



STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beyond Literacy

SEPTEMBER 20TH 2021

PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH:



BLOOM

ASPIRE | GROW | ACHIEVE

BLOOMPLANNING.COM

111 S. INDEPENDENCE MALL EAST • SUITE 800

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106

267.225.8761





OUR HISTORY

In spring 2021, the merger between Center for Literacy (CFL) and Community Learning Center (CLC) brought together 87 total years of literacy experience that has created lasting, positive impacts, not just for individual students, but for their families and the community at large. The merger was the result of a long-term, board-led process that allowed both organizations to carefully explore how they could maximize their ability to combat low-literacy by combining forces, rather than working in parallel. By uniting, the combined agency – renamed Beyond Literacy – goes above and beyond to offer transformational services and classes to those seeking a way to a better life.

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

OUR MISSION

To expand opportunities and improve lives by unleashing the power of literacy through free, high-quality education.

OUR VISION

Adults empowered beyond literacy; children, youth, and families inspired; our communities thriving; our city transformed.

OUR VALUES

Belonging: We create a positive environment where all learners may experience a sense of belonging and worth.

Equity: We provide equal access to education to combat systemic injustices that lead to unequal opportunities.

Lifelong learning: We believe everyone can learn and grow throughout their lives.

Inclusion: We foster an inclusive space in which all cultures, traditions, and social identities are respected and welcomed.

Transparency: We are sincere and accountable to each other and our community.



A. PURPOSE

In February 2021, in anticipation of the merger between Community Learning Center and Center for Literacy, Beyond Literacy’s leadership engaged with Bloom Planning, an education-focused strategy and planning firm, to support a strategic planning process. Over the course of seven months, the Beyond Literacy community engaged in a series of activities that culminated in alignment across the organization around a long-term vision for impact supported by key strategic planning initiatives and a detailed implementation roadmap that, in the aggregate, establishes a clear vision for the future of the organization and ensures the long-term success of Beyond Literacy’s staff and learners.

B. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

- A self-created roadmap to guide decisions, growth, and change and to help us realize our collective mission and vision for the future
- A process of stakeholder engagement yielding a set of carefully considered pillars and goals that bring our core priorities—scholars, educators, and community—into focus for the next three to six years
- A living document that will be revisited and revised on a regular basis

A STRATEGIC PLAN IS NOT...

- A tactical plan
- A static document
- Everything everyone wants nor everything the organization does

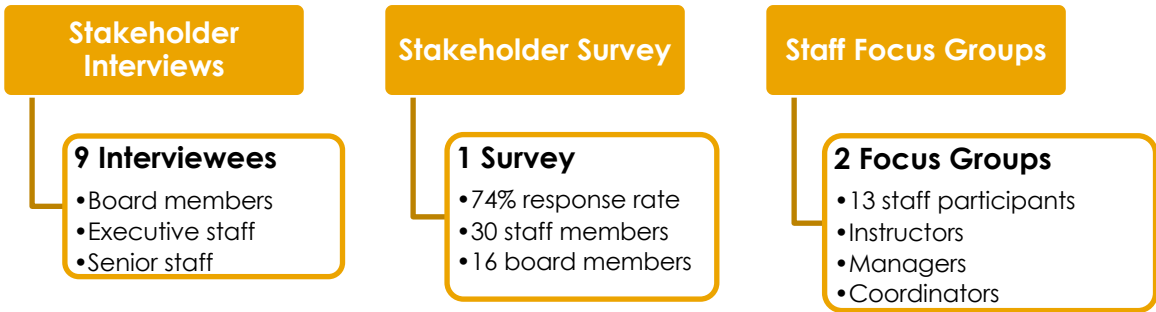
Beyond Literacy developed this strategic plan using a five-phase planning process.

Figure I.1 The Five Phases of Beyond Literacy’s Strategic Planning Process



Phase I: Discovery (February 2021 to April 2021)

As the first step in this strategic planning process, the Bloom team conducted a series of research activities to inform the visioning and strategic initiative–setting process. Through a variety of feedback opportunities, stakeholders from across the Beyond Literacy community had the opportunity to reflect on the network’s organizational strengths and areas for development.



Phase II: Visioning (April 2021 to June 2021)

To make meaning of the extensive information gathered during the discovery phase, Beyond Literacy convened multiple sessions with a strategic planning team comprised of all staff and a subset of board members to build understanding and refine planning options. Each meeting advanced the work toward the creation of a long-term vision for impact for Beyond Literacy and the identification of four planning pillars.

