

**Learning for Life Grant Application**  
Palm Beach County Schools  
September 2006

**1. PROJECT NEED STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES**

- Schools to be served by the project and how the funds will impact each site
- Needs of the targeted group of students, particularly learning needs

The Learning for Life (LFL) program will be made available to all kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms in up to 82 schools and all sixth to eighth grade classrooms in up to 4 middle schools serving at least 20,410 students, including special needs, in the 2006-2007 school year.

		Highland Elem.	B	Panther Run Elem.	A
		Indian Pines Elem.	B	Pine Grove Elem.	A
Allamanda Elem.	A	J C Mitchell Elem.	A	Pioneer Park Elem.	A
Barton Elem.	A	Jerry Thomas Elem.	A	Pleasant City Elem.	D
Belle Glade Elem.	B	Jupiter Elem.	A	Plumosa Elem.	C
Belvedere Elem.	A	Jupiter Farms Elem.	A	Poinciana Elem.	C
Benoist Farms Elem.	C	K E Cunningham/Canal		Rolling Green Elem.	A
Berkshire Elem.	A	Point Elem	C	Rosenwald Elem.	C
Binks Forest Elem.	A	Lake Park Elem.	B	S D Spady Elem.	A
C O Taylor/Kirklane		Lake Shore Middle	C	Sandpiper Shores	A
Elem.	A	Lantana Elem.	C	Seminole Trails	C
Calusa Elem.	A	Liberty Park Elem.	B	South Grade Elem.	B
Cholee Lake Elem.	B	Lighthouse Elem.		South Olive Elem.	B
Coral Reef Elem.	A	Limestone Creek	A	Timber Trace Elem.	A
Coral Sunset Elem.	A	Lincoln Elem.	D	Verde Elem.	A
Crystal Lakes Elem.	A	Loxahatchee Grove		Washington Elem.	C
Cypress Trails Elem.	A	Elem.	A	Waters Edge Elem.	A
D D Eisenhower Elem.	C	Manatee Elem	A	Wellington Elem.	A
Del Prado Elem.	A	Meadow Park Elem.	A	West Gate Elem.	A
Diamond View Elem.	A	Melaleuca Elem.	B	West Riviera Elem.	D
Discovery Key Elem.	A	New Horizons Elem.	A	Westward Elem.	C
Dr. Bethune Elem.	D	North Grade Elem.	A	Whispering Pines	A
Egret Lake Elem.	A	North Palm Beach	A	Woodlands Middle	A
Elbridge Gale (New)		Northboro Elem.	B		
Forest Hill Elem.	C	Northmore Elem.	B		
Frontier Elem.	A	Odyssey Middle	A		
Galaxy Elem.	B	Okeeheelee Middle	A		
Glade View Elem.	C	Orchard View Elem.	C		
Golden Grove Elem.	A	Pahokee Elem.	C		
Gove Elem.	A	Palm Beach Gardens			
Greenacres Elem.	A	Elem.	A		
Grove Park Elem.	C	Palm Beach Public			
Hagen Road Elem.	A	Elem.	A		
Hammock Pointe	A	Palm Springs Elem.	C		
Heritage Elem.	B	Palmetto Elem.	A		

Participating schools reflect the district's diversity:

Geographic: Schools from each of the district's seven regional districts are represented.

Economic: Title I schools serve large populations of low income students as determined by the percentage of students eligible for the free or reduced price meal program. All of the participating C and D (No F Schools), 21, are designated Title I (economically disadvantaged students). Thirty-Three of the remaining A and B schools are Title I.

Academic: Under the Florida A+ grading system, listed Palm Beach County schools have been graded: A- 50 schools, B- 13 schools, C- 17 schools, and D- 4 schools.

The goal of the proposed project is to provide the Learning for Life character education program for elementary and middle school students in the listed Palm Beach County Schools. The Learning for Life program aims to positively impact students through strengthening values and character and improving behavior. This will help to remove barriers to learning and lead to improved student academic achievement. The outcome objectives of the proposed project are to:

1. Increase positive student classroom behavior.
2. Improve student life skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.
3. Improve student character traits such as self worth and confidence, motivation, and ethical decision-making.

The participating schools will implement the elementary, middle, and special needs components of the LFL program.

## **2. PROJECT DESIGN**

- Mentoring and /or instructional activities and trainings

LFL is an educational program designed to meet the needs of youth and schools. It helps youth meet the challenge of growing up by teaching character and good decision making skills then linking the learned skills to real world situations.

Learning for Life's classroom based programs are delivered through an action learning **process by assigned guidance counselors at each school.** The elementary program features age appropriate and grade specific lesson plans to enhance and support the core curriculum. The LFL representatives coordinate guest speakers to support lesson plan topics upon counselor requests, linking schools with community partnerships. The curriculum for each grade level, kindergarten through fifth grades, consists of 60 lesson plans designed to reinforce social, ethical and academic skills in areas such as critical and creative thinking, ethical decision making, interpersonal relationships, practical living skills, building self worth, writing and other language arts, and participating citizenship. The lesson plans were written by educators for educators. **The Middle School program is age and grade specific with 44 lesson plans designed to reinforce social, academic and**

career education skills in various areas, such as critical and creative thinking, conflict resolution, decision making, interpersonal relationships, practical life skills, self esteem, writing and language arts, citizenship and personal fitness. Recognition includes the “Builders Award of Excellence.” For purposes of this application, the district is proposing to adopt the elementary, middle, and special needs level components.

