

Student Investment Account Annual Report Questions

Annual Report Questions

District or Eligible Charter School	
<p>1. There are clear impacts from the reduction in SIA funding and from the direct efforts to respond to COVID-19. While you can't fully set those aside, what is important for your community, including focal student groups, families, and educators, to understand about your SIA implementation efforts during the 2020-21 school year and the positive impacts that have occurred? How were you able to make progress towards the goals and outcomes you were aiming at with SIA funding and processes? (500 words or less)</p> <p><i>Explainer: In your response to this question, consider what is most important to share with your community about SIA implementation over the last year. As you reflect on the progress made toward the goals and outcomes you were aiming at with SIA funding, consider and speak to the impacts to student mental and behavioral health, and the reduction of academic disparities for focal students.</i></p>	<p>Our SIA implementation efforts were impacted by the regional wildfire, the Covid-19 pandemic, reduced SIA funding for the 20-21 school year and, even, contractor availability. Despite those challenges, we have made significant progress in supporting the social-emotional and academic needs of our students. For example, we hired an additional school nurse to support physical and mental well-being of students and families. We also hired a full-time Behavior Intervention Specialist for each elementary school. That person's role was to reach out to students who were not engaging in online learning and to also provide mental health supports to students and families. We also were able to support our focal groups. For example, we hired a Special Education Coordinator who provided support services to families and worked with teachers in using a variety of instructional models. We also contracted additional services with the Maslow Project to better support our homeless youth. To help all students with unfinished learning, we provided free summer school opportunities along with transportation and extended child care for parents. In addition, we purchased Spanish signage for our schools as well as various classroom supplies and equipment creating a more conducive environment to student learning. Finally, we used part of our SIA funds to improve and upgrade our schools HVAC systems. Our contractor, however, was not able to complete the project until September. A healthier learning environment will help staff and students feel safer at school and to feel valued by the district.</p>
<p>2. What barriers, impediments, or challenges to your SIA implementation have you faced or identified that are helpful for your community and/or state leaders to be aware of? (500 words or less)</p> <p><i>Explainer: Through this question, we're aiming to understand barriers and challenges that you experienced or faced in SIA implementation that would be helpful to share with students, families, communities and ODE.</i></p>	<p>The 2020-21 school year saw many challenges. As ODE, in collaboration with other agencies, continued to make changes to the Ready Schools Safe Learners guidance, our district staff had to spend many hours implementing those changes and adjusting our SIA plan to fit in-person, CDL, and Hybrid learning models. That work contributed to the overall stress and anxiety levels of students, staff, and parents. The loss of face to face instruction had a significant impact on our ability to cover content and differentiate for the needs of our learners. Socialization skills were the most impacted as students and staff lost the opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other. There also were significant impacts to student programs. We weren't able to run athletics and/or other extracurricular activities that students and parents love. School is so much more than a classroom. It's a full experience, allowing students to explore interests and discover new opportunities. SIA funds were going to be used to eliminate the pay to play costs. Although we did not have a full athletic season, we did have spring sports and did</p>

