work.

There are various ways to do a situational analysis. This group completed a **SWOT Analysis** by identifying **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats.

This information is crucial to helping you make informed decisions, however the real power of the information comes from taking the time to analyze it - determine what it is telling you, what it means to you, how it will impact you, and how you will use the information to assist you in our planning. A group can use this information to help them develop plans that:

- Build on strengths
- Resolve weaknesses
- Exploit opportunities
- Avoid threats

‘Gallery Walk’: Four flip chart ‘stations’ were set up. Participants were divided into four groups and moved from station to station in a ‘gallery walk’ to discuss each topic for 10 minutes and add their comments to the flip chart in the areas of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Threats. Questions were posted at each station to prompt discussion. Note: this was approached as a brainstorming activity as opposed to consensus building; therefore points recorded do not necessarily represent the views of *all* participants.

STRENGTHS

Questions to consider:

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What do you do really well? What's working? What is going well?
- What are the best things you do or have done for the community?
- What assets does the organization have? Think about people (knowledge, skills, time), relationships, financial resources, political, natural, built and cultural assets.
- What have been key or significant things that your group has done or accomplished since it was formed?
- What are your strongest resources and allies?
- What are you particularly proud of or pleased about?

WEAKNESSES

Questions to consider:

- What are your current weaknesses, problems or concerns?
- What are your disadvantages, challenges or pitfalls?
- What are the barriers, obstacles and constraints to achieving your desired future?
- What does the organization need to do better? Where can you improve?
- Where have you failed or fallen short of expectations? What hasn't gone as well as hoped?
- Where do you fall short in meeting the needs of your stakeholders and community?
- What have you struggled with most?
- What has been disappointing or frustrating?
- What do you need that you don't have?
- What, if anything, is hindering your progress, bogging you down, or keeping your organization from being the best it can be?

OPPORTUNITIES

Questions to consider:

- What are the most profound changes shaping your environment?
- What innovation inspires you to change?
- How can you make a difference for the organization and its stakeholders?
- What opportunities can you capitalize on (both internal and external to the organization)?
- What are your advantages?
- How can you reframe weaknesses so they become opportunities?
- What are your customers asking us to do?
- What gaps are there that you could fill?
- What synergies can you create with other groups?
- What positive trends, policy changes, emerging resources, upcoming initiatives or promising practices can you take advantage of?

THREATS

Questions to consider:

- Who are your biggest competitors?

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

- What is the competition doing that could harm you?
- What is your biggest danger?
- What is the worst thing you could do?
- What are your greatest challenges?
- What future threats (both internal and external to the organization) may impede your progress or cause you problems?
- What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?
- What threat have you underestimated or failed to consider?
- What emerging trends, policy changes, or impending pressures may act as obstacles to you achieving your desired future?

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ** Sue • ** Staff • * Program array and quality • * Partnerships – Snaps, FFAS, FCSS, Library, FSD, CD, media, FcWN) • * We are ‘something for everyone’ • * Passion for the cause • * Willingness and flexibility to community needs • * Reputation – credibility • * Staff – Board relationships (staff included in planning) • * Safe, welcoming, accessible (low/no cost, in home) • Staff training • Funding available for staff for professional development • Location (MD of Foothills) • Our building • Knowledge - early childhood, school age, adult, parenting • Adaptability – quickly • Diverse funding options • Board decision making • Teamwork • Recognition from the Grate Groan-Up Spelling Bee • Increased media coverage • Improved social media • Flood recovery • We have both long term and new blood staff and board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • * Inconsistent funding • * Promotion of BBBL – how do we promote Building Blocks ongoing? • * High staff, board turnover recently • Our building – location accessibility, lack capacity to expand • Overlap of programming between other community organizations / groups • No clear lines of distinction between other agencies (programs) • Quality of output dependent on our people • Lack of consistent / central knowledge on program delivery • Lack of essential curriculum or program manuals • Large tasks with no clear person who is accountable for it for execution • Lack of compelling message (“sexiness”) • Perception that literacy is only knowing how to read • Waiting lists for many programs – Turner Valley group, Okotoks • Communication within organization (e.g. duties, requirements, timing, communicating why we do things the way we do them) • Lack of participants understanding we rely on donations • Too many programs – split focus • Succession planning – for E.D. and Board |
| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • * Technology – computers social media • * Demands of the community / culture • * Family dynamics – higher involvement of grandparents • * Availability of grants, funding • * Natural disasters – e.g. flood • Bringing our programs to other agencies in different communities to train them → they do the program • New approach to fundraising • French Building Blocks program – multi-lingual • Immigration to the MD / baby boom • Flexibility of the organization • Knowledge of the community and its needs • Working with / referring to other organizations (e.g. FCSS); partnering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ** Lack of funding • ** Funding competition • ** Downturn in economy → less funding? • * The word ‘literacy’ in our name • * Our name often gets missed to show that <u>we are doing</u> the programs • * Institutional knowledge will be <u>lost</u> if not documented • * Succession needs to be planned for • * Similar offerings by other organizations • Lack of resources • Over commit, under deliver • Lack of understanding of LFL / “literacy” • Population growth (or shrinkage?) • Delivery in multiple communities |