Vision for Impact 2030

Beyond Literacy harnesses the power of education—providing adults and families with free, high-quality classes that change lives. As Philadelphia's largest and highest-performing literacy agency, we deliver effective academic and employment outcomes for our learners. Our dynamic services and partnerships result in efficient alignment and accountability that provide maximum value and results to the communities we serve.

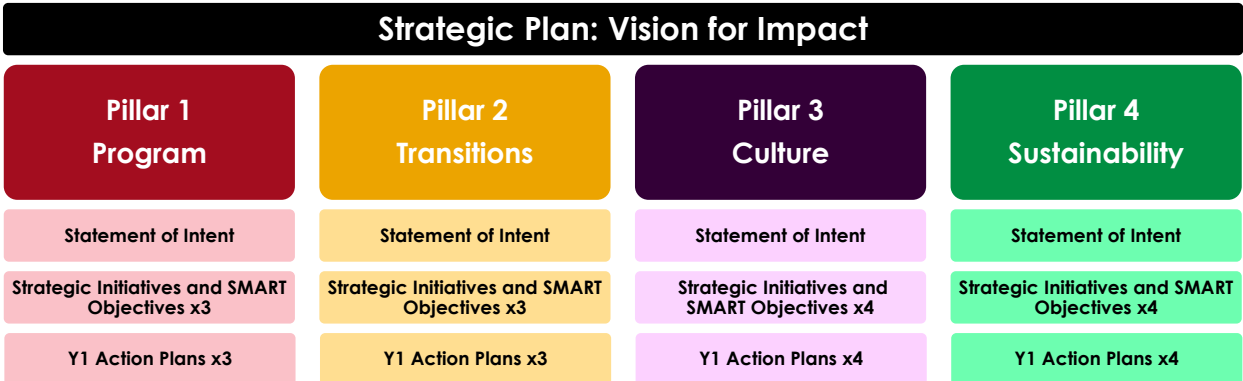
By 2030, we consistently serve at least 3,500 learners annually in our academic and career pathway programs. We positively impact learner prosperity by:

- Exceeding national education and workforce standards through data-informed program delivery, reflective teaching, and high-quality service integration in adult (adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English as a second language), out-of-school youth, and family literacy programs
- Offering our learners and communities opportunities to achieve family-sustaining careers through innovative employer and credentialing partnerships that support our local workforce system
- Creating a highly motivating and productive environment in which to volunteer and work, grounded in fair and equitable treatment for all
- Promoting thought leadership, leveraged resource opportunities, and adult education advocacy that leads to policy-level systems change, increased capacity, and long-term success

Phase III: Detailed Planning (June 2021 to August 2021)

The planning phase allowed for additional participation from the Beyond Literacy community. Selected staff joined one of four detailed planning teams, each focused on one of the four pillars. Through a series of gap analysis activities grounded in the discovery and visioning phase outputs, teams developed three to four strategic initiatives for each pillar. Over the course of two meetings, groups developed a pillar statement of intent and SMART objectives, metrics, annual milestones, and detailed Year 1 action plans for each initiative.

Figure I.2 Beyond Literacy's Strategic Planning Framework



Phase IV: Accountability
(August 2021 to September 2021)

To ensure successful implementation of the detailed action plans produced in the planning phase of this process, Bloom worked with Beyond Literacy’s pillar captains on a series of accountability activities including the creation of the Intra-Pathway Monitoring, Cross-Pathway Monitoring, & Macro Plan Monitoring approach, which is included in the final presentation and report. In addition, the rollout plan for the Beyond Literacy community to learn about the strategic plan prioritizes clear messaging, broad reach, and maintaining momentum.

Figure 1.3 Accountability & Finalization Plans & Tools



Phase V: Finalization
(September 2021 to October 2021)

The final plan will represent the culmination of Beyond Literacy’s robust strategic planning process. While it will capture the plan at a point in time, the action plans that will achieve strategic planning goals will continue to evolve and grow with implementation. Said action plans are captured in a separate *Implementation Tool*. This document includes a manipulatable metrics tracker and master action plan task list designed to be updated as work is completed.

