



Background

The purpose of the Student Investment Account funds is to:

1. Meet students' mental and behavioral health needs.
2. Increase academic achievement & reduce academic disparities for students of color; students with disabilities; emerging bilingual students; and students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care; and other student groups that have historically experienced academic disparities.

The North Clackamas School District participated in an extensive need assessment (2019-20) which included a data review and community, staff, and student engagement processes. Key themes that emerged from the district's need assessment identified as most urgent were:

- Increase Mental Health Supports
- Retain/Recruit Diverse Staff
- Lower Class Size/Caseload
- Strengthen Culturally Relevant Practices Throughout System
- Develop Community Partnerships
- Increase Proficiency in Literacy (Grades K-3)
- Expand Social Services to Students and Families

These themes of the most urgent needs informed the development of the three-year proposal for the Student Investment Account funds which was approved by the Oregon Department of Education and the North Clackamas School Board on October 8, 2020.

The North Clackamas School District Student Investment Plan (2020-2023) established five strategies to meet the goals and outcomes established.

Strategy 1: Invest in targeted class size reduction/case load in secondary English Language Arts, science, and math classes, special education, English Language Development and elementary schools with an emphasis on grades K-2.

Strategy 2: Expand and invest in teams of professionals to support the behavioral health and wellness needs of students and families.

Strategy 3: Develop and support collaborative partnerships with families and community organizations using culturally relevant and linguistically specific practices.

Strategy 4: Invest in job embedded and periodic professional learning aimed at relevant practices and effective instructional techniques and hiring practices.

Strategy 5: Reduce barriers for accessing academic interventions and supports.

Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Cultivating a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment where the success of each student is not be predicted by race, ethnicity, language, gender, gender identity, country of origin, disability, sexual orientation, socio economics, religion, marital status, or initial proficiencies.

Outcome 2: Attract, hire and retain high-quality staff that reflect the student demographics of the school district while elevating the professional capacity of our workforce to meet the needs of today’s learners.

Outcome 3: Each adult in the system addresses and responds to each student’s academic, social, emotional, and physical needs.

Outcome 4: Support student learning with rigorous, culturally relevant, consistent curriculum and clear expectations for teaching and learning while providing instructional supports and systems to meet the needs of students.

Outcome 5: Strengthen connections between our students, our schools, and our community.

The North Clackamas School District Student Investment allocation for 2021-22 and its eligible charter schools was \$ 12,588,139.01.

Graph of Expenditures:

Line Item Budgeted	Budget
Strategy 1: Invest in targeted class size reduction/case load in secondary English Language Arts, science, and math classes, special education, English Language Development and elementary schools with an emphasis on grades K-2.	\$5,500,000.00
Strategy 2: Expand and invest in teams of professionals to support the behavioral health and wellness needs of students and families.	\$2,600,000.00
Strategy 3: Develop and support collaborative partnerships with families and community organizations using culturally relevant and linguistically specific practices.	\$605,000.00
Strategy 4: Invest in job embedded and periodic professional learning aimed at relevant practices and effective instructional techniques and hiring practices.	\$2,545,000.00
Strategy 5: Reduce barriers for accessing academic interventions and supports.	\$520,000.00
Charter Schools – (Cascade Heights & Clackamas Middle College)	\$315,000.00
Indirect	\$500,000.00

The following supplemental questions are required by the Oregon Department of Education for the annual report.

1. What changes in behavior, actions, policies or practices have you observed related to SIA implementation during the 2021-22 school year? How do you see these changes contributing to the goals and outcomes in your SIA plan?

The North Clackamas School District builds relationships with students to honor their cultural heritage, foster their physical, social, and emotional well-being, cultivate joy in learning, and engage each student to reach their full potential. We create environments where students are inspired to be creative and critical thinkers as they prepare for success in life, college, and career. The support of the Student Investment Account funds has contributed to our efforts in moving our vision forward.

For the third time in the past four years, the North Clackamas School District (NCSD) set a new district record for graduation rate, as 88.2 percent earned a diploma in four years. The previous high of 87.2 percent was set in 2019.

The steady improvement reflects the district's commitment to educating the whole child, fostering an inclusive learning environment, providing a wide range of career-technical education opportunities, maintaining high academic standards, and offering a variety of educational pathways in the district.

Several student groups also made significant strides in their graduation rate, including students with disabilities at 78 percent (up 6.4 percent), students in homeless situations at 71.4 (up 8.4 percent), and students who were English Language Learners at any time in high school at 86.2 (up 12.9 percent).

The North Clackamas School District utilized the Student Investment Account resources to lower case load and class sizes in targeted areas, address mental and behavioral health needs, provide focused professional learning, ensure students had necessary resources in the classroom to be successful, as well as provided additional academic supports.

Overall, the additional resources provided through the Student Investment Account funding were critical to supporting equitable learning opportunities during a unique and challenging two year period of time during a worldwide pandemic. We recognize the importance of balancing mental and behavioral supports with academic supports, and find that our approach is improving student learning.

2. What barriers or challenges to SIA implementation have you experienced that are helpful for your community and/or state leaders to be aware of? What adjustment, if any, did you make to your SIA plan as a result of these challenges?

