

School Improvement Plan  
Narrative Overview

**Franklin Elementary School**

**PROGRESS TOWARD PREVIOUS YEAR'S GOALS  
2010-11**

**Overview:**

Franklin Elementary School was rebuilt in 1997, serving the needs of the central-Tacoma community. We have approximately 280 students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade, including two full-day Kindergarten sessions and two classrooms of each grade one through five. This year we added a Special Ed. Pre-school program. Additionally, Franklin has three Autism program classrooms with children from three years old through fifth grade. Franklin receives funding from the District, as well as from the Title I office which provides additional resources in reading and mathematics to all our students. Franklin maintains high standards of instruction by hiring only highly qualified teachers in accordance with District Human Resource procedures and with the support of building level hiring teams. Students completing fifth grade and living in our attendance area, usually attend Jason Lee Middle School. Franklin Elementary is located at 1402 South Lawrence Street, Tacoma, WA 98405. We invite parent and community comment and input for our plan. Tracye Ferguson, Franklin's principal, can be reached at 253.571.1400 or at [afergus@tacoma.k12.wa.us](mailto:afergus@tacoma.k12.wa.us).

Franklin Elementary School was built in 1889, honoring the great American inventor, Benjamin F. Franklin. The second Franklin building was the beautiful brick one constructed along South 12th Street in 1910 which served the students and their families in our mid-Tacoma location through 1997. At that time, that building was razed to make way for our current modern building built on the top of the former playground's knoll. We are located close to Tacoma's downtown core of museums and universities, and near freeways giving easy access to neighboring towns throughout Pierce County and the Olympic Peninsula. Approximately 280 students are enrolled in our preschool through fifth grade classrooms. Of these students, over thirty are in our Autism Program. The program, with four classrooms, serves the needs of students ranging in age from three years through fifth grade. Our Autism Program has been here since 2000, and we are very proud of the social and academic gains our students make as they prepare for middle school. We eagerly invite community organizations to use our building and playfields; currently we are home to a Sunday morning church, a fast-pitch team, and a lacrosse team. We provide before/after school classes for many students through the Hearts for Kids program.

Our students' progress in the area of Reading, as measured by the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP), demonstrated overall that our students are continuing to make Adequate Yearly Progress in this area. Students in grade three performed with nearly 67% of students meeting standard in Reading. We maintained our goal with a 2 point deviation. Students in grade four performed with nearly 60% of students meeting standard in Reading. We maintained our goal. Students in grade five performed with nearly 47% of students meeting standard. We are striving to continue our growth on the MSP. We would like to move more of our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students closer to reaching benchmark. We will continue to focus our efforts on all students reaching benchmark in reading.

In the area of Mathematics, we see a significant area of improvement needed. Our student's performance as measured by the 2011 MSP did not meet our established targets. A significant emphasis placed on mathematics, along with many layers of support across our school district and within our school in order to effectively address the concerns in this area we need to see a significant increase in the level of student

performance in mathematics as measured throughout the school year with formative assessments and in a summative manner on the 2012 MSP.

## OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT 2011-12

### **Continuous Improvement Process and Stakeholder Participation**

The content of this plan represents the ongoing work and goals established within our school for the 2011-2012 year. The goals and strategies in this plan represent and are influenced by the ongoing work of our staff members within grade level teams and as a part of whole-staff work sessions. The specifics of our attached Action Plan represents our school-wide reform efforts and are a result of our staff's review of student assessment data, prioritization of staff and team goals, and detailed next steps in our work toward student achievement. Establishing goals and focus of concern for our school's work is in partnership with our SCDM and/or SIP team, which includes parent representation. Our PSO's (Parent Staff Organization) focus is on supporting learning at the classroom level specifically through the arts as well as opportunities to partner with families. Our Title1 program, affords us the opportunity to offer parent involvement activities and events to support student achievement by building home, school and community partnerships. This on-going process influences our work and a strong foundation to achieve our goals.

