

Questions about Soap Lake's Required Action Plan:

- 1. Describe how your plan was developed in collaboration with administrators, teachers, other staff, parents, unions representing any employees, students and other representatives of the local community.**

The Soap Lake SD has been actively engaged with the entire community to share information and receive input on improvement activities throughout the past four years. The District Leadership Team that has responsibility for developing and monitoring the improvement plan is made up of the Superintendent, both building principals, teacher leaders, and the president of the teachers' association. An extensive collaboration process was used at the beginning of the improvement effort to gather input from staff and community as the original plan for improvement emerged. Since that time, this team has met frequently and regularly to guide the improvement effort for the district. Each year they have had a process to share results of improvement initiatives, as well as upcoming plans with the district's school board, students and community through regularly scheduled events. CEE surveys have been administered every year as another way of gathering information from staff, students and parents.

- 2. Specify the date of the public hearing to allow for comment on the district's required action plan:** The next scheduled public hearing is June 22, 2015.
- 3. Which improvement model is the district implementing?**
The district improvement model is the Transformation Model.
- 4. Describe how the concerns raised in the academic performance audit were addressed, and how it led to increased student achievement.**

Soap Lake's most recent academic performance audit was in April, 2013. Information on how the Summary Recommendations were addressed follows:

Set High Academic Expectations:

- Use of late starts each Monday to provide extensive professional development on the Danielson Framework, and alignment of coursework to new Washington State Standards.
- Several staff trained in Advanced Placement and UW College in HS courses.
- Addition of higher level math courses including calculus, AP Language, and Spanish into the school schedule – while reducing reliance on APEX courses for advanced work.
- Replacement of high school math teacher with newly hired math teacher with improved skill level to increase achievement of math students particularly in Algebra 1.
- Close tracking of students with D's and F's weekly, with intervention and parent contacts to improve performance.

- Meetings with each senior several times during year to assure progress toward graduation, and encourage application for college entrance and scholarships.
- Continued revision and strengthening of schoolwide AVID model, including implementation of AVID in grades 4 and 5 and continuing to make sure all new staff is trained in the AVID program.
- Results this year include higher number of graduates admitted to community college or 4 year college next year.

Develop a long term vision for curriculum implementation by identifying essential standards, curriculum alignment, and pacing.

- Through the evaluation process and professional development, staff knowledge and ability to instruct to new Washington State Standards has increased. Evidence of this is gathered through administrative/coach classroom walkthroughs as well as formal observations.
- Support from OSPI Instructional coaches has been a critical factor in providing ongoing work with staff in the implementation of new materials that are better aligned to new Washington State Standards. These coaches also provide feedback and support on alignment and pacing of lessons and classroom instructional practice. This targeted work in ELA, math, as well as science will continue next year.
- The district is moving to a K-12 implementation of Engage NY for math instruction in 2015-16.

Provide long-term professional development and coaching for instructional leaders and classroom teachers in effective classroom practices and include goals for individual and group improvement.

- Maintaining consistent leadership is a continual challenge for any small rural school. Throughout the 4 year grant period, leadership coaching from the Success coach has been a critical factor in leadership development through a number of principal changes. This coaching model will continue next year as our current two new principals enter their second year.
- The Success coach also provides ongoing support to teacher leadership groups.
- Extensive use of evaluation practices to support improved instruction, including goal setting for improved practices and student growth with every staff.
- Moving a number of staff from focused to comprehensive evaluations next year to provide more intensive intervention and support.
- Use of classroom walkthroughs with administrative staff and coaches to gather information and provide feedback on classroom instructional practice specifically related to Danielson framework and new Washington state standards.

- Use of peer observation guided by the Danielson framework to provide forum for discussion and personal reflection on classroom instruction.
- Purchase and implementation of Edivate (School Improvement Network) in 2015-16 – an OSPI vetted program that provides video and module support for targeted professional development – to be introduced to staff as a tool to be used individually or collaboratively to learn more about best practices and how to implement them in your classroom.

Develop and expand connections to families and community.

- Changes in structure of this year’s awards nights, student activities nights (i.e. science fair) and graduation resulted in increased parent and community involvement, and positive feedback.
- Continued use of annual BBQ to open school shows improved attendance every year.
- Monthly “Family Fun Nights” with a rotating academic theme at the elementary school have been well attended this past year and will continue next year.

Use student data to inform and differentiate instruction to meet academic needs of individual students.

- There is planned professional development on differentiation through Robin Kirkpatrick at ESD 171 beginning in the Fall, 2015.
- Implementation of AIMS Web for progress monitoring information K-10 in 2015-16.
- Continued use of SBAC Interim blocks in 2015-16 grades 3 – 11.
- Implementation of intervention classes in the regular school schedule in ELA and math for 2015-16.

5. Describe how the district addresses the education opportunity gap.

The demographics of Soap Lake include a significant Hispanic population as well as a significant Ukrainian population. This year a new secretary was hired at the MS/HS who is bilingual in Spanish. Other paraprofessionals and custodial staff are also bilingual and live within these communities. Consistent efforts are now evident to translate all materials going to parents into both Spanish and Ukrainian.

