



Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Approved November 15, 2014

INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan was designed to provide Thorne Nature Experience with a road map for the most efficient, effective, and meaningful way to achieve its mission to build Earth stewardship by connecting youth to nature through joyful, place-based, hands-on environmental education experiences. Thorne's Board and staff completed substantial research and invested significant time in debating and deciding upon the goals and objectives set forth in this plan. The Board and staff agree that the plan is ambitious, and that all of the goals and objectives may not be achievable in the coming four years. As such, progress in achieving the plan's goals and objectives will be reviewed during the first quarter of 2018 to determine if the plan should be revised and extended to include 2019 or 2020 or if it is appropriate to begin a new planning effort and write the next strategic plan for the organization. In addition to charting a course for Thorne's near future, the plan will prove invaluable in helping Thorne determine when to deviate from its chosen path. It is inevitable that along the journey, Thorne will encounter numerous unforeseen challenges and opportunities. In each of these instances, the plan will provide Thorne with a clear understanding of what it is giving up when it chooses to take a different path towards achieving its inevitably bright and successful future.

PROGRAMMATIC GOALS

Goal P1:

Expand **networking and collaboration** within Boulder County's environmental education community

Objectives:

1. Maintain a leadership role within the Boulder County EE Collaborative while engaging other organizations in sharing leadership responsibilities
 - o Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - o Lead: E.D., P.D.
2. Establish group of organizations to collaborate to design and deliver an expanded and integrated continuum of EE programs for pre-k through middle school at a pilot group of schools in both BVSD and SVVSD
 - o Timing: design by 5/31/2017, implementation beginning 9/1/2017
 - o Lead: E.D., P.D.

Goal P2:

Ensure Thorne's expertise and resources are required for the delivery of any **programs outside of Boulder County** and that delivery of these programs does not negatively affect programming within Boulder County

Objectives:

1. Bi-Annually compile profit and loss statements, including value of management and administration, for any programs operating outside Boulder County
 - o Timing: bi-Annually during 1st quarter beginning 1/1/2015
 - o Lead: E.D., P.D.
2. Cease operations of any programs outside of Boulder County that are not profitable or whose operations are a distraction to Thorne's Boulder County programs
 - o Timing: ongoing
 - o Lead: P.D., Staff

Goal P3:

Increase impact of current programs through enhancements to **curriculum**

Objectives:

1. Develop philosophy for addressing behavioral/learning issues encountered when working with disadvantaged youth and update Thorne's Educational Philosophy and all relevant Thorne curriculum and trainings
 - o Timing: by 5/31/2015
 - o Lead: P.D., Staff
2. Formalize curriculum, including the development of benchmarks, for each Thorne Summer Camp offering
 - o Timing: by 5/31/2016
 - o Lead: P.D., Staff
3. Establish annual curriculum development goals for Summer Camp, In-School, and Field Trip Programs and ensure that school based programs are updated to address any changes in Boulder Valley, St. Vrain or statewide science or environmental literacy standards
 - o Timing: annual during goal setting and budget process beginning 9/1/2016

- Lead: P.D., Staff

Goal P4:

Enhance and expand school year and summer programs to better serve **target demographic** of low-income and Latino youth

Objectives:

1. Restructure marketing and delivery of Nature Immersion Initiative to offer seamless and impactful delivery of In-School, Field Trip, After-School, and Summer Camp programs to students
 - Timing: by 7/31/2015
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
2. Design and implement a program to engage Latino parents in supporting their children's engagement in Thorne programming and Earth stewardship
 - Timing: design by 7/31/2015, implementation ongoing beginning 9/1/2017
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
3. Reallocate In-School program resources to focus on Nature Immersion Model and reach more low-income and Latino youth
 - Timing: ongoing through 8/31/2016
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
4. Assess potential to offer a field trip program to some (Title 1) or all SVVSD students at one grade-level
 - Timing: by 5/31/2016
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
5. Design, pilot, and implement a field trip program for some (Title 1) or all SVVSD students at one grade-level as appropriate
 - Timing: beginning 9/1/2016
 - Lead: P.D., Staff

