



Beth Conyers, Portland Public Schools

# Student Investment Account Engagement Toolkit

*A Resource for Oregon School Leaders to use  
in Support of the Student Success Act*

Final Guidance • October 2019



*"The Student Success Act marks a turning point for education in Oregon. We can finally invest in an education system that will ensure every single student in our state is on a path to realizing their dreams for the future. What we have come together to do over the past few months will be felt by students, teachers and schools for years to come."*

**Governor Kate Brown, July 1, 2019**

**Join In.  
Our Students. Our Success.**



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# Part One:

## Introduction & General Overview



# Dear Oregon School District Leaders:

I hope you'll read and share what follows.

On August 21st we released the initial version of this document. ODE received dozens of comments and has since had hundreds of interactions with district leaders. That is so important and appreciated. We see your sincerity and focus. We have also heard your appreciation, requests for additional clarity, and your sharing of points of challenge or confusion. This document provides our final guidance for school district leaders and other eligible applicants for the Student Investment Account on community engagement. More guidance on the application process, setting longitudinal growth targets, and more is headed your way in November.

One of my consistent messages to Oregon's school district leaders as I've been traveling and speaking, along with other members of our team, is both a statement and a question:

## Right Place + Right Time = Right Action?

We have the *right people in roles* all across the state or better said "we are the ones we've been waiting for."

It is the *right moment in Oregon* to focus on equity and educational improvement with focused attention on both the assets and the disparities that exist for students based on race, poverty, disability, or experiences with homelessness or the foster care system. These are the students the state legislature placed at the center of this act.

The essential question is whether, with this historic investment, we will each play our parts to take the *right action*.

I believe we can and that we will.

And that optimism doesn't come by avoiding our state's history and the facts.

In 1844 Oregon had a lash law pushing people of color out of the state and requiring "lashes" if they refused to leave. In 2018 the suspension/expulsion rate of Black/African American boys was 7.4% - in Kindergarten. Recent data suggests that over 50 percent of Oregon's 580,000+ K-12 students are navigating poverty.

Facing our history also allows us to see how bright the future can be. Our state is strengthened by growing cultural diversity and language learning. This creates important opportunities and challenges. Oregon has invested in the idea that we can complete a skilled and focused remodel of public education to meet the needs and realize the potential of each and every learner and their families.

The act focuses on students of color; students with disabilities; emerging bilingual students; and students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care. **I ask that you know, give voice to and hold these students at the center of your conversations about school and district improvement.**

This is an incredible time for public education in Oregon, and a turning point for how we, as educational leaders, think about improving the conditions, access and opportunities for young people in public education.

We are poised to make a difference. Our state's past does not have to predict our future. Let's take the right action, let's join together as champions for Oregon education.

Colt Gill

Director

### Leading with ODE's Equity Stance

Education equity is the equitable implementation of policy, practices, procedures, and legislation that translates into *resource allocation, education rigor, and opportunities for historically and currently marginalized youth, students, and families* including civil rights protected classes. This means the dismantling and restructuring of systems and institutions that create the current dichotomy of beneficiaries over oppressed and marginalized peoples.



## Toolkit Purpose

This toolkit is designed to support school leaders and their partners across Oregon’s 197 school districts in authentically and meaningfully engaging students, families, communities, and staff, *particularly underserved or marginalized groups*, in their strategic planning efforts as required by the Student Success Act ([House Bill 3427](#)).

This toolkit aims to clarify how this first set of engagement processes will enable school districts to stay on track with the steps they need to follow to apply for SSA Student Investment Account funds. We know many districts and communities may have already engaged in needs assessment or self-evaluation processes, continuous improvement or strategic planning, and community engagement work. *Please use this opportunity to align your work to meet the requirements in the law and reach out with questions, needs and challenges you’re experiencing.*

We are partners in this work and we each have a distinct role to play in it. We will do our best to provide consistency, clarity, and state-level systems and expertise around how the requirements of the SIA relate and can be coupled with other investments and requirements of districts and charter schools, so that integration between continuous improvement plans, ESSA, High School Success, and other initiatives can be linked over time. We ask that you stay in the conversation, raise any questions, and name barriers to our goal. We are focused on supporting you in order to help our students succeed.

