# **SOA Plan Example 1: Milltown Public Schools**

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| **Section 1: Summarize your district’s plan** |
| ***Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan.*** Milltown Public Schools is committed to developing and enhancing the following evidence-based programs to address disparities in performance between student groups in our district, and accelerate the improvement of our Black/African American students, Hispanic/Latino students, English learners, and students with disabilities. 1. Expand **full-day pre-kindergarten programming for 4-year-olds alongside a robust early literacy program for grades pre-K to 3** at four of our elementary schools.
2. Start an **Early College program** at Milltown High School focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education and aligned to the Massachusetts Early College designation criteria.
3. Launch an **Acceleration Academies program** to provide targeted support for select middle school students district-wide.

These investments are as follows: $4,265,000 for expanded pre-kindergarten and $2,350,000 for early literacy programming; $484,500 for Early College; and $477,300 for Acceleration Academies. The total investment in evidence-based strategies over the next three years will total **$7,576,800.** |

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| **Section 2: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support**  |
| ***In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?*** Milltown Public Schools (MPS) is an urban Gateway district in the Commonwealth that serves 8,900 students. Our student population is 56% Latino, 24% white, 16% Black, and 4% Asian. In addition, 23% of our students are English learners, 21% are students with disabilities, and 66% are low-income. Based on our district’s data described below, MPS needs to work on multiple fronts to effectively address the needs of all students. Examining progress on core MCAS achievement and growth metrics over the past five years, we discern slight improvements for Latino and Black students. However, the performance of English learners and students with disabilities has remained stagnant. Notably, white and Asian students have seen considerable gains, particularly over the past two years, underscoring disparities in academic achievement.Delving deeper into the data, we identify disparities in performance between student groups emerging as early as third grade - especially in English Language Arts (ELA)- narrowing by fifth grade, and widening throughout middle school into high school. The widest performance gaps are observed among English learners and students with disabilities at the high school level. These trends illuminate disparities in learning experiences across grade levels.Noteworthy trends in high school include low student engagement levels, with fewer than 40 percent feeling engaged on a typical school day. Additionally, college persistence poses a challenge across all student groups, with a district average of only 20 percent persisting after the first year. This highlights a need for targeted interventions in high school to enhance engagement and post-secondary success.In reviewing elementary school trends, a positive highlight emerges from the implementation of full-day pre-kindergarten programs at Alcott and Emerson schools five years ago. Black and Latino students who participated in the program exhibited significantly higher proficiency rates in mathematics and slightly higher rates in ELA, narrowing performance gaps. Similarly, students with disabilities in the pre-kindergarten program made notable progress compared to their peers who did not participate.In summary, our deeper analysis has revealed three critical areas requiring attention.1. **Early Intervention and Readiness**
	* Disparities in performance between student groups are apparent as early as third grade, and are particularly apparent in ELA, emphasizing the need for early literacy interventions.
2. **Middle School Challenges**
	* Growing challenges in middle school contribute to increased disparities in ELA and math MCAS performance among Black, Latino, English learners, and students with disabilities.
3. **High School Engagement and College Persistence**
	* Performance gaps remain wide in high school, accompanied by declining student engagement and low college persistence rates.
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| ***What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?***Below is a summary of how we plan to address the disparities across student groups that were revealed in our deeper analysis. 1. **Early Intervention and Readiness:** Expand our full-day pre-kindergarten programming for 4-year-olds, which has had promising results for our Black and Latino students, as well as students with disabilities. Implement a robust early literacy program for grades pre-K to 3 at our elementary schools.
2. **Middle School Challenges:** Launch an Acceleration Academies program for select middle school students district-wide. This program will focus on students in the “Lowest Performing Students” group as identified in our DESE accelerated improvement target, and will include accommodations for our English learners and students with disabilities.
3. **High School Engagement and College Persistence:** Start an Early College program at Milltown High School focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education and aligned to the Massachusetts Early College designation criteria. Focus on interventions to counter declining student engagement, particularly in high school, and enhance college persistence rates across all student groups.
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| ***Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years?*** * Black/African American Students
* Hispanic/Latino Students
* English learners
* Students with disabilities
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| **Section 3: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement**  |
| ***Confirm that your district will use DESE’s three-year targets for increasing performance for the “Lowest Performing Students” group in ELA and math.*** Yes. We will adopt the three-year improvement targets established by DESE for the “Lowest Performing Students” group as our district’s SOA plan improvement targets. |