Goal P5:

Measure success of programs, including their ability to build Earth Stewardship, and use information to adjust programs and program delivery as needed

Objectives:

1. Establish strategy based on industry best practices to measure both 'outputs' (students served) and 'outcomes' (earth stewardship, science learning with specific emphasis on school district and statewide science and environmental literacy standards) for each of Thorne's programs
 - Timing: by 12/31/2015
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
2. Collect pertinent data based on selected 'output' and 'outcome' indicators
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2016
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
3. Report successes and opportunities for improvement of programs to the Board, partners and supporters based on selected 'output' and 'outcome' indicators and metrics
 - Timing: annually beginning 6/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., P.D.

4. Establish organizational and programmatic metrics based on selected ‘output’ and ‘outcome’ indicators
 - Timing: annual during goal setting and budget process beginning 9/1/2016
 - Lead: P.D., BOD, Staff
5. Determine changes to current programs and curriculum with input from Board, staff, and partners, based on selected ‘output’ and ‘outcome’ indicators and metrics
 - Timing: ongoing beginning during goal setting and budget process beginning 9/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., P.D., Staff

Goal P6:

Enhance and expand Summer Camp program to generate additional **earned income**

Objectives:

1. Design and implement new summer camp offerings to attract an increased number of campers ages 3-5 and 9-15
 - Timing: design by 9/30/2016, implementation ongoing beginning 6/1/2017
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
2. Design and implement a viable model for offering Summer Camp programs to Lafayette and Louisville youth
 - Timing: design by 9/30/2016, implementation ongoing beginning 6/1/2017
 - Lead: P.D., Staff

Goal P7:

Increase **wild nature play** within all Thorne programs

Objectives:

1. Develop practices and guidelines for expanding wild nature play within Thorne programs and update all relevant Thorne curriculum and trainings
 - Timing: by 12/31/2016
 - Lead: P.D., Staff
2. Complete thorough review of parent and teacher communication and contracts and change as necessary to educate about the benefits of and allow for expanded wild nature play
 - Timing: by 5/31/2017
 - Lead: E.D., BOD
3. Secure increased access to locations for wild nature play for Thorne program participants from public land managers, local school districts, and private land owners
 - Timing: by 12/31/2017
 - Lead: E.D., BOD

Goal P8:

Address **inequality in EE programming across grade levels** at Boulder County elementary schools

Objectives:

1. Assess pros and cons of developing a 1st grade (plants) or 2nd grade (insects) field trip program and offering it in addition to or in place of Thorne’s existing 4th grade BVSD field trip program
 - Timing: by 8/31/2017
 - Lead: E.D., BOD, P.D., Staff

2. Design, pilot, and implement a 1st grade (plants) or 2nd grade (insects) field trip program for BVSD students as appropriate
 - Timing: beginning 9/1/2017
 - Lead: P.D. and Staff

Goal P9:

Ensure a continuum of environmental education with multiple contacts for pre-k through middle school for students within **Title 1 feeder school networks** within Boulder County

Objective:

1. Develop, shift resources to, and implement or fund programming to address any remaining gaps in services for pre-k through middle school students within Title 1 feeder school networks within Boulder County
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2018
 - Lead: E.D., BOD, P.D., Staff

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

Goal O1:

Continue to hire, support, and retain the best environmental educators and **staff**

Objectives:

1. All staff to participate in a minimum of two days of training and professional development every year
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D.
2. Conduct a day-long all-staff training to enhance morale, job satisfaction, and/or productivity each year
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D.
3. Assess current and future workload for existing staff positions and restructure job descriptions and expand staff as necessary to create both a sustainable workload for all Thorne employees and a highly efficient and skilled team capable of achieving the organization's strategic plan
 - Timing: by 6/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D.
4. Assess current benefits package for all staff, including administration of benefits, and design and implement a plan to improve benefits and benefits administration as appropriate
 - Timing: design by 8/31/2015, implementation beginning 9/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D., Finance Committee