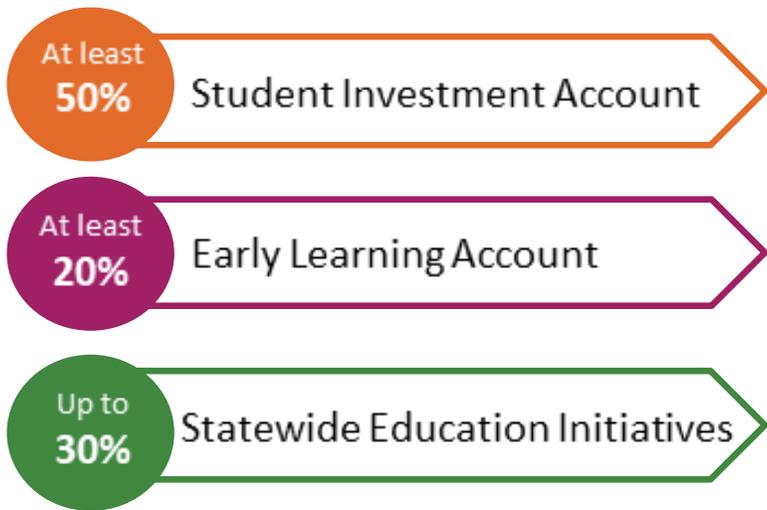


# STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

## The Student Success Act

When fully implemented, the Student Success Act is expected to invest \$2 billion in Oregon education each biennium; that's a **\$1 billion investment in early learning and K-12 education each year.**

In the 2019-21 biennium, the SSA adds **\$200 million** to the State School Fund, bringing it to \$9 billion. The remaining SSA funds are divided among three targeted accounts. In the 2019-21 biennium,



### A Vision for Meaningful Engagement and Shared Accountability

For communities and school districts across Oregon, our collective vision to improve schools and the outcomes of students relies on collaboration and partnership. Shared accountability to use this investment well, transparently, and in a manner that fulfills this vision is critical across local and state entities.

### Advancing Equity

At the heart of the SSA is a commitment to improving access and opportunities for students who have been historically underserved in the education system.

# Part Two: Student Investment Account - Essential Facts & Planning



# Student Investment Account

## What is the Student Investment Account?

When implemented for the 2020-21 academic year, the Student Investment Account is estimated to provide close to a **\$500 million investment** directly to Oregon school districts and eligible charter schools. The Student Investment Account is a **non-competitive** grant program and the purpose is to:

1. **Meet students' mental and behavioral health needs**

2. **Increase academic achievement, including reducing academic disparities for:**

- students of color;
- students with disabilities;
- emerging bilingual students;
- students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care; and
- other student groups that have historically experienced academic disparities ([Section 9](#)).



**Check it Out!** Oregon Health Authority defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. Behavioral health is a general term used to refer to both mental health and substance use. Learn more [here](#).

## Who is Eligible for SIA Grants?

The SIA defines eligible applicants for funds as:

1. Common school districts and union high school districts; and
2. Public charter schools who meet the requirements of eligibility within the law or reach agreements to apply as part of their sponsoring district's application. Virtual charter schools are not eligible for Student Investment Account funding.