C. PLANNING PILLARS

Pillar 1: Program

5-YEAR STATEMENT OF INTENT

As evidenced by national and local data, Beyond Literacy is a model for operational excellence that consistently exceeds federal and local performance benchmarks for educational gains and high school equivalency attainment. Our programs support all learners by increasing their opportunity for educational success as parents, workers, and community members.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



3-YEAR SMART OBJECTIVES

<p>1.1 Hiring & Onboarding for Direct Service Staff</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit’s hiring and onboarding process ensures that 100 percent of new intake, instructional, and student support staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and tools to orient and support students and increase their satisfaction, retention, learning, and achievement.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>1.2 Ongoing Support for Data-Driven Decision Making</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit’s comprehensive, job-embedded professional development system ensures that 100 percent of direct-service (intake/orientation, education, and case management) staff develop and demonstrate their commitment to using data to guide their professional practice and improve student outcomes.</p>
<p>1.3 Scaling Special Programs</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit maximizes program reach by bringing high-need, high-opportunity special programs to a larger population of learners and families, specifically in family literacy (FL), out-of-school youth (OSY), community schools (CS), and digital literacy (DL). BeLit implements a standard quality-improvement and benchmarking process to ensure that program development and capacity building are ongoing and programs are continuously assessed for efficacy.</p>

Pillar 2: Learner Transitions

5-YEAR STATEMENT OF INTENT

In collaboration with community stakeholders, Beyond Literacy promotes successful long-term employment, postsecondary education, and training transitions through demonstrated approaches that integrate learner support services, leverage community partnerships, and lead in a regional economy dependent on diverse and knowledgeable workers. Our services are cohesive, coordinated, and innovative to promote better economic opportunities, greater equity, and sustainable career pathways.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

<p>Pre-Apprenticeship Expansion Program</p>	<p>Establishing Graduate Support Program</p>	<p>Growing Industry-Focused Partnerships</p>
---------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------

3-YEAR SMART OBJECTIVES

<p>2.1 Pre-Apprenticeship Expansion Program</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit establishes a robust Keystone Energy Employment Pipeline (KEEP) Pre-Apprenticeship Program that serves as a referral pathway for learners and graduates into family-sustaining careers within the energy and utilities sector.</p>
<p>2.2 Establishing Graduate Support Program</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit implements programming and builds operational structures to support alumni transitions to employment, training, and postsecondary education. Programs include learner-centered wraparound support, such as a peer mentoring program, and staff will leverage a data system to track graduate outcomes, support quality improvement, and guide program implementation. Seventy-five percent of learners with an employment or postsecondary engagement goal achieve a positive transition outcome.</p>
<p>2.3 Growing Industry-Focused Partnerships</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit supports three industry-focused programs (two ABE/ASE programs and one ESL program) based on the needs and interests of students. BeLit’s operational structure and capacity have evolved</p>



to ensure the sustainability of the implementation of said programs. Industry-focused programming provides all learners who are not in the graduate cohort quality options for employment and training so that they can secure family-sustaining employment opportunities.

Pillar 3: Culture, Employer of Choice

5-YEAR STATEMENT OF INTENT

Beyond Literacy embodies a culture where all staff are fully engaged, feel valued, and are equipped to excel in contributing to the overall mission of the organization. Our values of belonging, equity, lifelong learning, inclusion, and transparency are promoted through honest communication, accountable leadership, and professional development opportunities that empower staff, making BeLit an employer of choice in the field.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Staff Learning & Development

Intentional Communication

Unifying & Strengthening Team

Comprehensive Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Approach

3-YEAR SMART OBJECTIVES

<p>3.1 Staff Learning & Development</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit implements a professional learning and development strategy that ensures all staff participate in a combination of role-specific and approved, self-elected professional development opportunities. These professional development experiences directly support staff’s ability to achieve our highest and best performance in our roles and as members of the BeLit professional community.</p>
<p>3.2 Intentional Communication</p>	<p>By June 2024, Beyond Literacy implements a robust internal communication strategy that ensures staff at all levels are connected to updates and changes with appropriate notice allowing them to succeed in their roles. All staff know whom to include in communications (emails and meetings), and Beyond Literacy intentionally identifies staff-input opportunities, such as five to 15 minutes of structured time to offer feedback at all meetings, particularly monthly all-staff meetings.</p>
<p>3.3 Unifying & Strengthening Team</p>	<p>By June 2024, BeLit implements a strategy to facilitate organizational integration. The organization has a feedback process in place that encourages staff to communicate both personal and professional needs to their fellow team members and leadership and that allows them to fully participate within the organization’s cultural norms. BeLit provides opportunities for all staff to collaborate and build relationships across departments and roles, so staff are able to meet, share needs and ideas, and support one another in achieving outcomes.</p>



