

ROBERT FROST

“Transition Academy”

(Valley High School and Phoenix)

TRANSFORMATION PLAN

December 9, 2013

Executive Summary

Why Dramatic Change at Frost? –

- Frost is one of the persistently lowest performing schools in the state.
- Frost loses over 50% of its market share to other schools.
- Large percentage of Frost students go to Valley High School, another Priority School
- Restructuring and Re-purposing of Frost can lead to more strategic approach to achievement and intervention for struggling students

Aspiration and Theory of Action

Aspiration: To create a different pathway of support and achievement for students who attend Frost Middle School, Valley High School and the Phoenix School so that each graduates college and career ready.

Theory of Action:

- If we target students at 6th grade –designing focused, developmentally appropriate work with expert 6th grade teachers who understand transition;
- If we provide students with a clear pathway between 7th and 9th grade and prepare students to be “affiliated” with Valley High School in a more substantial way than in the past;
- If we make the Phoenix School more cohesive and united in one place
- Then each student can and will graduate prepared.

Strategies that Work...

'Turnaround' strategy is based on:

- Different student configurations to target needs in smaller range
- Targeted interventions through different use of time and extended time during the week and during the year
- Growth Mindset
- Personalization for every student through Success Pathways
- teacher collaboration based on standards
- innovative and differentiated instruction that considers the social-emotional needs and physical health of each student.

Strategy structures

The proposal includes this Reconfiguration:

- 6th grade only 'Frost Transition Academy'
- 7th/8th grade 'Valley Preparatory Academy' at Valley High School
- Combine the Phoenix School of Discovery Middle School and High School to achieve cohesion

Innovation and Change Structures

1. Summer Bridge Program – (0-4 weeks in the summer)
2. Extended Day for Students – Frost Transitional and Valley Preparatory Academies
3. Extended Day for Teachers
4. Advisory Period to build relationships/success pathway
5. Instructional Innovation – Standards Based Instruction
6. Social-Emotional Supports
7. School Choice

Anticipated Outcomes:

- High Achievement at 6th Grade in reading and math due to focus and interventions in these areas
- More students mastering standards prior to 7th grade and 9th grade in all content areas
- Each student able to articulate and follow their own “success pathway” in terms of future plans
- More informed and effective transitions between key grades (5th and 6th / 8th and 9th)
- Students indicating a greater sense of belonging
- Teachers articulating the increased opportunities to use time more effectively
- None of the three schools priority (i.e. 6th Grade Academy, Prep Academy or Valley High School)

Middle School Web links

White Plains, New York sixth grade academy:

<http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/Page/22>

The Transition Years:

http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/cms/lib5/NY01000029/Centricity/Domain/4/6th%20Grade%20Academy%20Files/The_Transition_Years.pdf

College Readiness Begins in Middle School:

<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/CollegeReadiness.pdf>

Sixth Graders Better Off in Elementary School:

<http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/cms/lib5/NY01000029/Centricity/Domain/4/6th.pdf>

Breaking Ranks - Middle School Reform:

<http://www.wpcsd.k12.ny.us/cms/lib5/NY01000029/Centricity/Domain/4/6th%20grade%20academy%20files/BrkRnkMiddlePgsforWeb.pdf>

Middle School Paths to Graduation:

<http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/cms/lib5/NY01000029/Centricity/Domain/4/6th%20Grade%20Academy%20Files/PuttingMSStudentsonGradPath.pdf>

Questions for Parents:

http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/cms/lib5/NY01000029/Centricity/Domain/4/MSReDesign_ParentsQnA_Sept2011.pdf

Sixth Grade Academy in an Elementary School:

<http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/Page/4398>

Marietta Sixth Grade Academy:

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CDkQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.advanced.org%2Foasis%2Fu%2Fpar%2Faccréditation%2Fsummary%2Fpdf%3Bjsessionid%3DECC3550A99FA9598E31815128926D62C%3FinstitutionId%3D34085&ei=Fc5tUqrbL8Sy2wWEilHwAQ&usg=AFQjCNG7o2vSVmj901uSZXnKv06qS8iKiw&sig2=UFkG8sMaXYCaYCrFWO4tKA>

Sixth grade academies: Fad or fix for our schools?

<http://blogs.ajc.com/get-schooled-blog/2010/11/22/sixth-grade-academies-fad-or-fix-for-our-schools/>

Research supporting Grade 7-12 configuration.