**Review of Data to Establish Improvement****Achievement**

Spring Data (expressed as a percentage of students meeting standard)

<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Reading</b>	69.8	61.7	75.5	60.0	69.4	66.7
<b>Mathematics</b>	48.8	74.5	75.5	41.8	50.0	58.3

<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Reading</b>	75.0	70.7	46.7	51.0	62.5	58.3
<b>Mathematics</b>	33.3	48.8	46.7	19.6	47.9	50.0
<b>Writing</b>	57.1	56.1	40.0	68.6	56.3	58.3

<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Reading</b>	65.1	60.9	69.0	52.2	53.3	46.9
<b>Mathematics</b>	37.2	50.0	45.2	23.9	33.3	28.6
<b>Science</b>	11.6	17.4	28.6	10.9	13.3	13.3

The school-wide data from the 2011 MSP indicates marginal strength in Math performance. This data matches the progress as measured in our primary classrooms using district and classroom-based assessments. Our students' performance on the Reading portion of the 2011 MSP indicates that our students did not make adequate yearly progress in grades 3-5. Our work in this area continues to be teachers collaborating together to review student work, reviewing ongoing formative assessments to make instructional decisions that support student learning in the classrooms, and layers of intervention that are provided through our Title I program. (See action plan for specific intervention strategies.)

In the area of Mathematics, our student's performance at all grade levels did meet the state standard. Our instructional focus in this area will be the implementation of our new math program as we work to increase the level of academic success in mathematics. The District's support of this work, with the infusion of math coaches, ongoing professional development for teachers, coaches and principals weekly grade level collaboration meetings, and the development of intervention and enrichment plans to respond to student achievement will all contribute to the work designed to significantly and positively influence our students' achievement. (See action plan for specific intervention strategies.)

## Attendance

(Average daily attendance K-5)

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
90.9%	94.2%	93.8%	93.5%

### **Strategies to enhance school attendance**

Franklin staff uses several strategies to help create a sense of importance around good student attendance. Research shows that students who attend school regularly do better academically. Franklin's strategies include phone calls home by our secretary if a student is marked absent. The secretary also asks for notes explaining the reason for the student's absence. This is a safety measure to communicate or alert parents regarding a student's absence. If a student incurs numerous of absences we implement the Becca process starting with a parent conference. Staff also reward students with incentives to promote attendance and academic success.

### **Planning for Transitions** (between grade levels and grades)

Research tells us that students who struggle with school are most likely to “fall through the cracks” when transitioning from one grade to the next. Knowing this, our counselor visits 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms to talk to students about middle school expectations after winter vacation and later in the spring. Middle school counselors come to our school to develop their 6<sup>th</sup> grade schedules. Towards the end of the year 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers meet to discuss students who have exceptional learning needs. This year we plan to add opportunities for 5<sup>th</sup> graders to spend a day at the school they will be attending so they will be able to meet their “buddy” for the next year and experience Middle school. Our kindergarten teachers plan informational and family nights for students transitioning into kindergarten. Grade level transition activities will be conducted between the outgoing and incoming teachers who will discuss every child’s areas of strengths and concern.

### **Characteristics of High Performing Schools**

In 2009, Franklin participated in the BERC Powerful Teaching and Learning study. This study compared our school to the nine characteristics of high performing schools. The following is the summary and recommendations for Franklin that we will focus on for improvement. Researchers were impressed with the supportive and nurturing learning environment at the school for both and students. Also noted was the academically focused environment and distributed leadership (**Clear and Shared Focus**). Staff members are clearly committed to holding students to high standards and believe students can be successful (**High Standards and Expectations for All Students**). To further improve efforts Franklin will focus on two instructional areas identified during classroom observations. These include students demonstrating thinking through reflection and metacognition (Thinking), and students extending their learning into relevant contexts (Application) **Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Aligned with State Standards**. Franklin has a plan in place to look at data in more depth, but it may be necessary to investigate ways teachers can collaborate on instruction, curriculum, and assessments on more regular basis during the school day. A final area of growth is in the area of family and community partnerships. Although Franklin actively encourages parent and community involvement, it would behoove the school to continue to expand the ways in which they welcome parents and the community into the school. Parents indicated that they would like more frequent teacher-parent chat times or phone calls to keep them abreast of student’s progress (**High Levels of Family and Community Involvement**).