Learning for Life offers recognition for all students to encourage positive behavior, foster a sense of belonging in the group, and assist in building self worth. The recognition plan for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade both standard and special needs, uses an individual student recognition chart. There are 15 brightly colored peel off stickers that relate to the 60 lesson plan themes in each book. When the class completes a designated set of themes, the teacher places the appropriate sticker on the honor wall chart by the name of each student who participated. Students in the K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are called “Seekers”; 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades are called “Discoverers”; 5<sup>th</sup> grade is called “Challengers”; and special needs students are called “Champions.” The lesson plans can be integrated with the core curricula or used as stand alone activities according to what the individual school deems necessary. The recommended usage of the program is at least one lesson for 45 minutes once a week. The activities may be taught in units. As students complete the units, they receive the appropriate recognition. A family involvement component is part of each lesson plan to extend the lesson into the student’s home environment.

The LFL lessons have been correlated with the Sunshine State Standards, Palm Beach County benchmarks, and the FCAT requirements for each grade level for Character Education addressing trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. In addition, the lessons are correlated with the for each grade level addressing health literacy, responsible health behavior and promotion of healthy living.

Children face many challenges every day as they encounter the complexities of today’s society such as drugs, gangs, violence, and dysfunctional family environments. The ability to make good ethical and moral decisions is critical for today’s youth. The LFL program is designed to support educators and youth serving organizations in their efforts toward preparing young people to successfully handle these complex issues. LFL also helps youth develop social skills, life skills, assist in character development, self-confidence, self-esteem, motivation, and self worth.

The LFL program is designed to help youth, through character education, to become productive, ethical adults.

### **3. ACTION PLAN**

- Timeline for services to be delivered, goals, and major activities
- Management plan
- Professional development activities

The Gulf Stream Council has hired Learning for Life Director to oversee the implementation of the program with plans to add a program specialist. The council

support staff will assist the LFL Director. **Ongoing teacher professional development sessions will be conducted with each participating school facilitator during training workshops and site based instruction.** John Hay II, Elementary Guidance Specialist, will serve as the school district liaison. Designees of the participating schools will work with the council to facilitate school-based scheduling and implementation/continuation.

***GOAL:*** *To provide a character education program for Palm Beach County School students that will strengthen values and character and improve behavior.*

#### August

- In collaboration with School District, LFL submits grant application to DOE.
- The School Board of Palm Beach County and Gulf Stream Council, Inc. identify new target schools and classrooms/specialty areas, using district data.

#### September

- Submit Grant Application and Partnership Agreement between LFL and the School District to the School Board for approval;
- Conduct Needs Assessment;
- Develop program; Order and Distribute materials;
- Conduct staff and teacher training sessions/workshops at schools selected;
- Obtain memoranda of understanding from schools;
- Submit participation roster to school district contact(s).

#### October – December

- Conduct Learning for Life program activities;
- Begin site visits to assist with program implementation, support teachers/mentors;
- Begin outdoor activities (field days);
- Pre-test students.

#### January - April

- Continue program activities;
- Conduct on-going training, support and recognition;
- Provide additional program supplies;
- Continue Field Days;
- Continue program evaluations;
- Complete post-tests.
- Submit Mid-Accountability Reports to DOE;

#### May

- Provide recognition/appreciation for youth and adult participants;
- Complete program evaluation;
- Conduct outcomes surveys and summarize assessment results;
- Set program agenda for upcoming school year;
- Recognize principals, lead teachers, top students and Board members at annual luncheon.

June

- Present “Executive Summary” Report to School Board;
- Collect attendance and academic data from school principals/designee;
- Complete summative evaluation reports for DOE/Regional LFL office;
- Meet with principals regarding future partnerships.

The school district will serve as the fiscal agent for the \$175,000.00 project, subcontracting with the Gulf Stream Council for LFL services. **The Learning for Life Representatives will have direct contact schools twice a month.** The council will use the funds for salaries and employee benefits (two executives and support services), travel, curriculum and classroom materials, Learning for life fees, liability insurance, teacher and school awards, computer upgrades, LFL tracking and evaluation costs.

Learning for Life executives attend a two-week National training course upon employment. After successful course completion, each executive is issued Learning for Life executive certification. Annually, the executives attend national Learning for Life courses to review program revisions and additions. In addition Florida LFL executives attend conferences to review specifics particular to their local school districts.

#### **4. PARTNERSHIPS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- Internal and external partners and involvement in sustaining the project.

Learning for Life’s “Partners in Character” and “Schools of Character program is designed to involve local businesses in the financial support of character education in Palm Beach County. Learning for Life is involved with the monthly Palm Beach County School District Character Education Committee meetings. In most of our schools we work with the guidance office to administer the program. The guidance counselors help ensure the LFL program is implemented by trained teachers or counselors.

