



Lame Deer Schools of Promise—Planning for Improvement Update

December 7, 2010

Each month, Lame Deer Office of Public Instruction (OPI) team will briefly report on the status of some of the initiatives being implemented and plans for the next steps related to the School Improvement Grant. Remember, we have three years to implement steps through the Transformational Model for School Improvement. During this time, together we will seek to implement many research-based practices and build the capacity to sustain these practices within the Lame Deer School District to continually help improve student achievement.

Update from Jo Swain, Lame Deer Transformational Leader

On Thursday, November 11, Sarah Pierce and Nancy Coleman came to Lame Deer to share the budget for our Schools of Promise plan written by the Lame Deer SIG team. The OPI budget reflects approximately \$329, 421 in salaries and benefits for OPI staff to work collaboratively with Lame Deer educators. These positions include the Transformational Leader, Jo Swain, the Instructional Leader, Deb Glass, the Community Liaison, Robert Simpson, and the School Board Coach, Nancy Coleman. This team provides frontline support for all K-12 staff, however the primary focus is for the 7th-12th grade students.

Approximately \$34,000 has been spent to date on computers for middle and high school math. Providing staff with job-embedded staff development is a primary focus for the Schools of Promise initiative. The goal is to provide ongoing training and support to staff who are working in reading and math. Additionally, staff will have opportunities to learn more about creating professional learning communities, mental health supports, and teacher evaluation. The overall dollar amount earmarked for Lame Deer School District is \$1,376,527. The staff is now in the process of developing action plans to outline how this money will be spent. The budget will be placed on the Lame Deer Schools of Promise website, as well as the action plans once development is complete.



Upcoming meeting dates:

December 1, 2010—SIG meeting, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

December 9, 2010—Administrator Leadership Team, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

December 15, 2010—SIG meeting, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.



Schools of Promise Web site Please visit the Lame Deer Schools of Promise Web site located at <http://lamedeer.k12.mt.us/>. Go to the Schools of Promise pull down menu. Meeting agendas, meeting minutes, committee membership, and calendars are located on this link.

Update from Deb Glass, Lame Deer Instructional Leader

The month of November has been non-stop for the Language Arts/Reading and Math teachers, data facilitator and I as we have assessed and placed all 7-12 students in their reading groups along with the core English curriculum. All classes are teaching the newly acquired reading and math materials. This is part of the federal funding awarded to the Lame Deer School District. The goal is to have students in Corrective Reading advance to the next reading series by the end of the first semester. The mathematics program has administered the quarterly test developed by Algebraic Thinking to all junior high and Foundations math classes. This test determined which content standards and benchmarks the students have mastered to this point in time. The subsequent quarter tests will assist the math teachers in pinpointing areas of strength and weakness in their students' overall knowledge across the curriculum. Long range plans for the quarterly math test are to develop a statewide short term common assessment for mathematics. Implementing the new programs with fidelity has been a major focus as we fine tune instructional procedures for each required program. Both math consultants working with the 7th-12th grade staff have been to Lame Deer in the month of November and we are looking forward to the on-site visit from the Reading/English consultant this week. Their expertise helps teachers and me to understand the philosophy and components behind each program and how it fits within the bigger picture of state content standards and benchmarks. The teachers and I continue with the coaching cycle to solidify program delivery. It continues to be a privilege to work with the fine staff within Lame Deer Schools and to interact with the students. As these three years progress, we will continue to build a strong educational foundation for our students.

Update from Robert Simpson, Lame Deer Community Liaison

Although I've been the School-Community Liaison since the beginning of October, this is my first report to the Board. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the community of Lame Deer and the administration and staff of the Lame Deer Schools for welcoming me. I am very happy to be back in Lame Deer and to be working with the community to support our schools and students.

For a long time, my office situation was in limbo, but I now have an office at the Administration building. Much of my work requires going out to other programs, offices and homes, so I am not always in my office. But I am going to set some regular office hours each week for people to reach me. I will post these hours outside my office door on Monday of each week. Feel free to stop by and visit with me about how we can build support for our schools and our students.