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| **Section 4: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders**  |
| ***Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented.***In Milltown Public Schools, meaningful engagement with families and caregivers is a cornerstone of our educational approach. We've diversified our strategies to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness.**Key Engagement Initiatives:*** **Integrated Family Engagement in Professional Learning:** We prioritize family engagement in all professional learning and cultural initiatives.
* **Community Mapping:** Staff and leadership create a community map to help recognize and aggregate all community resources (professionals, organizations, services) available to families, and develop strategies to engage families from targeted student groups.
* **Collaborative Family Engagement Plan:** Developed with community-based organizations, this plan ensures culturally sensitive and responsive strategies.
* **Parent Ambassadors Program:** Established a program where engaged parents act as liaisons, sharing information and encouraging involvement.
* **Home-Visit Program for Elementary Schools:** An instituted program allowing educators to build stronger relationships with families.
* **Quarterly Leadership Meetings:** Ongoing dialogue with PTO, SEPAC, and ELPAC leadership for transparent communication.
* **Diverse Engagement Opportunities:** We provide formal and informal opportunities for engagement, removing barriers to participation (e.g., childcare, food, a variety of times and formats).
* **Virtual Workshops and Webinars:** We host sessions on a variety of topics for families in our community.

**Measuring Family Engagement:*** **Annual Family Engagement Survey:** Conducted district-wide to gather feedback and assess the impact of initiatives.
* **Consistent System for Attendance and Participation:** Implemented to measure and analyze parent attendance, providing valuable data.
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| ***Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan?***Milltown Public Schools partnered with a local community organization, Community United, to lead our community engagement efforts and ensure broad and demographically representative participation from our community. Through these efforts, we engaged the following groups: * focus group of parents/guardians including PTO presidents from each school
* focus group of educators
* focus group of local nonprofits and businesses
* special education parent advisory council
* EL parent advisory council
* the local teachers union
* discussions with local elected and appointed officials
* Grassroots Education and YouthSpeak (two local community organizations)

Additional individuals and community groups spoke during public comment in our February and March school committee meetings. A primary concern for families was the lack of targeted support for students who are behind academically. Families were also highly interested in expanding pre-kindergarten programming and high school programs to ensure students were successful in college. These priorities are reflected in the Evidence Based Practices that we are focusing on in our SOA Plan. Community United, our partner organization, has agreed to reconvene these groups annually to step-back and reflect on SOA Plan progress, so we can adjust course if necessary.  |
| ***Confirm you engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan: parents/caregivers, special education and English learner parent advisory councils, school improvement councils, and educators in the school district.*** Yes |
| ***Confirm that your school committee voted to approve this plan and provide the date of the vote.*** Yes, our School Committee voted to approve the plan on March 12.  |

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| **Section 5: Select Evidence Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes** |
| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.***2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning |
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| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** *2.1C Comprehensive Approach to Early Literacy*  |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***We are in the early planning phases of developing a comprehensive approach to our early literacy programming. Research will guide our implementation of an effective early literacy program, which will include: * Establishing school-based literacy teams, including school and district personnel, to ensure program alignment and success across classrooms.
* Adopting high-quality, evidence-based literacy curricular materials for all core content areas (including science and social studies), in pre-K and grades K-3.
* Using valid assessments to identify instructional needs and to monitor progress.
* Differentiating, scaffolding, and accommodating the core curriculum to ensure equitable access for all students.
* Implementing evidence-based interventions to address individual student needs.
* Providing initial and ongoing professional development and support to teachers, leaders, and support staff, through embedded instructional coaches and external PD providers.