Our community partnerships include but are not limited to: Bank Atlantic, Solid Waste Management, South Florida Water Management, Smith Barney, Oxbow Environmental Center, Civic Clubs, Police Departments and Fire Departments. These organizations add value to the program by providing speakers, demonstrations, role models, educational field trip opportunities and adult mentors. **In cooperation with our partners, Learning for Life will increase the amount of field days to be held in Palm Beach County. There will be an opportunity for elementary, middle, and special needs students focusing on life skills, environmental science, and career awareness.**

#### **5. SUPPORT FOR READING /STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES**

- How the project will incorporate reading initiatives and one or more of the Florida State Board of Education (SBE) strategic imperatives.

Learning for Life supports the Department’s reading initiative, “Just Read, Florida!” and *SBE Strategic Imperative 3: Improve Student Rates of Learning/Every student is proficient on grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics.* Learning for Life character education lessons suggests books to read to the students to reinforce character

themes. There are also lessons such as “Classic Literature” that are completely literature-based and require the students to read and comprehend age-appropriate books or excerpts and answer questions using critical thinking skills. Learning for Life also includes a Family/Home activity that goes along with each classroom lesson. These activities encourage the parents to work with their children on a supplemental home lesson that includes stories to be read to the students and activities such as word mapping. In this case, the parents or family members become the child’s “mentor” not only for reinforcing character, but also reinforcing reading skills. Learning for Life lessons are correlated to Sunshine State Standards with specific emphasis on reading. Learning for Life teaches character while supplementing academic skills, such as reading.

## **6. DISSEMINATION AND MARKETING PLAN**

- Methods/strategies to be used in disseminating and marketing information about the project to appropriate populations.

The Gulf Stream Council will disseminate information about the LFL successes through online newsletters and other publications. The LFL Director will inform schools about the LFL program through regularly scheduled district hosted workshops and the annual recognition luncheon.

## **7. EVALUATION**

- Project outcomes will be evaluated using qualitative and quantitative data

Students and teachers are involved in the assessment process. Student are given a pre-test / post-test survey. Improvement in student knowledge of character traits will be determined by this survey method. The classroom teacher implementing the program evaluates the classroom as a whole and is surveyed concerning their satisfaction with the Learning for Life program and material. The evaluation plan is designed to address the overall behavior change in Palm Beach County students subsequent to receiving instruction from the Learning for Life program. The plan is both formative and summative. It includes a programmatic assessment through the use of a program survey. Participating students will complete pre-and post-tests. Principals will be asked to furnish attendance and academic data for participating students in order to measure attendance and academic improvements. The program must be evaluated, and outcomes assessed, to determine where improvements need to be made, and whether pre-set goals have been achieved. Internal monitoring will be conducted by Gulf Stream Council, Inc., which manages LFL locally. A mid-accountability report will be submitted in January 2007 and an annual report will be completed in June 2007.



**Student Performance:** Any measure that is specific to student performance; e.g., test scores, attendance, behavior, award of diplomas, certificates, etc. Students may include pre-k, K-12, and adult learners

(1) Name of Performance and Brief Description	(2) Method of Evaluating Performance	(3) Method of DOE Verification	(4) Timelines for Data Collection
<p>10% of the mentored students improving their <b>letter grades</b>.</p> <p>12% of the mentored students improving their <b>school behavior</b>.</p> <p>10% of the mentored students improving their <b>school preparedness</b> (homework).</p> <p>5% of the mentored students improved their <b>school attendance</b>.</p> <p>10% of the mentored students improving their <b>general attitude</b>.</p>	<p>Students' letter grades will be monitored through the 9-week report cards.</p> <p>School behavior will be monitored through the number of school disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and expulsions.</p> <p>School Preparedness will be monitored through teacher feedback on students turning in homework and being prepared for class.</p> <p>School attendance will be monitored through school and district attendance reports.</p> <p>General attitude will be monitored through teacher feedback surveys and student pre and post test data.</p>	<p>Report Cards</p> <p>Disciplinary Referrals/Observation</p> <p>Evaluation Summaries</p> <p>School Attendance Records</p> <p>Evaluation Summaries/Participant Competency Evaluations</p>	<p>Quarterly Collection</p> <p>Quarterly Collection</p> <p>Yearly Collection (4th Quarter)</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Yearly Collection (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter)</p>



**Summative Evaluation**

A program review is conducted at the end of each school year. Classroom pre-test/post-test evaluations and teacher/mentor survey results are compiled and a general report is prepared to identify the successes of the program, and to modify activities as necessary. During the 2005-2006 school year 77 school sites were served by the Learning for Life program in Palm Beach County. Approximately 135 teachers, aides and other school personnel received Learning for Life training. 4,900 students participated in the year-end assessment. Overall a 6% increase in knowledge of character traits was achieved.

**Reporting Outcomes**

The required accountability reports will be submitted to the Department of Education: The mid-term report will be submitted by January 31, 2007 and the final report will be submitted by July 31, 2007.