Since October, I have been very busy getting to know all the different programs in the community that work on youth issues, getting to know students and school staff, and getting to know tribal leaders and employees. The highlights of the past month include the Masquerade Pow-wow for the community that I coordinated with the Boys and Girls Club, with the generous support of different tribal programs and community organizations. We had over 400 people attend the pow-wow. Most importantly, some of the teachers attended, and I had an opportunity to introduce them to the community in a non-school setting. I hope they had as much fun as I did, and I know the community really enjoyed the event. Some other highlights include two trips to D.C.--no, I am not running for office. My first trip was with Schools of Promise, and I participated along with other School-Community Liaisons from Montana. We learned a lot about a program to implement home visits by teachers to students' homes, and how these can really help a school and community move forward

together. We heard from a lot of other communities where they have implemented this program successfully. Of course, none of these communities were in Indian country, so we will have to tweak it a little to work successfully here in Lame Deer. But, I think it will be a really good way to help all of us get on the same page to move forward for our students which is really the main goal that all of us have.

My second trip to D.C. was with the Promise Neighborhoods initiative that Marissa Spang is directing. I hope that Schools of Promise and Promise Neighborhoods can continue to partner into the future to strengthen our community by supporting our schools. I think we have a great opportunity to really do some amazing things for our students, schools and community, if we all work together.

**From the Helena Office –
Nancy Coleman, SIG Unit Director –
ncoleman@mt.gov**

District Action Plan - (DAP) Reviews of the plans are done and now the work begins at the local level developing complete action plans to fully implement all the required aspects of the SIG. See the outline of things that need to be accomplished at the local level below.

School of Promise Performance Appraisal System – (SOPPAS) Orientation has been provided for all certified staff as well as the leadership in all four schools. The OPI has trained 3rd party evaluators that will be available for the district's labor/management teams to contact and recommend for hire for the district. Stay tuned for further developments.

New SIG Staff Openings: We are currently advertising for a full-time Transformational Leader for Lame Deer as well as a School Board Coach. Those positions close soon and we hope to get new staff trained and in place soon.

Grant Requirements for December and January:

For the board's information we are providing a listing of things that need to be accomplished at various levels:

For the on-site OPI employees:

Provide planning for the implementation of the District Action Plan (DAP);
Assist with organizing the collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs);
Support actions steps within the Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI);
Schedule external professional development providers; and
Provide job-embedded professional development through training and coaching for all staff.

For the Principal:

Attend School Improvement Team meeting(s);
Attend and coordinate professional development of the PLCs;
Lead, along with the MBI facilitator, action steps within the MBI;
Participate in the SOPPAS to provide support and feedback to teacher on effective instruction; and
Provide a system to determine 'at risk' students based on attendance, past class grades, discipline, support systems for success (student information system)

For the District/Superintendent:

Provide the board the name of the external evaluator that was selected by the labor/management team for board approval (teacher evaluations);
Support the implementation of the DAP through resources, etc.; and
Participate in the finance calls that are provided by the OPI once a month.

For teachers:

Participate in collaborative PLCs;
Plan and implement lesson plans that include standards alignment with ongoing assessments;
Implement the programs for communication arts and mathematics with fidelity; and

Actively participate in school improvement teams which you are involved with.

Donnie Wetzel, Statewide Youth and Community Outreach dwetzel2@mt.gov

We finally have all of the Community Liaisons hired. With 21st Century, MBI, Gear Up and Indian Education programs, it has been exciting to learn more about the available resources at the state and where it all fits together. I attended the MBI Youth Days last week and all the SIG schools were there. I have been in contact with Tribal Leaders, Legislators, and other tribal entities on building support around what is happening at the schools. I have also been working with IHS on some collaboration for student wellness. BIA is interested in visiting and learning how they can help from the law enforcement side as well as education. I am also working on a SIG Community Newsletter where we will show the positives of things that are happening in our schools.

Sarah Pierce, School Advocate Specialist spierce2@mt.gov

For the month of November I have been working on organizing some professional development foci at each of the SIG schools. I have been working to arrange times for math, science and communication arts teachers across the four schools to meet virtually to share ideas and build collaboration. Due to the weather, we had to cancel the first scheduled National Board meeting and have rescheduled for December 11. I also worked with OPI staff and especially the Instructional Leaders in developing a systems change focus for sustained growth in all the schools. My site visit to Lame Deer on Nov. 10th, 11th and 17th continued to show growth in Corrective Reading, and utilizing data for student growth. The District Action Plan review was also discussed and facilitated by Nancy Coleman.

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