The MS/HS has added more advanced classes each year of the grant period, and concerted efforts are made to have the enrollment in these courses reflect the school’s population. There have also been a number of elective courses added in the past year to address the diverse needs of the population. These include technical music, radio broadcasting, web design, and Spanish.

6. Describe how the district supports the schools collectively.

During the entire grant period improvement efforts have been planned and applied to the K-12 district as a whole, with expectations and opportunities increasing for both schools. Principals

work closely together this year to increase coherence of programs and successful transition for students. An example would be the K-12 adoption of Engage NY for math, as well as the elementary implementation of AVID.

7. Describe the budget for your plan, and how it provides for adequate resources to implement the model and other requirements of the plan.

A key component of the budget for this past year, and planned for next year has been the ability to hire a Dean of Students for the MS/HS. This position is held by a bilingual educator who provides much needed support for student attendance and discipline as well as family and behavioral intervention, allowing the principal increased time to spend in classrooms working with teachers on instructional practice, and monitoring student progress.

Other Key Budget Components are:

- Increased counseling time
- Additional staff time for professional development
- Funds to provide extended learning time to students during the summer and after school hours.
- Additional staffing to provide intervention classes.
- Stipends for ongoing teacher leadership team.

8. Describe the changes in the district's or the school's policies, structures, agreements, processes and practices that are intended to attain significant achievement gains for all students.

- Implementation of weekly late start Mondays – Provides 1 and ½ hours of time each week for staff to engage in professional development, collaboration, data analysis. This has been in place since the beginning of the grant period.
- Implementation of advisory period in the MS/HS – while this has been revised a number of times, it remains a critical part of our ability to build relationships with students, and build a stronger connection between the student and the school.
- Extensive use of new evaluation system, particularly by the two new principals that began this past year – this has been critical in communicating increased urgency and intentionality regarding improving instructional practice and student learning. Effective use of the new evaluation system to improve instruction has received strong support from the teachers' association leadership.
- Transition plan for new superintendent in 2016-17 – the current superintendent has announced his intention to retire at the end of 2015-16. The district has hired a former principal to return in the role of assistant superintendent this coming year, with the plan already in place for him to assume the superintendent position

the following year. This provides for a strong transition strategy, with someone who is already familiar and supportive of all the improvement efforts so far.

9. Identification of the measures that the district will use in assessing student achievement, closing the educational opportunity gap, improving math, reading or ELA, improving graduation rates.

- Transition from NWEA MAP to AIMS Web in 2015-16 – to provide more frequent and better aligned information to monitor academic progress of students in grades K-12.
- Implementation of SBAC Interim Block tests 3x per year in ELA and math to provide information on progress toward benchmark for students in grades 3 – 11.
- Purchase of HomeRoom program to assist staff with organizing data for analysis, generating reports on student progress by student, by group, by cohort, by class etc.

Some follow up questions regarding Soap Lake’s Required Action Plan:

1. Please highlight aspects of you plan that directly impact the elementary school. Which of the activities described in the description of your budget plan (Question 7) will apply to the elementary school? What are your strategies for professional development for the elementary school educators? **For the first three years of the grant all efforts at reform were targeted at the K-12 system, with all PD, assessments and release time applied to both schools in order to build capacity across the district. During the 2014-15 school year, each school had an improvement grant. Portions of each grant were used to continue professional development efforts, with an effort to increase consistency and strengthen transition across both schools. Professional development at the elementary school is largely delivered through late start Monday sessions, as well as additional time after school. The principal has worked this year to develop expertise among several staff members in key areas so “in-house” PD support can continue. Examples of professional development at the elementary school include:**

- **Math and ELA curriculum and assessment development to align to Washington State Learning Standards – this was done with support from OSPI Instructional Coaches.**
- **GLAD training for entire staff – year 3.**
- **PD on data analysis of available data to monitor progress in reading, with regrouping of students for intervention every 6 weeks.**
- **Strengthening of PLC time – Monday late start**

2. What systems-building is happening that will sustain beyond the term of the grant, including providing professional development, accessing data, and using data? **Both schools will be using the same assessment system and have worked to vertically align their instructional approaches to ELA and Math. They will continue to share professional development as they have the past**

four years. The HomeRoom system (School Data Solutions) is being purchased district wide to support staff data access, and Edviate (School Improvement Network) is being purchased district wide to support continued professional development. Both principals will continue to work together with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent on the District Leadership team to guide these efforts.

3. Please explain a bit more about the transition from NWEA MAP to AIMS Web. Members didn't know what these were, and what the advantage of one over the other. While NWEA MAP has been used for a number of years at both schools, staff input was that the results did not provide detailed enough information that could be used for intervention during the year with students. AIMS Web allows for more frequent assessments throughout the year that are more closely aligned to what has been taught in the classroom. It is a very common assessment system used for local assessments in Washington State.