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	<p>not charge students to participate in any of the activities. Finally, it was difficult during the 2020-21 school year to engage our parents in a remote way. Although we made attempts at video conferencing and connecting with parents, we found that everyone became weary of the constant screen time and, as a result, participation in the various events we attempted were limited. Another challenge was getting the HVAC system work completed. Due to COVID, lack of materials and limited contractor availability, the scheduled improvements did not happen on the timeline originally developed. We are on schedule to have the work completed by the end of September.</p>
<p>3. SIA implementation includes ongoing engagement with focal students, the families of focal students, and educators. What successes and challenges, if any, have you experienced in maintaining engagement? (500 words or less)</p> <p><i>Explainer: What we're seeking through this question is a reflection of successes and challenges (if any) in engagement over the first year of SIA implementation. We recognize this question may feel a little redundant to one of the recent SIA Plan Update questions; however, we're hoping to get a little more depth in understanding engagement in general over the year, not just as it relates to informing updates to the SIA plan.</i></p>	<p>During the 20/21 school year, engaging our community in a “virtual” way proved challenging. The majority of our Board Meetings as well as other parent, community, and stakeholder input sessions were done in virtual platforms. The challenges of collaboration in these types of settings are daunting. Families and students, especially, really struggled with the isolation and lack of human connection during the 20/21 school year. One of the focuses in our Community Engagement process this year was to include a clear review of the district’s 2020-21 SIA plan in all of the surveys and discussions. Like in all districts, the last 12 months of schooling in Grants Pass has been focused on CDL, hybrid instructional models, and all things COVID related. Since March of last year, few parents, students or even staff have thought much about SIA funds, priorities, and spending. With that in mind, all surveys sent to students, parents and staff included a review of the district’s 2020-21 SIA spending priorities, an explanation of the reduction in SIA funds allocated to districts, and the resulting spending of this year’s funds. We put out a number of student, staff, and parent surveys to check in on how things were going. The Youth Truth survey was completed with all middle school staff, students, and parents and pointed toward the issues related to the social emotional needs of our community. By the summer of 2021, parents and students were ready to engage and our summer sessions and credit recovery opportunities were well utilized. Survey feedback from the summer sessions showed a need to continue to look for ways to extend beyond the school’s instructional day as well as using strategies to keep kids engaged. Finally, our most significantly impacted groups were special education and homeless youth. Although we attempted home visits, one-on-one virtual conferences, and phone calls, students and their families struggled to be engaged. We made significant investments in internet connectivity in order to reach more families, but in a rural community, this still proved to be a challenge.</p>
<p>4. Please share your professional assessment of what guided your choices and prioritization efforts in the first year of SIA implementation? What stands out? Anything important or surprising to report back or reflect on? How were key decisions on scaled down implementation made? What impacts, if any, are helpful to name in how you</p>	<p>In our first year of SIA implementation, we received significantly less money than had been anticipated and, with the challenges of COVID, certain activities became difficult to implement. Our key driver is always - “What’s best for kids.” With this in mind, we chose to do things we felt would have the most impact. The district administrative team was in charge of planning and analyzing the data gathered from community engagement on prioritization of activities due to reduction in funding. They wanted to learn if the SIA activities identified in the</p>

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navigated through the last year, specifically as it relates to SIA implementation? (500 words or less)

Explainer: In your response to this year, we'd like to hear specifically what guided your prioritization of some activities/strategies over others in light of the reduction in funding and/or shifting community needs. Within this question, you may also offer learnings or surprises that were unanticipated.

original SIA Plan were still a high priority. Additionally, TIDE (Team for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity) meetings were used to review the purpose and requirements of the SIA funds, review the original priorities, and ensure planned activities using the equity tool were still the priority of the community. This information was taken back to the district administrative team. The TIDE group is made up of representatives from our Hispanic community, staff and students. Our administrative team took the data from the virtual sessions and surveys and analyzed them for themes related to our initial SIA plan prioritized activities. Per our community feedback and data analysis, we know that our students experiencing homelessness, students experiencing disabilities, and students who are English Learners need the most support. Prioritization was given to activities identified by the data and would have an impact in these areas. One issue that significantly impacted our decisions and strategies was the lack of available and qualified staffing. We had jobs posted for months with little to no applicants or applicants who were not qualified for the position. An example would be our need to hire an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator. We have had to get creative on how to proceed with the work and have changed job responsibilities with existing staff to accomplish this. We were disappointed that we were not able to provide our Stepping Stones programs for elementary students struggling with self-regulation due to the COVID requirements and students having to learn from home. Mental and behavioral health is a major focus of our SIA investments and with the lack of in person time with students, we weren't able to implement the Stepping Stones program. We did, however, reach out and continue supporting students with mental health challenges remotely, but it was less effective than in-person support and proved to be difficult to manage.