Goal O2:

Maintain **financial** health of organization

Objective:

1. Maintain 3-month operating revenue (1/4 annual budget) as cash reserve balance (total equity, less current value of restricted assets and temporarily restricted assets)
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D., Finance Committee, BOD

Goal O3:

Continue to enhance the effectiveness of the **Board of Directors**

Objective:

1. Establish and implement annual Board goals and work plan and Board self-evaluation
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: BOD, E.D.

Goal O4:

Practice what we preach

Objective:

1. Continually enhance organizational and staff sustainability practices which could include reduce ghg emissions, reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce water consumption, increase composting and recycling, etc.
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D., Staff

Goal O5:

Undertake initiatives to make Thorne and its programs more **inclusive** and authentic

Objectives:

1. Implement Thorne's Inclusiveness Plan
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D., BOD, Staff
2. Evaluate potential positive and negative impacts of integrating scholarship students from I Have a Dream and Nature Immersion Initiative schools into "Camp Experiences" with other Thorne campers
 - Timing: by 3/30/2016
 - Lead: P.D., BOD, Staff
3. Review and update Thorne's Inclusiveness Plan
 - Timing: by 5/31/2016
 - Lead: E.D., BOD, Staff

Goal O6:

Develop **major donor** fundraising program

Objectives:

1. Design and implement Edventurer event program for Major Donors
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 5/1/2015
 - Lead: E.D., Staff
2. Recruit five new major donors with gifts of \$1,000 or more annually, and develop one new significant major donor contribution of \$5,000 or more annually
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., BOD, Staff

Goal O7:

Increase **community awareness** of organization's programs serving disadvantaged youth amongst potential donors

Objectives:

1. Complete market research project for target audience
 - Timing: by 8/31/2015
 - Lead: E.D.
2. Design and implement marketing and outreach plan to reach target audience
 - Timing: design by 12/31/2015, implementation ongoing beginning 1/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., Staff

Goal O8:

Make investments to enhance **efficiency** and effectiveness of organization

Objectives:

1. Transition to Campminder database for donor management system
 - Timing: by 9/30/2015
 - Lead: E.D., Staff
2. Establish and achieve annual efficiency goals
 - Timing: ongoing beginning during goal setting and budget process for 2015
 - Lead: E.D., Staff

Goal O9:

Optimize **volunteer** engagement in delivery of Thorne programs

Objectives:

1. Design and implement a plan to increase total volunteer hours contributed to Thorne by 40%
 - Timing: design by 12/31/2015, achieve objective by 12/31/2016
 - Lead: E.D., Staff
2. Design and implement a plan to significantly increase the use of volunteers ages 50 and older
 - Timing: design by 12/31/2015, implementation ongoing beginning 1/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., Staff
3. Design and implement a plan to increase Thorne alumni engagement as volunteers and interns
 - Timing: design by 5/31/2016, implementation ongoing beginning 6/1/2016
 - Lead: E.D., Staff

Goal O10:

Maintain Sombrero Marsh as a **world class facility**

Objectives:

1. Design and implement plan to expand use of Sombrero Marsh by the general public
 - Timing: Timing: design by 5/31/2016, implementation ongoing beginning 6/1/2016
 - Lead: ED, Staff
2. Establish and achieve annual Marsh infrastructure enhancement goals
 - Timing: ongoing beginning during goal setting and budget process for 2016
 - Lead: E.D., Staff

Goal O11:

Ensure **Oakleigh Thorne's** lasting legacy as founder

Objective:

1. Formalize and market planned giving program to support Oak Thorne Vision Fund to potential donors
 - Timing: ongoing beginning 1/1/2017
 - Lead: Oakleigh Thorne, E.D., BOD