# Student Investment Account Grants & Allowable Use

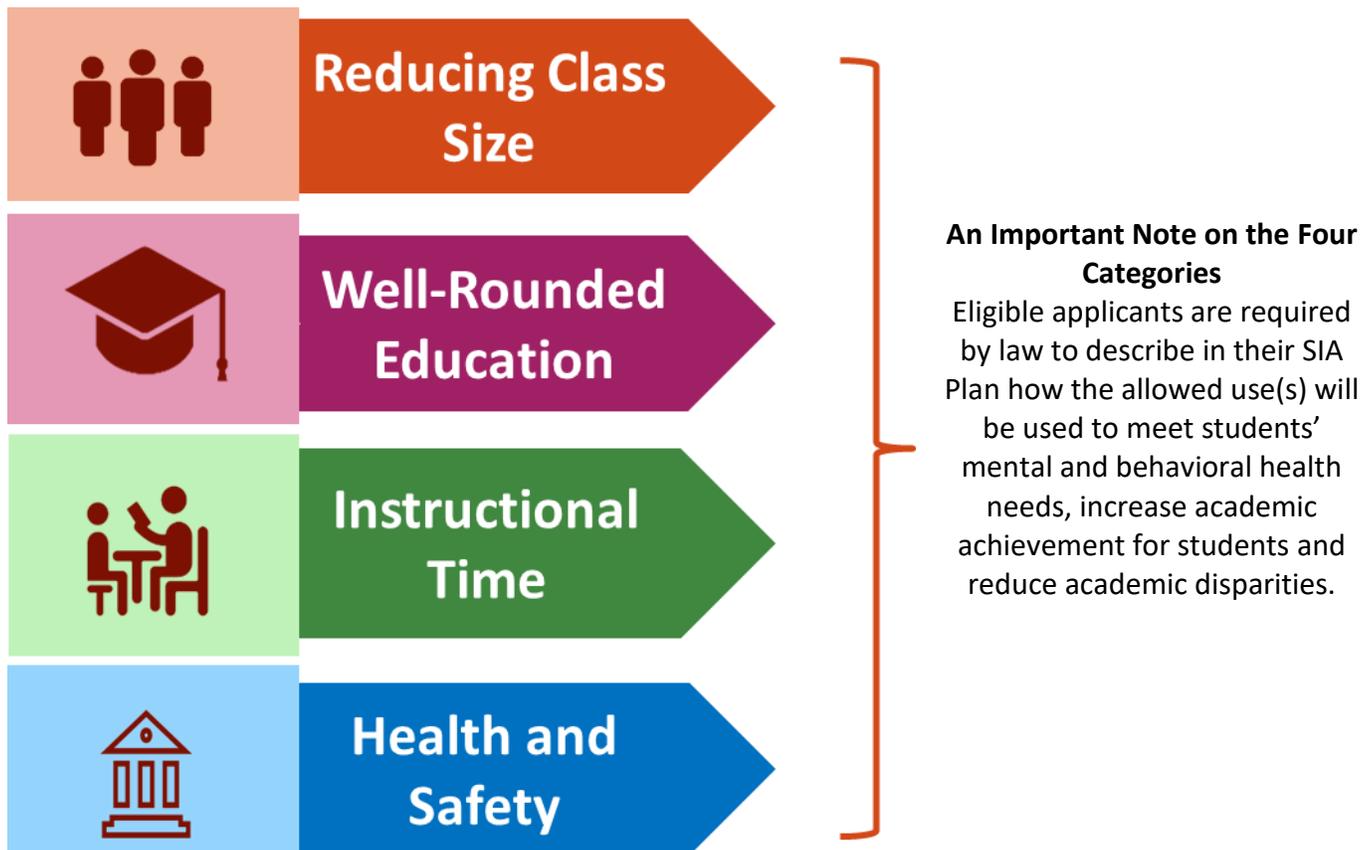
## Non-Competitive Grants

To receive grant money from the Student Investment Account (SIA), all Oregon school districts and eligible charter schools will be expected to meet the planning, needs assessment and authentic engagement requirements.

## Allowable Uses

All grant requests must have a spending plan focused *in any, some or all of the allowable uses that are detailed in HB 3427*. The categories (Reducing Class Size; Instructional Time; Health and Safety; and Well-Rounded Education) are helpful from a communications standpoint and the bullet points under each category are those outlined in the law and may be used as strategies to advance equity by reducing and eliminating disparities and by increasing health and well-being for students.

School districts are encouraged to review the allowable uses as they engage with students and families from the priority populations and staff to discuss, inform and develop their SIA plan and application to ensure it meets the spirit and intent of the law.



# Four Categories for Spending



## Reducing Class Size

- Use evidence-based criteria to ensure appropriate student-teacher ratios or staff caseloads;
- This may include increasing the use of instructional assistants.



## Instructional Time

- More hours and/or days.
- Summer programs; before or after school programs.
- Technological investments that minimize class time used for assessments administered to students.



## Health & Safety

- Social and emotional learning, trauma-informed practices; student mental and behavioral health.