### **Professional Development Opportunities**

A great deal of the staffs’ learning at Franklin is a result of our teachers coming together around student work and learning from each other as they constantly seek to improve their practice. Franklin will focus on continuing to strengthen our school-wide management plan with the focus on CHAMPS training. Teachers will participate in the district PLC grade level meetings around math, IBD (Inquiry by Design), and AVID. More formal professional development from the district will inform our school-based training around our focus area of math. Our academic coaches and principal will continue to lead the work in implementing the elements of the 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning ensuring the appropriate use of Learning Targets and Student Engagement. This year Franklin’s Art committee will participate in the PAL training.

### **Highly Qualified Teachers**

- Provisions for staff training in Tacoma include opportunities, incentives and compensation. The district provides a broad spectrum of classes on assessment, standards-based instruction and best practices in the content areas. Staff members receive extra pay to attend these classes and clock hours/university credits are frequently offered. The district also supports and encourages school-based training that support the school's SIP goals with building-based optional day pay for certificated staff. In addition to classes, instructional facilitators at each Title I school provide ongoing, job embedded staff development. Para educators and other staff receive workshop pay to attend both district and school workshops. Para educators and other staff are encouraged to participate in all Reading and Math curriculum and assessment professional development.
- Parents are informed in the Parent Handbook of their right to know their teachers and para-educators qualifications
- Highly Qualified Para-educators meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate knowledge and ability in instructing reading, mathematics and writing.
- Tacoma actively recruits highly-qualified staff with our job fair, letters of intent, recommendations to hire and applicant searches. We seek to attract and keep highly-qualified staff at our school by providing opportunities for quality staff development and professional growth.
- All teachers in Tacoma are required to meet the NCLB highly qualified teacher requirement. Human Resources sends each school a list of the teachers with their teaching qualifications. THE SCHOOL principal signs an attestation form to confirm all staff are highly qualified. In the event that a staff member does not meet the highly qualified requirements, a NCLB HOUSE Plan of Assistance is developed for the teacher. To support teachers working to achieve highly qualified status, along with all staff striving to provide excellent instruction, our school's professional development/training is focused on best practices in reading and math.

### **Recognition of Non-Academic Learning**

At Franklin Elementary, we believe in educating the whole child! This belief is demonstrated by a strong emphasis on creating a focused, structured, and nurturing environment. We look for opportunities to recognize and promote non-academic learning with a particular focus of integrating the arts throughout the curriculum. Students are also recognized at monthly Terrific Kids assemblies, Panther Awards, and Friday Panther award recognition. They can also win “Pizza with the Principal”.

Students are offered alternative and enrichment experiences such as chorus, drums, dance/movement, and reading during recess. Before school band and orchestra explorations and an after-school “Hearts for Kids” program. “Hearts for Kids” is a parent/volunteer supported program that provides academic, dance, cooking, and other enrichment activities after school. Overall, we work to promote the values of helping others, giving back to community, and the building of a collaborative work culture.

### **Safe and Supportive Learning Environment**

The Franklin Elementary School staff is purposeful and intentional in its work to create a safe and supportive environment. Franklin has adopted the Positive Behavior Intervention Support System (PBIS). Through PBIS Franklin has developed the Panther Pride Creed: Be Respectful, Responsible, Caring and Safe. The whole school recites this creed every morning. The traits are including in our school-wide expectations matrix that is reviewed and displayed in every classroom and hallway consistently. Staff and Students use common language and expectation for behavior. Franklin has implemented training from the Compassionate Schools and Champs programs which supports our positive school attitude. A no-tolerance approach to behaviors that violate safety and respect is combined with a supportive administrative and counseling team and Check, Connect and Expect program for individual students. Working together, we actively and explicitly promote a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

### **Equity Issues**

The District’s focus on cultural competency and the Action Plan for closing the achievement gap will drive our school’s efforts this year. Our performance data trends on the WASL and now MSP show that our greatest gap is between our white student population and African American males in both math and reading. Our professional development in math will address culturally competent teaching strategies that can be applied to all subject areas. Intervention activities that include additional time for struggling students will be built into the day and provided after school as well. Because many of our students are on free or reduced lunch we acknowledge that their learning needs cannot be met if their basic needs at home go unmet, therefore, our counselor will continue to work with Tacoma 360 to assist in fulfilling needs in this area. Franklin has completed a book study on “Teaching Kids in Poverty” by Eric Jensen and attended the Race and Pedagogy conference on Teaching and Social Justice October 2010. Our cultural competency team is continuing to participate in the district professional development on “How Race Affects Teaching and Learning. Franklin believes that every child should have equal access to educational opportunities to be successful life-long learners. The staff understands that providing these opportunities for students is an essential part of their job.