Throughout the rest of this school year, we will begin planning for the initial implementation of a robust early literacy program in grades K-3. Key activities will include: * Establishing school-based literacy teams
* Selecting high-quality instructional material
* Hiring instructional coaches and interventionists (1 instructional coach and 4 interventionists will be hired in Year 1 and these positions will be maintained in Year 2 and Year 3)
* Providing teachers and school leaders with professional development to prepare them for implementation.

In Year 1 (FY25), we will focus primarily on core instruction in pre-kindergarten and early elementary literacy. With support from instructional coaches, educators will implement the adopted instructional materials, participate in ongoing curriculum-specific professional development, and utilize screening assessments to inform instruction. In the following years, we will focus more intensively on selecting and utilizing appropriate interventions. Teachers will receive training on specific evidence-based interventions that complement the adopted instructional materials, while instructional coaches provide ongoing support to educators to implement interventions appropriately. We expect our early literacy program to be fully implemented across grades K-3 by FY27, with an established walk-through process in place to monitor fidelity of implementation.  |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** All elementary schools |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** **$2,350,000**
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| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * **Professional Development:** $350,000
* **Classroom & Specialist Teachers:** $1,500,000
* **Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology:** $500,000
* **Total:** $2,350,000 for early literacy programming
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| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Professional Development, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on 3rd Grade ELA MCAS
* Increase in the number of students exiting the “at-risk” category on our early literacy screener
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| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*** 2.2 Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** 2.2D Targeted Academic Support and Acceleration  |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***In order to support our middle school students in closing achievement gaps, MPS will begin a multi-year commitment to an Acceleration Academies program for our two middle schools, Milltown North and Milltown South. The Academies will take place during February and April vacation weeks and run for the entire week (five days). Each Acceleration Academy will focus on a specific content area, with ELA as the focus in February, and math and science as the focus in April. As part of the program, students will receive at least four hours of high-quality, targeted instruction in the same subject area each day for the entire week. Core content teachers will teach the same cohort of 10-12 students during the Academy and will have at least one planning period each day when students attend a specials class. We expect the program to serve roughly 10 percent of students from each grade level at the two middle schools, for a total of 200 students annually. For this program we anticipate providing stipends to 20 teachers per academy in each of the two academies over three years. To support planning for the week, teachers will receive high-quality professional development in creating standards aligned, engaging lessons along with relevant data for their student groups. Additionally, teachers will be provided with curricular materials and any other necessary resources to use for the week. Because the Acceleration Academies will take place during school vacation weeks, students will be invited but not required to attend the Academies. Students will be invited to participate in the Academies by analyzing and grouping students based on common needs, with a focus on students in the “lowest-performing” student group. We will also ensure Academy classrooms are accessible and include services for English learners and students with disabilities.  |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** All Middle Schools district-wide |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $477,300
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| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Classroom & Specialist Teachers: $360,000
* Administration: $36,000
* Pupil Services: $36,000
* Professional Development: $15,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: $6,300
* Operations & Maintenance: $24,000
* Total: $477,300
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| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Administration, Pupil Services, Professional Development, Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology, Operations & Maintenance |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on Math, ELA, and Science MCAS
* Increase in MCAS SGP on Math and ELA MCAS
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| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*** 2.3 Reimagine the high school experience so that all students are engaged and prepared for post-secondary success |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** 2.3B High-Quality Pathways and Programs |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***This program will launch by serving an initial cohort of 80 10th grade students in Year 1. We expect to expand it to 240 students by Year 3. In close partnership with our local community college, Milltown High School will build and deliver a high-quality Early College program. An explicit goal will be to serve students who have been historically under-represented among postsecondary degree holders in our community. Our Early College program will align to the core model components outlined in the Commonwealth’s designation criteria, and we will apply for the state designation in the spring of 2024. Critically, we will immediately hire two key staff members who are dedicated to Early College management. These positions will initially have wide-ranging responsibilities, from building and maintaining a very strong and strategic relationship with our college partner to ensuring coordination of class schedules and reviewing student outcomes. We used the five guiding principles of the Early College designation to begin designing our program: 1. **Equitable access.**