## Well-Rounded Education

- Developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive early literacy practices and programs in pre-K through third grade.
- Culturally responsive programs and practices in grades 6-8, including learning, counseling and student support that is connected to colleges and careers.
- Broadened curricular options at all grade levels including: Art, Music, PE, STEM, CTE, engaging electives, accelerated, dual credit, IB, AP, Life Skills, TAG, dropout and prevention programs, and transition supports.
- Access to licensed educators with a library media endorsement.

## Strengthening Partnerships

Effective partnerships can avoid isolation, build trust, and improve changes in practice and outcomes. Many of the allowable uses of HB 3427 could benefit from strong partnerships that support implementation or weave together community or cross-district supports.

## Questions?

Questions about possible allowable uses will continue to be added to the [FAQ](#) resource on the SIA webpage to help with further clarity along with publishing additional guidance on these aspects of SIA implementation in late November. We encourage a focus on engagement and discussion of plan possibilities with students, families, and communities at this time. As questions arise please send them to [SIInfo@state.or.us](mailto:SIInfo@state.or.us) for tracking and responses.

# Requirements for Applying for Student Investment Account Funds

## Community Engagement

The Student Success Act (SSA) requires all eligible applicants for Student Investment Account (SIA) funding to **engage all staff and particularly students of color; students with disabilities; emerging bilingual students; and students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care; and other students who have historically experienced disparities in our schools and the families of students within these focal groups.**

## Needs Assessment Process

The SIA requires eligible applicants to conduct and use the needs assessment process within your Continuous Improvement Plan. School districts are encouraged to show evidence of how they collected community input in the five priority areas<sup>1</sup>:

1. Reducing academic disparities;
2. Meeting students' mental or behavioral health needs;
3. Providing access to academic courses;
4. Allowing teachers and staff sufficient time to collaborate, review data and develop strategies to help students stay on track to graduate; and
5. Establishing and strengthening partnerships.



Join In! Our Students. Our Success.

<sup>1</sup> HB 3427 establishes these priority areas within the CIP process beginning July 1, 2020.

# Student Investment Account (SIA) Plan

## SIA Planning Process

The SIA requires eligible applicants to engage in a planning process to inform your SIA plan and application. The SIA planning process must:

1. **Take into account the input from the community**, including school employees, student groups named and parents and families of those students; and
2. **Include data collected to make equity-based decisions that is disaggregated by focal student groups**; and
3. **Include an analysis of the potential academic impact** for all students and the focal student groups identified in the act; and
4. **Consider the [recommendations from the Quality Education Commission](#) (QEC).**



## SIA Plan

The SSA requires eligible applicants to develop a 3-year SIA Plan in the first year of implementation<sup>2</sup> that includes:

1. **A plan for the use of SIA funds**
2. **Which Allowable Uses in [section 9](#) will be funded with grant moneys**; and
  - a. Which of the allowable uses will be designated to meet student mental and behavioral needs; and
  - b. A description of how the allowed uses will be used to meet students' mental and health needs; increase academic achievement for students; and reduce academic disparities for student groups in [section 9](#).
3. **A Budget** for how funds will be used
4. **Alignment with your Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)**

## Public Review & Board Approval of SIA Plan

The SIA requires eligible applicants to:

1. Obtain approval of the SIA Plan by the school board at an open meeting following:
  - a. An oral presentation of the SIA plan at an open meeting;
  - b. Opportunity for public comment; and
  - c. The availability of the SIA plan on the district webpage and at the district office.

<sup>2</sup> In 2020-2021, eligible applicants will develop their first four-year SIA plan, to be reviewed every two years.

