

## **Rationale**

The greatest deterrent to student learning and achievement is not lack of ability but a deficit in meeting the learning and emotional needs of students through the current academic structure and approach to school. Responsible educators identify students whose needs, shaped by past educational and personal experiences, cannot be effectively met by a traditional educational experience. Once these students are identified, educational options that address their needs should be designed and implemented.

The Franklin Alternative Program is designed to bridge the gap between the needs of a 10th, 11th or 12th grades student and the established educational process. Our structure includes elements designed to address those needs. Entering students and their parents will meet at Franklin for an introduction to the important aspects of the Franklin School structure.

## **Key Elements**

The Philosophy

The Goals

The Incentive Point System

The Advocacy/Assistance Intervention System

A Comprehensive Work/Student Component

## **Franklin Philosophy**

We believe that students will behave differently if they are treated differently. Students given the same respect afforded to an adult, with guidance and support, are taught that success in school and life is their responsibility.

## **Program Goal**

Our goal is to provide staff and students with a safe culture in an environment where they can learn and develop academic and life skills without fear of rejection or failure. *Students don't do well when they fear rejection or mistreatment.*

The program addresses the fear of rejections or mistreatment through the development of stands that direct staff and students to treat all others with respect. All are expected to demonstrate an appropriate level of tolerance for diversity. A student's treatment of staff, other students, school property and the learning environment, all affect the student's daily grade. Rules that address verbal/physical abuse and harassing behaviors involve steps that address both the needs of the innocent and the significant consequences for the guilty.

*A student's past experiences may cause fear of possible failure.* Fear of failure is addressed through an incentive point system and an advocacy intervention system. The incentive point system clearly delineates what students must and must not do to maintain passing grades. The advocacy intervention system monitors students' progress in order to support them as they learn to manage personal issues that could hinder their success in the program.

## **Preparation for the Future**

To assist students to become “ready for life” is a major goal. This may require a different skill emphasis for each student. The basic tools are:

- Responsibly for personal decisions
- Accountability for personal actions
- Respect for self and others
- Tolerance for others and their differences
- Community service
- Communication skills
- Math skills
- Completion of the graduation requirements

The first five tools: respect, responsibility, accountability, tolerance and community service, relate to the need for students to develop individual character. The remaining three encompass the academic standards necessary to earn a diploma and success in future employment opportunities. Students exhibit appropriate levels of respectful behavior and responsible decision making to succeed. The program supports students in their development of responsibility by allowing them to make their own decisions in response to program guidelines and expectations. They are further supported consequences for their decisions of they:

- exhibit appropriate levels of respectful behavior in order to succeed.  
Students
- exhibit respectful and tolerant behavior toward all staff, students and guests.
- are loyal to the Franklin Family and program by signing and honoring the Franklin School Safe Culture Obligation Contract.

The Franklin staff members provide students numerous opportunities to volunteer in the community. Through Community Service our students show appreciation for the support the community shows our school. More importantly, experience gained through participation in community service activities supports positive growth in character development.

The program offers students graduation requirements through an abbreviated academic schedule that includes a mandatory work/study component. Graduating Franklin students receive an Edward Little high school diploma.

## **Advocacy**

The Franklin Advocacy is designed to be a nurturing supportive experience where our safe school values and those embedded in our philosophy are modeled and which provides our student with:

- A trusting, respectful relationship with another significant adult at Franklin, in addition to school administrators, helps students with problems, conflicts and other issues that could block student success at Franklin.
- A smaller group of classmates to feel accepted by and connected to.
- The desire and skill to actively listen and support each other.
- Bolstered self-esteem and increased comfort with themselves and others.
- Genuine tolerance for others and their beliefs and differences.

- Increased community awareness:
- Employment opportunities
- Services/resources
- Training/educational opportunities
- The habit of mind of supporting and being involved in community service.
- Social skill development.
- Life skills development such as:
  - Budget building
  - Checkbook use
  - Resume writing
  - Problem solving
  - Increased social, emotional, physical and academic resilience
- Goal setting skills
- Conflict resolution skills

Support at effectively monitoring their progress and status at Franklin:

- Point system (weekly grades/running total)
- Conditions status
- Attendance
- Content Standard completion
- Portfolio organization and awareness.