	* We will work closely with middle school guidance counselors to begin recruiting students and their families in the 8th grade. We will focus on recruiting students who express interest and commitment to Early College, but without consideration of prior academic performance.
	* Our math and ELA faculty will work with their college counterparts to align curriculum.
	* Further ensuring that as many students take advantage of Early College as possible, all courses will be taught by college faculty during the regular high school day; buses will take students to and from the college campus in the 11th and 12th grades; and there will be no fees for students.
2. **Guided academic pathways.**
	* Beginning in 10th grade, Early College students will follow a sequenced set of courses aligned with local labor market needs, that are gateways to college-level courses that are credit-bearing and in the Mass Transfer block.
	* Students will earn at least 12 transferable college credits, but our block schedule will give students the opportunity to take significantly more credits – up to a full year’s worth of college credits.
3. **Enhanced student supports.**
	* We will encourage students to access supports offered by our college partner and Early College staff at Milltown High will provide enhanced supports on the high school campus.
	* With our college partner, we will implement an early warning system that alerts our dedicated Early College staff to points where students are struggling. Robust, individualized academic and guidance supports will then be developed and provided.
4. **Relevant connection to career**.
	* We will offer multiple experiences that connect college with career. The 10th grade advisory will include career orientation, with goal-mapping and exposure opportunities through business partners. College coursework will introduce students to opportunities in their chosen career pathways, and internship opportunities will be aligned with our pathways.
5. **Robust partnerships.**
	* For years, many of our students have participated in dual enrollment coursework with our college partner. While we recognize that dual enrollment and Early College are not the same, this has allowed us to establish close relationships.
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| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** Milltown High School |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $484,500
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| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Administration: $210,000
* Guidance & Psychological: $210,000
* Classroom & Specialist Teachers: $30,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: $34,500
* Total: $484,500
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| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Administration, Guidance & Psychological, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.***  * Increase in pathway/program enrollment rates
* Increase in 4- and 5-year graduation rates
* Increase in college enrollment/persistence rates
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| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.***2.4 Develop a coherent and holistic range of programming that is responsive to the needs and interests of diverse learners |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** 2.4A Expanded Access to Pre-Kindergarten |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).*** As a district, we see expanding high-quality pre-K and reconfiguring literacy instruction (referenced earlier in this plan) as two complementary strategies for improving student outcomes, particularly in ELA. We currently have full-day pre-kindergarten programs in place at Alcott and Emerson schools that have had a positive impact on kindergarten readiness over the past five years. We aim to increase access to and enrollment in new pre-K programs that will flow seamlessly into continued strong early literacy instruction in grades K-3. In Year 1 (SY25), MPS will open eight new classrooms of full-day pre-kindergarten and begin implementation of early literacy programs at Alcott Elementary, Emerson Elementary, Thoreau Elementary, and Longfellow K-8 School. Our pre-kindergarten model will be structured based on the evidence-based model below. This fall, current Milltown pre-K and early elementary educators had an opportunity to visit model pre-K programs to observe firsthand key features we intend to enhance and/or adopt in Milltown: * All pre-K educators will hold a degree in early childhood education and will be prepared to support the needs of all incoming students
* We will further research and adopt high-quality curriculum materials that are aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and based on national models in early education.
* We will establish an extensive progress monitoring and assessment system, ensuring student needs are being identified and addressed in real time.
* Teachers will receive professional development throughout the year to enhance their practice, with expert coaches providing embedded support in the classroom.
* We will ensure all classroom settings are appropriate for pre-K students and culturally responsive.
* Pre-K classrooms will feature small class sizes with two educators (1 pre-K teacher and 1 paraprofessional) for 20 students.
* We will seek accreditation for our programming by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
* We will hire a pre-K coordinator and family engagement specialist to support the individual needs of families, as well as our efforts to recruit students of color and English learners into the program.
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| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** Alcott Elementary, Emerson Elementary, Thoreau Elementary, and Longfellow K-8 School |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $4,265,000
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| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Classroom & Specialist Teachers: $2,160,000
* Other Teaching Services: $1,110,000
* Administration: $510,000
* Pupil Services: $135,000
* Professional Development: $40,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: $120,000
* Other: $200,000
* Total: $4,265,000
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| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Other Teaching Services, Administration, Pupil Services, Professional Development, Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology, Other |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Increase in Pre-K seats/enrollment
* Increase in Kindergarten readiness rates as measured by local data
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# **SOA Plan Example 2: Rivertown Public Schools**