### **Technology**

Franklin Elementary continues to build upon the use of technology in a variety of ways to enhance student learning. Technology within the classroom includes regular access to SMART boards and computers in every classroom, the daily use of document camera/LCD projector bundles, opportunities for word processing, internet research for project-based learning, and the use of a technology-supported student publishing center. Franklin’s librarian works collaboratively with teachers to support in integrating technology into their classroom lessons. Teachers update their SWIFT web pages regularly as a communication tool for families.

### **Parent, Family and Community Involvement**

We believe strongly in the power of parent and family involvement in our school and have worked hard over the years to have developed a strong parent involvement component into our school program. We have a growing Parent Student Organization (PSO) that supports student academic success in classrooms and family events to connect families to Franklin. Additionally, we have used our Title I funds to provide “Muffins with Moms”, “Donuts with Dads”, “Pastries with the Principal” and Curriculum Learning nights for families. This year we will have several evenings where we bring parents onboard with our new math program so that they know how to help their children at home. We know that many of our parents work and are unable to volunteer in the classroom so we provide these opportunities so parents can be involved in very meaningful ways in their child’s education. We do, however, have a number of volunteers who regularly work with children to support learning, and help monitor progress in reading and math. Beyond working with families, we regularly seek out ways to partner with our greater community through such strategies as mentors from the neighborhood church, an annual food drive to support our families in need during the holidays, back to school supply donations, and Veterans’ Day presentations.

### **Coordination of Fiscal Services**

Franklin’s School Improvement Plans aligns with Tacoma’s District Improvement Plan. The staff at Franklin work to support the school’s and district’s improvement efforts. Title 1, Special Ed. and Basic Ed. staff work in collaboration to provide and instructional program and intervention services to meet the needs of all Franklin students. To support school-wide implementation, Title 1 provides technical assistance and NCLB support, Research and Evaluation provides data and instructional support, Purchasing supports expenditures, Human Resources facilitates staffing and provides Highly Qualified information. The Tacoma School District provides technical assistance for school improvement including School, Family and Community Partnership liaisons, Finance, Elementary Directors, Instructional Coaches. While categorical and basic education funds are tracked separately in Tacoma, the programs work together to meet the needs of all students and support the school-wide program goals. Through the work of the Professional Learning Community, school-wide planning and SCDM team, Title I, Special Ed. and the Homeless liaison team with Basic Ed. to improve academic achievement in Reading and Math, coordinating services for identified students and families. Title I Instructional Facilitators help teachers coordinate intervention instructional services for our students with high academic needs. Title I also works closely with homeless services within the district.

## **Appendix A**

### ***#10 Coordinated and Integrated Federal, State and Local Services:***

*A schoolwide program shall include coordination and integration of Federal, State and Local Services and programs, including programs supported under this NCLB Act, violence prevention programs, nutrition programs, housing programs, Head Start, adult education, vocational and technical education, and job training.*

At FRANKLIN categorical programs and basic education work together to meet the needs of all students and support our schoolwide program goals. While categorical and basic education funds are tracked separately in Tacoma for fiscal purposes, the Title 1 program and Basic Education coordinate services for the purpose of serving academically at risk students, with the intent that all students in the school be successful.

Funding Source	Amount Contributed	Intend & Purposes
Title 1 A	\$132,139	Ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments
Basic Education	\$1,075,681	Promote continuous improvement of student achievement of state learning goals and essential academic learning requirements (WAC 180-16-220 2bii)
Title 11	\$66,556	As part of our support for professional development, we use Title 11 funds to pay for onsite instructional coaches. The focus of the instructional coach is to support teachers in the implementation of standards-based instruction, especially in reading and math classes, to improve student achievement for all students. The coaches facilitate grade level meetings and data analysis, analysis of student work, provide professional development around particular research-based instructional strategies and materials, and coach teachers in their practice.