



# FRANKLIN EDUCATION CONNECTION

*Education Foundation · Study Connection*

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## Staff

Bea Northcott  
*Executive Director*

Melissa Parramore  
*Director, Study Connection*

July 29, 2015

Economic Development Commission  
City of Franklin  
70 E. Monroe Street  
P.O. Box 280  
Franklin, IN 46131

Dear EDC Members:

Attached is a Proposal from Franklin Education Connection for \$7,500 from the Franklin Economic Development Fee Fund.

We propose to use these funds to support academic programs in Franklin Community Schools to ensure students graduate college/career ready.

A well-trained workforce is vital to economic development and we sincerely appreciate the opportunity to partner with others to support these efforts.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Franklin Education Connection, thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andy Kinsey  
Board President

# Franklin Education Connection

## *Proposal for Economic Development Fees*

**Name of the Organization:** Community Involvement in Learning, Inc. d/b/a Franklin Education Connection.

Franklin Education Connection was formed in September, 2013 when Study Connection and the Franklin Community Schools Education Foundation joined forces to better serve the community. Franklin Education Connection is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. TID #35-2082528.

Franklin Education Connection operates the following programs:

- *Study Connection*, operating since 2005, is a homework/mentoring program which matches adult Study Buddies with students in grades 2-6 who have been identified by school staff as needing assistance in reaching academic and social standards. In the 2014-15 school year, a record 116 Study Buddies provided more than 3,000 hours of volunteer help and support.
  - A child who is behind in school in the third grade has a higher risk of not completing high school.
  - According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average high school dropout can expect to earn an annual income of \$20,241. That's a full \$10,386 less than the typical high school graduate, and \$36,424 less than someone with a bachelor's degree.
  - More than 70% of Study Connection students qualify for free/reduced lunch, compared with 47% for the overall Franklin Community Schools (FCS) student population.
  - Students who participated in Study Connection during the 2013-14 school year improved more than 13 points on average in reading and more than 18 points in math using NWEA MAP assessments (fall and spring testing). On average, all students tend to improve about 8-10 points in reading and math, so Study Connection students beat the typical growth for students and our program was a part of their exceptional growth.
- *The Education Foundation*, established in 2010, provides grants to FCS teachers to enhance students' academic experience. Since 2011, the Education Foundation has awarded almost \$43,000 in teacher grants to 32 programs benefiting all FCS schools. These grants encompass literacy, literature, the arts, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and Essential Skills/Special Education. The Education Foundation has also secured more than \$20,000 in funding for:
  - Robotics Clubs at the Intermediate and Middle schools.
  - Destination Imagination (DI) teams as a pilot project. After two years of the pilot, FCS incorporated the program into their corporation and expanded the program to 10 teams at six schools. DI encourages teams of students to use STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) along with fine arts and service learning to solve problems. Teams compete in regional, state and global competitions. In 2014, a DI team from Creekside Elementary progressed through their competitions and qualified for Globals (Knoxville, TN). In 2015, teams from Needham and Webb elementary schools advanced to Globals.



- Connecting high school students with meaningful internships so that they can be exposed to the wide variety of career opportunities available in Franklin

**Impact the project would have on economic development in Franklin:** As you are aware, Franklin Community Schools loses approximately \$1.5 million per year due to Tax Increment Financing Districts and an additional \$2 million per year due to property tax caps. Plus, the school corporation also loses taxes due to abatements. As a result of strained budgets, many academic programs suffer because schools lack the funds to implement innovative programs or sometimes even replace aging classroom equipment.

The programs which Franklin Education Connection operates and supports are critical to Franklin's economic development. The quality of Franklin's school system is a significant factor in attracting new businesses and residents.

- Companies looking to relocate or expand seek an educated workforce and schools which are preparing their students for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs. Franklin Education Connection works closely with Franklin Community Schools to identify academic programs which are moving our schools from good to great.
- Johnson County's extremely low unemployment rate means that companies seeking to relocate or expand also face the reality of not having a readily available, skilled workforce. Franklin Education Connection's goal is to help develop FCS students to be college/career ready.
- Quality schools also attract residents. One of the most important factors in housing selection is a quality school corporation. Franklin Education Connection's goal is to support FCS in attracting residents as well as keeping students in the community upon graduation.
- A May, 2014 study by the American Planning Association, "Investing in Place for Economic Growth and Competitiveness," showed that "two-thirds of all respondents and 74 percent of Millennials believe investing in schools, transportation choices, and walkable areas is a better way to grow the economy than traditional approaches of recruiting companies."

**Amount of funds requested and a prioritized detailed project budget:** \$7,500.

- The cost of providing Study Connection to one child for the entire school year is \$225. \$2,700 of this grant would be used to provide Study Connection to 12 children.
- Education Foundation grants range from \$300 to \$3,000 with the average being \$1,178. \$2,400 would be allocated to providing approximately two grants in the 2015-16 school year.
- The remaining \$2,400 would be used for operating expenses necessary to support all of our programs.