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| **Section 1: Summarize your district’s plan** |
| ***Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan.*** Rivertown Public Schools is committed to accelerating improvement for English Learners, Hispanic/Latinx students, and Black/African American students. Our three-year Student Opportunity Act plan focuses on addressing persistent disparities through the following evidence-based programs carefully chosen based on a thorough analysis of data:* **Enhanced support for SEL and Mental Health:** Our analysis of student data revealed the critical need to enhance social-emotional competencies, as disparities in SEL competencies were evident across student groups. To address this, we will adopt a social-emotional competency screener and provide enhanced supports, including substantial investments in hiring new staff, aligning with the factors that have exacerbated mental health challenges during the pandemic and contributed to disparities in student outcomes.
* **Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners:** Furthermore, our data indicated the effectiveness of Dual Language Education (DLE) programs for English Learners. Hence, we are launching a new DLE program at Mill Elementary School, building on our successful DLE model, to further support the academic and social-emotional development of English Learners.
* **Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process & Supporting Educators on Curriculum Implementation:** Finally, our analysis highlighted the importance of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) in narrowing achievement gaps. Therefore, we will continue our district-wide adoption and robust implementation of HQIM to ensure equitable access to high-quality education for all students, with specific expansion plans in grades 5 - 8 for both ELA and math curriculum.

In total across each of these initiatives, Rivertown will invest nearly $3.5 million in aligned evidence-based programs as follows: EBP 1.1B: Enhanced support for SEL and Mental Health = $1,224,000; EBP 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process = $600,000; EBP 2.1B: Supporting Educators on Curriculum Implementation = $325,000; EBP 2.4C: Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners = $1,314,000. |