Effective communication skills:

- Understanding the difference between argument versus disagreement
- Understanding that people can disagree and it doesn't mean anybody is wrong
- Communicating our thoughts/feelings accurately and not just in reaction while simultaneously choosing words and a manner that allow people to hear what we have to say and not stop listening

### **Grading Process/Point System**

Research documents that immediate feedback can motivate students to succeed. Students are graded on the basis of a point system in each class and every day. Teachers maintain a record of students' points on wall charts that student can check to determine their progress. At the end of each week, a student's scores are computed. On Fridays, students are given "paychecks" that show the number of points they earned the previous week. The points on the "paychecks" are used to determine the letter grade earned in each class.

Inherent in the Franklin philosophy is the belief that success in life is based upon developing character traits as well as academic achievement. Therefore, the Franklin point system is more importantly based upon the development of character. Character is the ability to treat others respectfully, and exhibit responsible and accountable behavior.

Points awarded are based upon a student's attendance and performance in class. Students must arrive to class on time and remain in class for the entire period in order to earn one point for attendance.

### **Bonus Credit**

Students may also earn up to four performance points as follows: Bonus-point

incentives have been developed to foster student development of appropriate long-term behaviors and responsible decision-making. A student who earns attendance points for 15 consecutive days receives three bonus points for that one class. For each consecutive 15 days thereafter, the student receives five bonus points for that class.

### **Extra Credit**

At a student's request, extra credit work is provided by the teacher. A student may earn a maximum of three extra credit points per week, per class.

### **Makeup Credit**

If a student will be absent or tardy and calls in before a class begins for that day, the student is allowed to make up two points worth of the course work missed while not in that class. If the student does not call in, makeup credit is not allowed.

### **Speaking Rule**

When a student has attended one or more classes for the day and must leave school early, the student informs a teacher when he or she will not be able to attend that teacher's class. Failure to "speak" to teachers for any classes missed results in a loss of the three grade points per class and three points will be subtracted from each of the student's four class for the day.

### **Work/Study Component**

The Franklin School Alternative Program is a work/study component requiring students to pursue community-based experiences with opportunities to practice responsibility, accountability, respect, community service and academic scholarship. Students will be successful in their adult lives when they develop these traits and skills. Students earn academic credit for experience and participation per the following:

- Working 20 hours or more per week in a paying job
- Volunteering 16 hours or more per week in the community at a non-profit organization
- Attending two classes at Edward Little High School
- Attending a trades-related program at Lewiston Regional Vocational Center or Lewiston Alternative Vocational Center.
- Attending two extra classes at Franklin School
- Attending an approved program at the variety of academic institutions in the area.
- Participating in apprenticeship or job-shadowing experiences
- Attending counseling, support groups or participating in other personal growth and development activities for 7 to 10 hours per week
- Experiences that can be documented as appropriate learning opportunities

### **\*\*\*Notes about classes used at work/student credit**

1. Credits awarded at the end of the semester for work/student options will be determined by the grade earned in those classes.
2. A student has the first two weeks of their new schedule to attend classes at Edward Little, Franklin or Lewiston and/or one of the other work options. After the two weeks,

they must declare their work/study option choice.

3. Students may choose to:

- Continue both options and can drop at anytime either the extra classes or the work options but must continue to do one or the other. Once one of the options has been dropped to create a single load, it cannot be switched back to a double load. Students use their work option or the classes as work/study credit and drop the other option. Students who then switch from classes to work will need to coordinate with the work/ study coordinator. The grade received in the first option will become the grade for the replacement options. Students may switch from work to classes with the work/study coordinator's permission.

4. Students will have difficulty switching from work to classes after the first two weeks because the add/drop period has ended for Lewiston and Edward Little.

5. Using Franklin classes for work/study is a privilege and could be lost at the work/study coordinator's discretion if the following guidelines are not followed:

6. Students may not speak/skip/leave classes without permission from the work/study coordinator.

7. Students are expected to call in and explain absences, failure to do so three times could result in losing the classes.