The continued impact of COVID-19 and its repercussions continued to bring challenges and hardships. The main challenges were:

- **Barrier 1- Changing Regulations/Guidance:** The continued regulations and guidance often changed on a daily basis, requiring North Clackamas to create new systems quickly to meet the needs of students, families, and staff while prioritizing safety.
- **Barrier 2- A shortage of teacher substitutes:** When teachers and support staff are absent due to illness, COVID-19 exposure or other routine reasons, administrators had difficulty in finding substitutes. These shortages in critical areas have a direct impact on educational opportunity for each of our students, and research shows that educator shortages disproportionately impact students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and students with disabilities.
- **Barrier 3 - Professional Development:** The lack of substitutes meant many professional development efforts were curtailed mid-stream or at the last minute due to the need for all educators to be in the classrooms. This meant some professional development efforts were eliminated, others shortened and others yet offered to a smaller group of people than the original plan was designed for.
- **Barrier 4 - Hiring:** Challenge in hiring an adequate number of staff for the positions available due to staffing shortages statewide.

All four of these barriers promote time and energy being spent on “reacting” to changes and obstacles to provide a safe learning environment for each of the students. In addition to this, anxiety and depression appear to have increased in children and staff as a result of COVID-19 itself and as a consequence of school changes.

3. SIA implementation includes ongoing engagement with all students, focal students, families, staff, and community partners. How have relationships with or between those groups changed and/or been maintained throughout the academic year?

We have continued to engage our students, staff and community through the use of surveys, focus groups, and personal connection. We continue to engage the defined focal populations as well as the broader community through interviews, small group gatherings, one on one conversations, and surveys. Our continued efforts to reach out have created a more diverse collection of perceptions and beliefs from our students and parents. We have worked at creating conditions that families feel supported and able to comfortably express their perspectives and participate in the design process.

Survey results confirm there was high interest in providing feedback. This feedback is used to help determine if NCSD’s day-to-day actions and programs through the funding of the Student Investment Account is aligned with what we hear from our community on the definition of success in school.

Some of those details adopted by the school board and employed districtwide include:

- Ensure that modes and delivery of teaching and learning are varied and responsive to students' learning needs.
- Support the mental health and well-being of each student.
- Strengthen and improve instructional and assessment practices that lead to meaningful academic and experiential learning for each student.
- Recruit, hire, and retain exceptional employees with a strong sense of commitment to the district's mission, vision, and core values.
- Build trusting relationships with students, families, and community.
- Improve family engagement through a variety of relevant, accessible and meaningful opportunities.
- Strengthen and develop partnerships that remove barriers to learning and advance the school district's vision and goals.
- Foster inclusive spaces that build community with families and students through culturally relevant practices.
- Create impactful and sustainable systems that are adaptable to changing needs.
- Strengthen practices that lead to a workforce that reflects the diversity of the North Clackamas Community.

4. As you think about what guided your choices and prioritization efforts in this year of SIA implementation, what stands out? How will what you've learned this year impact future SIA implementation efforts?

What stands out in guiding our choices is our commitment to equity that supports fostering an inclusive and barrier-free environment in which everyone will fully benefit. The North Clackamas Equity Lens was developed to assist our district when making decisions. The questions that stand out for this year are:

- Question 2: What systems of oppression might exist within this situation?

This question asks the decision-maker(s) to examine the norms and culture of the organization and look intentionally for systems of oppressions that may be influencing how this situation came to be, how it affects people based on components of their identity, and how those systems influence the decision-maker(s) ability/ willingness to act. Traditional dominant culture gender and sexuality roles, rank, and positional power of the decision-maker(s) are examples of systems that may be adding to the experienced oppression of individuals or for whom the organization has traditionally marginalized or excluded.

- Question 3: Whom does this decision affect both positively and negatively?

This question asks decision maker to analyze which groups will be affected by the decision or action. This includes groups in the dominant culture and those who are not as well as students in the highest achieving groups and the lowest achieving groups.

- Question 5: Are those being affected by the decision included in the process?

This question asks the decision maker to consider the voices of those being impacted by the decision or action, including those who traditionally are not represented in decision-making processes and those who are traditionally underserved by decisions and actions.

The Equity Lens is intended to cause individuals and groups making decisions to check assumptions, biases, and barriers in order to eliminate practices that lead to perpetuating disproportionate educational results an injustice based on the identifying characteristics of a student or group who are not members of the majority culture.

A key strategy for the district in navigating the current and coming years is to ensure continuity of services through a braiding of one-time or limited duration federal funds (ESSER), Student Investment Account funds, federal formula grants, and basic support from the State School Fund. Considering these all as cascading funding sources, such that, as one-time federal funds are reduced or eliminated in the coming years the district is not forced to eliminate critical programs. This requires discipline in understanding programmatic prioritization and placing the highest priority items for long-term support into the general fund, down to the lowest priority and limited duration programs into the federal funding bucket.

The key learning from the second year of SIA implementation, coupled with the challenge of navigating a global pandemic in its second year, is the class size/case load investments in classroom support, focused professional development and strategic investments in student behavioral and mental health and wellness remain the top priority for SIA funding.