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| **Section 2: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support**  |
| ***In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?*** Nearly all of Rivertown Public Schools’ (RPS) 3,400 students are members of one or more high needs student groups. Our student population is 56 percent Hispanic/Latino, 24 percent white, 16 percent Black, and 4 percent Asian. In addition, 23 percent of our students are English learners, 21 percent are students with disabilities, and 66 percent are low-income. Based on our district’s data described below, RPS needs to work on multiple fronts to effectively address the needs of all students.In reviewing progress by student groups on core MCAS achievement and growth metrics over the past four years, we have seen some recovery compared to 2022, but performance among our English learners and students with disabilities, as well as our Hispanic/Latino and Black students, is still far below 2019 pre-pandemic levels.Digging further into the data, we note several trends in student performance across grade levels. Across the district, disparities in performance generally begin in third grade, tend to slightly narrow by the time students reach fifth grade, and widen throughout the middle school years and into high school. These trends hold for Black and Latino students, English learners, and students with disabilities, with performance gaps for the latter two groups the widest among student groups at the high school level. We attribute some of the improvement we see in Grades 3 and 4, to our adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials in our elementary schools, which was a priority in our first SOA plan.Among our English learners, we noticed a decrease in the percentage of students making progress on ACCESS and increasing disparities for English learners on the Grade 3 MCAS as compared to their non-EL peers. In a bright spot, however, English learners who are in our Dual Language school have been progressing at higher rates on ACCESS and have performed better on Grade 3 MCAS. Reflecting on what works:As we embark on addressing these disparities, it is equally important to reflect on what has worked well. Our successful Dual Language Education (DLE) program for English learners stands as a shining example. English learners enrolled in this program have not only made notable progress on ACCESS assessments but have also outperformed their non-EL peers on Grade 3 MCAS. This success highlights the value of bilingual education and underscores the importance of exploring similar effective strategies for other student groups.Additionally, our commitment to the adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) in our elementary schools has yielded positive results. The improvement observed in Grades 3 and 4 can be attributed, in part, to this focused effort. This experience emphasizes the significance of aligning curriculum resources with the needs of our students, and we intend to apply this successful approach more broadly in our district as a part of this three-year plan. Our deeper analysis has revealed three critical areas requiring attention:* **Weak Curriculum Implementation**: One significant root cause identified by our team is related to weak curriculum implementation, particularly at the middle and high school levels. Our analysis indicates that there have been gaps in ensuring that the curriculum effectively meets the needs of diverse student populations. This weakness may contribute to the disparities observed among various student groups.
* **Instructional Practices at Middle and High Schools:** Another key finding from our root cause analysis is the need to strengthen instructional practices at the middle and high school levels. Disparities tend to widen during these crucial years, and our analysis suggests that a more focused approach is required to address the learning experiences of students, specifically English learners and students with disabilities, during this phase of their education.
* **Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health:** The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on student mental health and well-being. Our analysis indicates that the pandemic-related disruptions, isolation, and uncertainties have exacerbated mental health issues among students, particularly among our low-income, Black, and Latino students. This has further contributed to disparities in academic performance and overall student experiences.

Teacher Feedback:To further inform our understanding of these disparities and potential solutions, we conducted focus group meetings with teachers. During these sessions, teachers provided valuable feedback, emphasizing that teacher professional development to address the unique needs of diverse student populations has been insufficient. This feedback underscores the importance of investing in ongoing professional development opportunities that empower our educators with the tools and strategies needed to support English learners, students with disabilities, and students with low academic performance effectively.In conclusion, Rivertown Public Schools recognizes the complex nature of disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes. Our commitment to data-driven decision-making, addressing weak curriculum implementation, strengthening instructional practices at the middle and high school levels, and enhancing teacher professional development is central to our ongoing efforts. |
| ***What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?***Below is a summary of how we plan to address the disparities across student groups that were revealed in our deeper analysis. * **HQIM Implementation**: We will implement an HQIM adoption process for math and ELA in grades 5-8. We will also provide professional development to our teachers to ensure effective implementation of HQIM. This will include professional development for all teachers on strategies to ensure the HQIM are accessible to all students, especially our English learners and students with disabilities.
* **Dual Enrollment for English learners:** We will expand our programming for English learners, with a new Dual Enrollment strand at Mill Elementary based on our analysis that English Learners who are enrolled in our current DLE program at Town Elementary perform higher than ELs in our SEI programs across the district.
* **SEL Screener and Curriculum for Mental Health:** We intend to address the significant challenges for the mental health and social emotional development of our students by adopting a SEL competency screener districtwide in grades 3-8, expanding on the SEL curriculum that we’ve adopted across our middle and high schools over the past three years.
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| ***Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years?*** * Black/African American Students
* Hispanic/Latinx Students
* English learners
* Students with disabilities
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| **Section 3: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement**  |
| ***Confirm that your district will use DESE’s three-year targets for increasing performance for the “Lowest Performing Students” group in ELA and math.*** Yes. We will adopt the three-year improvement targets established by DESE for the “Lowest Performing Students” group as our district’s SOA plan improvement targets. |