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetition and reinforcement of essential skills • Prov. Policy Learning Framework-Foundational / Literacy • Foothills Youth Foundation (youth centre) • Employment • Financial literacy (in a foundational learning format) • Parents – technology, internet, early childhood • Population increase - Okotoks, Black Diamond, Turner Valley – could grow 10-15,000; population decrease – High River • Lowering economy will spur interest in learning • Charge for services – cost recovery • Corporate interest in services • Dog Tales expansion • “Cat Whispers” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of community • Difficulty in measuring outcomes to justify our programs and secure funding • Wide geographic area • Lack of brand recognition • Not telling our story • Education system |
|--|---|

2012-15 STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

Key elements of the LFL 2012-15 Strategic Plan were briefly reviewed to refresh participants' memory of the mission, values, guiding principles and goals.

IDEAS FOR THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The participants generated ideas for the new planning cycle, building on the information discussed earlier in the day. Participants were asked to jot down their ideas individually. Following the individual brainstorming, everyone shared their answers in small groups and each group decided upon 5 – 8 ideas to share with the larger group. The ideas were written on sticky notes which were then posted on the wall, with clarification as needed. The participants then grouped similar or related ideas forming clusters. The clusters were reviewed and named to identify areas of focus. Following is the content of the clusters of sticky notes and the cluster names:

| Cluster names (areas of focus) | Ideas put forward by table groups and clustered |
|--|---|
| Continue delivery of current plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue delivery of current plan |
| Program audit, alignment and documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program review – needs assessment • Conduct program audits to determine forward focus • Identify and focus on core (unique) programs • Align programming to meet needs of community • Program manuals – everyone aware of what they are and using them • Document programs and how to facilitate them in manuals |
| Explore future program possibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Building Blocks program • Start Lifestyle Literacy programs (e.g. cooking literacy) • Family programs available evenings and weekends |
| Review and execute communication plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve internal and external communication • Modernize the brand • Execute communication plan • Expand marketing, including stories on website • Execute communication plan (stories, messages, etc.) |
| Revenue generation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate significant new revenue • Explore cost recovery pay for service model |
| Human resources planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning for executive director • Succession plan with resources and strategies to implement • Streamline policy and procedures for future board and staff • Document knowledge transfer of roles • Increase focus on staff development |

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Individuals were invited to submit any ideas they wanted captured in these notes separately:

One additional individual submission: *Budget plans for future staff raises*

NEXT STEPS

The information generated at the session will be shared with all participants, reviewed by the board, and used to inform the process of developing the new strategic plan.

PARKING LOT

During the session a 'parking lot' sheet was posted. The purpose of the parking lot was to record any items identified during the workshop that may require attention but that are not part of the workshop's objectives. Nothing was recorded on the parking lot.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

The Community Development Unit provides training, facilitation and consultation to non-profit, public sector and government organizations in order to help them improve their organizational effectiveness and build their capacity to achieve their goals, ultimately contributing to strong, vibrant communities in Alberta. Please don't hesitate to contact the Community Development Officer if you require any further assistance.