### **Option Search**

Students who are not attended extra classes or taking advantage of the work/study options above may earn credit by performing OPTION SEARCH. Option search consists of a maximum of five weeks where the student is looking for a job. Option search activities include:

- Calling prospective work/study options contacts/supervisors
- Visiting prospective work/study sites
- Meeting/interviewing with prospective work/study option contacts/supervisors

### **Point Value of work/study and option search options**

Work/Study: Full credit is earned if a student successfully completes an entire work/study schedule for the week and hands in the appropriate work slips and verification forms on time.

Option Search: Phone calls, visits to prospective work/study sites and/or meeting or interviews with prospective work/study option supervisors equal 2 points each.

Option Search points needed for various week lengths:

### **Work slips and verification forms**

It is a student's responsibility to hand in either a work/study work slip or verification form each week.

Work/study work slips are due on the Wednesday of the following week that they cover and should be signed by an employer or supervisor.

Students in option search must hand in verification forms and phone call logs by the end of the week. These forms should be signed by a staff member who is monitoring the calls and no forms will be accepted past the due date without the work/study coordinators permission.

## **Bonus Points**

Bonus points may be earned by:

- Handing in work slips before the work/study due date. (20 points for Friday/Monday, 10 points for Tuesday)
- Handing in full credit (30 point) work slips or verification forms for three weeks in a row (3 points after the first three weeks and 5 points for each three week thereafter) Points can be lost if slips or stubs are not handed in on time or a student does not attend work/study on a scheduled day.

## **Termination from program**

A student could be terminated from the work/study program if he or she falsifies slips or stubs, breaks a work/study related special condition agreement, or if they show unsatisfactory effort in the program regardless of their academic status.

## **Intervention System**

The intervention system has two major parts—the advocacy system and the assistance agreement system. Traditional school rules are so deeply ingrained in our society that it often takes time for students to adjust to alternatives and to feel secure about their responsibilities. If they are not ready to manage the responsibility required for success in the program, an advocate intervention system assures that students receive individual support while addressing personal development of necessary skills. Students are assigned to advocate teachers who have them in class every day. The advocates orient new students to the program's rules and expectations. Advocates assist students with issues that hinder success. Advocates monitor student progress via the point system.

There are three levels of assistance to which students may be assigned—advocate, staff and administrative. At any time, the advocate or the student may refer the student to an assistance meeting. Parents/guardians are encouraged to join staff members at these meetings where issues affecting the student's success will be discussed.

There is no real success without the possibility of failure. Therefore, students are allowed to fail up to a point. Nevertheless, they are expected to keep the totals within range of passing while they are learning to manage the new options and responsibilities.

Staff members meet weekly to review the point status and general progress of all students. When students allow their point totals to get too far behind, they are put on one of two assistance agreements. Assistance agreements are designed to keep students from getting further behind in the point system. If students do not respond affectively to assistance agreements, they will be put on an administrative assistance agreement that includes the possibility of termination from the program. Students who can't or will not manage the program's point system or the work/student components are terminated for the semester if the student's commitment to his/her success is minimal.

Before being terminated, the student is guided toward the support necessary to bring their life back into focus. Terminated students may petition to return the following semester when they can demonstrate progress in the areas that led to their failure.

At the end of each semester, the Franklin staff meets with each student to review and discuss the student's progress. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend these conferences.

### **Advocate Assistance**

The student's advocate teacher monitors the student's point status. The advocate teacher will meet with the student to discuss the reasons for being behind in points. The advocate teacher and the student, may develop a plan to address the student's challenges when:

- The student is 20 or more points below passing
- The student is failing two or more classes
- The student violates Safe School Obligations

The advocate assistance is a support for the student who must prioritize behaviors required in the Franklin point system. The intent is also to negate the need to address unsuccessful behavior through the Administrative Assistance Agreement process, but advocate teachers may refer advocate students to the staff who may recommend a staff assistance agreement.

### **Staff Assistance**

The staff monitors the student's point status and will offer to meet with the student to develop a staff assistance agreement when:

- The student's advocate refers the student to staff assistance
- The student is 40 points or more below passing
- The student is failing three or more classes
- The student exhibits significant/repeated Safe School Obligation violations

### **Administration Assistance**

The team leader monitors the student's point status and will put a student on an Administrative Assistance Agreement when the student's points are 60 points or more below passing. Students who violate the terms of the agreement will meet with the principal, team leader and advocate, to determine whether the student will remain in the program.