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| **Section 4: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders**  |
| ***Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented.***Rivertown has implemented several strategies to meaningfully engage families over the past few years, including: * Prioritizing family engagement in all professional learning and culture building across the district. Through those efforts we have set a district-wide expectation that school staff proactively engage with families regarding the specific needs of individual students.
* Developing and implementing a district-wide family engagement plan, in partnership with community-based organizations working with historically underserved families.
* Implementing a home-visit program in our elementary schools.
* Quarterly meetings between district leadership and PTO/SEPAC/ELPAC leadership.
* A variety of formal and informal engagement opportunities throughout the school year for families, and we have worked hard to remove as many barriers to participation as possible, including:
* Providing interpretation services, food, and childcare at meetings
* Holding meetings and events at a variety of times to accommodate for different schedules
* Advertising meetings/events through a variety of communication channels, both school based and through our community partners

We use the following strategies to measure family engagement in our district:* Annual district-wide family engagement survey
* Consistent district-wide system for measuring and analyzing parent attendance/participation
 |
| ***Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan?***We engaged stakeholders in the development of this plan in several ways, including:* We held a series of focus groups with our educators in which we shared the aggregated data on gaps between student groups and solicited their feedback on what supports would be most critical to address them.
* During regular meetings with various advisory councils (Special Education Parent Advisory Council, English Learner Parent Advisory Council, School Improvement Council, and School Committee) we shared aggregated data on disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes and solicited feedback on approaches to addressing those disparities.
* We held two facilitated community meetings for families/caregivers and community members to both share the aggregated data on disparities and gather input and insights.
* We reviewed aggregated data gathered during our community visioning process for our comprehensive strategic planning last year as a reference point for selecting our EBPs to close gaps. This group included a wide cross-section of district stakeholders, including educators, students, families, and representatives from local community groups, non-profits, and business leaders.
* We consulted with local elected and appointed officials about the disparities observed in the data and emerging priorities and strategies to address them.
* We identified support for mental health and social-emotional learning as a consistent priority across groups, so we integrated that priority into our plan.
 |
| ***Confirm you engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan: parents/caregivers, special education and English learner parent advisory councils, school improvement councils, and educators in the school district.*** Yes |
| ***Confirm that your school committee voted to approve this plan and provide the date of the vote.*** Yes, our School Committee voted to approach the plan on March 23.  |

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| **Section 5: Select Evidence Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes** |
| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*****Focus Area 1.1:** Promote students’ physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces |
|
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** **EBP 1.1B: Enhanced support for SEL and Mental Health:** Expand capacity to address social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health needs of students and families (e.g., build knowledge and skills of current staff, add specialized support staff, partner with community-based providers) |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***Our district will continue to work on focusing on the whole student - including the importance of students’ social emotional competencies alongside their academic competencies. As one of our focus areas for this three-year plan, by 2027 we will implement a SEL competency screener districtwide in grades 3-8. This expands on our adoption and implementation of SEL curriculum across elementary and middle schools over the past 3 years. Implementation of the screener will include high-quality aligned training for staff to support the administration and interpretation of the screener. In addition to building the capacity of our existing staff, we also plan to increase the number of FTEs across the district who have specialized skills and training regarding the response to students’ social, emotional, and mental health needs. In summary, by FY27 we will have added the following components to our district:* Adopt a screener for SEL competencies
* High-Quality Professional Development for staff
* 4.0 FTE BCBAs
* 4.0 FTE Adjustment Counselors
* 4.0 FTE Social Workers