3.4 Comprehensive Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Approach	By June 2024, BeLit establishes DEI as a core value, working intentionally and directly to address matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion across race, gender, age, religion, experience, and other social identities. Leadership and staff create spaces for DEI to be discussed in a safe and structured way, and BeLit supports DEI training for all staff, so they are equipped to build recruitment and accountability structures and develop organizational policies, programs, and partnerships with an equity lens.
---------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Pillar 4: Sustainability

5-YEAR STATEMENT OF INTENT

Beyond Literacy leverages our powerful brand reputation for transformational programs by actively promoting adult education as a solution to systemic inequities. We are valued thought leaders in the fields of literacy and career development, allowing us to build our network of champions, volunteers, and donors and pursue diverse funding opportunities that optimize our reach and impact.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Advocacy & Awareness

Volunteer Strategy

Diversified Funding

Communications & Outreach Strategy

3-YEAR SMART OBJECTIVES

4.1 Advocacy & Awareness	By June 2024, the Advocacy Task Force, which is composed of board members, staff, and/or program volunteers, cultivates relationships with identified adult education champions from both grassroots and state/local organizations to exert influence on policy-making, funding priorities, and program support.
4.2 Volunteer Strategy	By June 2024, BeLit has a range of volunteer roles available to community members and employs a full-time volunteer coordinator to recruit, onboard, train, and support 100-plus volunteers annually across all roles, including classroom volunteers, corporate volunteers, student support program volunteers, microvolunteering volunteers, and event/project-specific group volunteers.
4.3 Diversified Funding	By June 2024, Beyond Literacy has retained and grown our government contracts, increased our individual giving base by 25 percent, and broadened our foundation relationships. BeLit cultivates and strengthens local corporate and other partnerships to establish reliable, agile funding streams.
4.4 Communications & Outreach Strategy	By June 2024, a comprehensive communications plan, which utilizes both print and digital platforms, supports agencywide initiatives, informs and recruits learners, encourages individual and corporate engagement, and helps to cultivate meaningful partnerships. BeLit maintains a consistent branded presence that reinforces our reputation in the communities we serve and our expertise as leaders in the adult literacy field.



D. ORGANIZATIONAL INTEGRATION CROSS-PILLAR CONSIDERATION

A merger is a transformative process. Beyond Literacy’s leadership and staff recognize the importance of operational and cultural integration. While a focus on unifying Beyond Literacy staff is memorialized as a strategic planning initiative, the organization is also committed to ongoing consideration of the ways in which organizational integration can be factored into the implementation across all strategic planning initiatives.

E. STRATEGIC PLAN AT A GLANCE

Vision for Impact 2030

Beyond Literacy harnesses the power of education—providing adults and families with free, high-quality classes that change lives. As Philadelphia’s largest and highest-performing literacy agency, we deliver effective academic and employment outcomes for our learners. Our dynamic services and partnerships result in efficient alignment and accountability that provide maximum value and results to the communities we serve.

By 2030, we consistently serve at least 3,500 learners annually in our academic and career pathway programs. We positively impact learner prosperity by:

- Exceeding national education and workforce standards through data-informed program delivery, reflective teaching, and high-quality service integration in adult (adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English as a second language), out-of-school youth, and family literacy programs
- Offering our learners and communities opportunities to achieve family-sustaining careers through innovative employer and credentialing partnerships that support our local workforce system
- Creating a highly motivating and productive environment in which to volunteer and work, grounded in fair and equitable treatment for all
- Promoting thought leadership, leveraged resource opportunities, and adult education advocacy that leads to policy-level systems change, increased capacity, and long-term success

PILLAR 1 	Program	1.1 Hiring & Onboarding for Direct Service Staff 1.2 Ongoing Support for Data-Driven Decision Making 1.3 Scaling Special Programs
PILLAR 2 	Learner Transitions	2.1 Pre-Apprenticeship Expansion Program 2.2 Establishing Graduate Support Program 2.3 Growing Industry-Focused Partnership
PILLAR 3 	Culture, Employer of Choice	3.1 Staff Learning & Development 3.2 Intentional Communication 3.3 Unifying & Strengthening Team 3.4 Comprehensive Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Approach
PILLAR 4 	Sustainability	4.1 Advocacy & Awareness 4.2 Volunteer Strategy 4.3 Diversified Funding 4.4 Communications & Outreach Strategy