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Year one Review - 2016
Literacy for Life Foundation Planning Review Session Notes
May 30, 2016 5:30 – 9 PM

Facilitated by Kim Rowe Facilitated by Kim Rowe, Community Development Unit
For more information, please contact Kim at kim.rowegov.ab.ca

Government of Alberta ■
Culture

Purpose:

- To share a meal together
- To develop and discuss an environmental scan to inform our planning
- To review the current plan and what is most needed in the near future
- To have a shared understanding of the planning process and how to proceed

Our Vision "Literacy and learning are integral parts of the community where everyone has the essential skills to live a fully engaged life."

Our Mission - Literacy for Life (LFL) is a registered charitable organization in the M.D. of Foothills that facilitates, designs, and delivers literacy and learning programs and services to improve the lives of community members and their families.

Current Environmental Scan

- What have been significant or key things that your organization has done or experienced over the past couple of years?

- flood
- change in office staff
- additions in programming (different)
- policy change from Innovation and Advanced Education
- partners in building
- strengthened partnership with schools
- strengthened LFL staff / team (trust)
- New government – provincial and federal levels
- immigration – TFW changes
- economy (cost of living, employment...)
- flood recovery

- What emerging trends, issues, challenges, threats or opportunities could affect you that you should pay attention to?

Issues / challenges:

- refugees / new Canadians
- continuation flood support
- economic downturn – funding
- struggles with literacy within public schools
- Sue's retirement

Opportunities:

- ELL, computer basics, GED, (economic downturn), building blocks
- building community support, one-on-ones
- GED supporting retraining, re-entry into workforce
- evolve dog tales to seniors
- unemployed – opportunities for us to train = Alberta / Canada job grants
- Mental Health – could be a challenge also

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

-Art based tools

- What does your organization do really well? What are the best things you do for the membership and community?
 - work with others – community interaction
 - dynamic – change with needs – flexible
 - range of services – intergenerational – vision
 - social media: awareness & increased followers
 - build personal & meaningful relationships with families
 - create continued / ongoing relationships

- What does the organization need to do better? Where do you fall short in meeting the needs or expectations of the membership and community?
 - building more capacity within the community – discussion with schools etc.
 - communicating who we are and how we can help... but room to improve with people finding their way to us – sometimes our message gets lost
 - identifying additional funders & find efficiencies in the securement /sourcing
 - fundraising and donations – “ friends” or other types –fee for service
 - networking to broaden connections outside the MD
 - volunteer recruitment for boards, fundraising

- What has changed since the last strategic plan was developed?
 - economic downturn
 - refugees / new Canadians
 - loss of businesses (High River, renovations, constructions)
 - For Mac – new temporary residents
 - High River: new businesses / big box stores
 - population growth in some places – loss in others
 - programming - Natured Kids, Refugee project, Seniors Memories
 - Bee – fundraiser
 - changes in Government – still a lot of unknowns...
 - changes in LFL Board membership

Scan Summary

Flood impact

Unemployment / retraining

Refugees / new Canadians / new comers / broader (private sponsors)

Rural role – extra challenges

New governments – Provincially & Federally – unknowns, socially, policy changes – gov. timing

Restrictive budgets

succession planning – organization, people

Funding - get grants – general public funds or other sources – sustaining donors & friend

Identify fresh approaches & new donors

Lots going on - & unpredictable / stable / not reactive – build capacity – responsive to major change?

Project funding – continue to build – growth

August 1st 2015 – July 31st 2018 Strategic Plan

Demographics – west end of MD – growth – young families – high demand – new developments – aboriginal – social needs – not self-identified – younger or older pockets

Move from public to private schooling – private tutors – change in education? / parenting – high needs kids – kids falling through the cracks?

What could be for programming

Not knowing how / who to access services

Second (or other) languages

OUR Plan - What is most needed?

philanthropic culture – staff / board donate – piggy banks

Areas of Focus

Programs – started – still needs buy in & focus

Board input – policy discussion

Changes for funding – opportunities

Potential for new demographics – young families

Staff – commination – volunteer management – dividing roles differently – what is this now?

Communication with community

2-3 years- new ED

Brand of LFL – Sue- involving others – board / staff

NEXT STEPS – Where do we go from here?

Policy & procedures – board roles – succession

Business continuity plan

Theming information

Recruitment of new board members – start now – 3 (+) ? positions