Professional development on screener implementation and interpretation will be conducted through a lens of cultural and linguistically sustaining practices ensuring that all staff have a common language and approach. Additionally, 50% of the FTE hires will be bilingual in order to both assist students who speak a language other than English and enhance communication with families.  |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** All Elementary & Middle Schools |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $1,224,000
 |
| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Pupil Services = $864,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology = $300,000
* Professional Development = $60,000
* **Total = $1,224,000**
 |
| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Pupil Services, Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology, Professional Development |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Change in social and emotional competency rates as measured by local screener (indicators to be selected once screener is adopted)
* Decrease in chronic absenteeism rates for targeted student groups
 |
| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*****Focus Area 2.1:** Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning  |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** **EBP: 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process:** Implement a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum adoption process that engages multiple stakeholders in the exploration and assessment of potential instructional materials  |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***Our data analysis provided earlier in this plan described the positive impacts we have seen as a result of our high-quality instructional material adoption and implementation efforts from our first SOA plan. We will be enhancing and deepening this strategy by implementing an adoption process for HQIM for math and ELA in grades 5 - 8 this year. We will be utilizing a new process to engage multiple stakeholders in the exploration and assessment of potential instructional materials including targeting families of our target student groups and educators with expertise and experience in teaching ELs and SWD specifically.  |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** All Middle Schools |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $600,000
 |
| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Other Teaching Services = $100,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology = $500,000
* **Total = $600,000**
 |
| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Other Teaching Services, Instructional Materials |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Increase in HQIM adoption rates
* Increase in efficacy of HQIM implementation as measured by classroom walkthrough tools
* **Increase in MCAS SGP on Math and ELA MCAS**
 |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** **EBP 2.1B: Supporting Educators on Curriculum Implementation:** Engage teachers in professional development linked directly to the curriculum and set up a process to regularly monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***In addition to purchasing the new materials, we will also be contracting with professional development providers to inform the accessibility of the curriculum and pedagogical strategies for robust implementation. Additionally, to address the persistent disparities in achievement for our English learners and students with disabilities, we will provide professional development for all teachers on strategies to ensure the HQIM are accessible to all students. Furthermore, we will be convening a group of expert educators from across the district to revise and refine our classroom walkthrough tool based on the newly introduced HQIM and focus on ELs and SWD. While we plan to develop and pilot this tool for SY23-24, we will subsequently implement the tool as a part of our regular instructional walkthrough and feedback cycles across schools in SY24-25.  |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** District-wide |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $325,000
 |
| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Professional Development = $300,000
* Other Teaching Services = $25,000
* **Total = $325,000**
 |
| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Professional Development, Other Teaching Services |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.**** Increase in HQIM adoption rates
* Increase in efficacy of HQIM implementation as measured by classroom walkthrough tools
* **Increase in MCAS SGP on Math and ELA MCAS**
 |
| ***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*** **Strategic Objective Focus Area 2.4:** Develop a coherent and holistic range of programming that is responsive to the needs and interests of diverse learners |
| ***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*** **EBP 2.4C: Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners:** Develop or enhance research-based programs for multilingual learners that support and sustain students' native languages while also addressing their educational needs and language development |
| ***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***Rivertown public schools is excited to launch a new Dual Enrollment strand at the Mill Elementary School starting in Fall of 2025. This will be the second dual language program in our district and will begin in kindergarten with plans to phase up to 5th grade. By 2027, we will have a dual language strand in kindergarten and first grade. In terms of FTEs, we will have added a district dual language program coordinator and two elementary certified (with bilingual endorsement) teachers. During our planning process, our district will engage in a curriculum review and will purchase curriculum materials. We will also provide professional development to all staff at Rivertown public schools as well as targeted learning for the staff who will be working directly in the DLE strand. Our data analysis demonstrated that our English Learners who are enrolled in our current DLE program at Town Elementary perform higher than ELs in our SEI programs across the district. This is also supported by a vast and growing body of research in second language acquisition stating that bilingual education results in better outcomes – both academic and social emotional – for English Learners and all students. |
| ***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?*** Mill Elementary School |
| ***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**** $1,314,000
 |
| ***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.*** * Instructional Leadership = $300,000
* Classroom & Specialist Teachers = $864,000
* Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology = $100,000
* Professional development: $50,000
* **Total = $1,314,000**
 |
| ***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***Instructional Leadership, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology, Professional Development |
| ***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.***  * Increase in Dual Language Education (DLE) seats/enrollment (year 1)
* Increase in academic language acquisition of ELs as measured by the WIDA Model (year 1)
* Increase in % of English learners making progress on the ACCESS exam (year 2)
 |