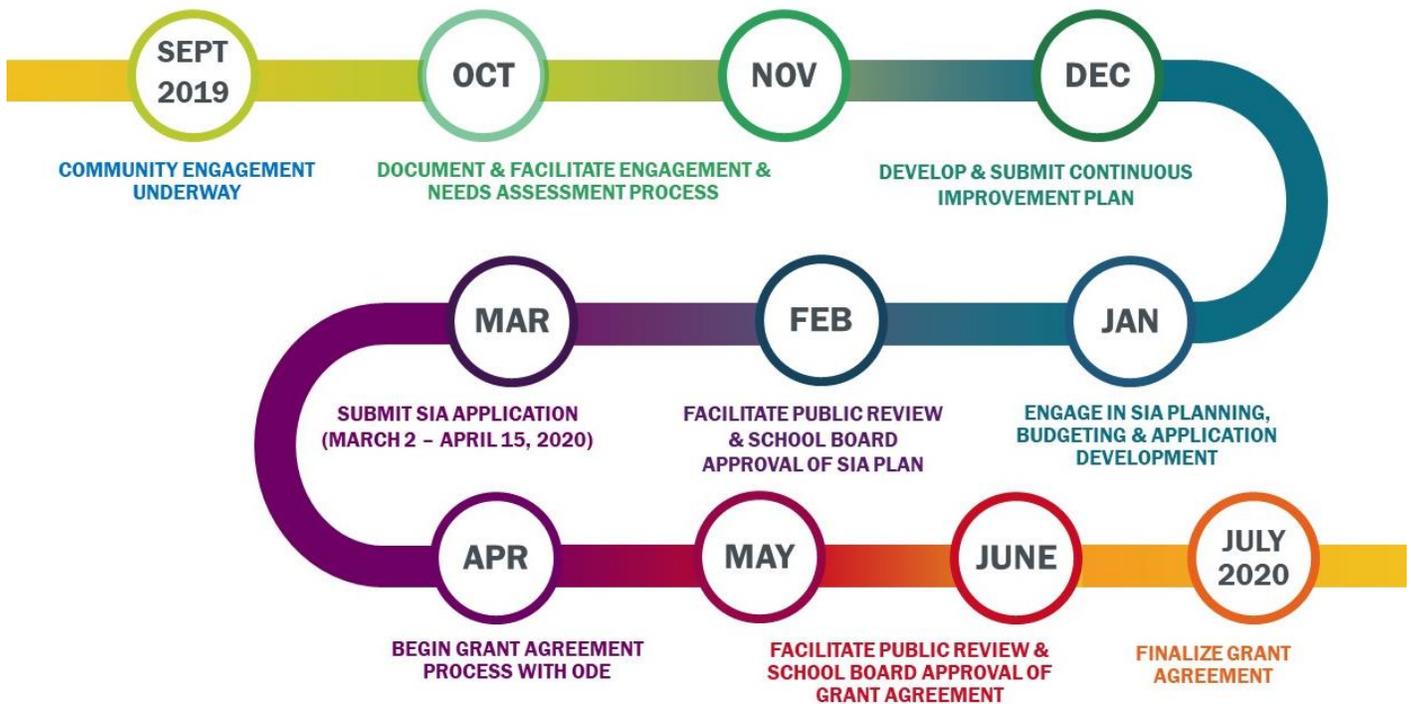
# Student Investment Account Application

ODE will receive applications from school districts and other eligible applicants from March 2 to April 15, 2020. Applications for the 2020-2021 grant period will be expected to include:

1. Evidence of complying with the application requirements outlined above including community engagement processes and application development processes outlined in the law.
2. SIA plan
3. SIA Budget
4. Copies of any relevant district’s agreement(s) with charter school(s) eligible to be included in the SIA Application.
5. Documentation of board approval of the plan, application, budget and any charter agreements prior to submission. Note: Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets will be requested for review but will not be considered by ODE to determine if a district complies with application requirements and won’t require school board approval until those targets and corresponding Intergovernmental Grant Agreement (IGA) are co-developed and approved by ODE.

## SIA Roadmap for 2019-2020

Consider sharing this [roadmap](#) with your school board, association members, staff and community members as one way to help everyone keep the big picture in mind.



# Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets and Grant Agreement

The SIA requires eligible applicants to enter into and co-develop a grant agreement with ODE. The grant agreement must include longitudinal performance growth targets for measuring academic growth of students within defined metrics. Further guidance will be provided by ODE on this process.

ODE will ask that applicants submit *draft* longitudinal performance growth targets at the time of application but review of applications will not be contingent on these targets and school boards will not be required to approve these targets until they are mutually determined by districts and ODE.



## Public Review & Board Approval of Grant Agreement and Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets

SIA requires eligible applicants to:

1. Obtain approval of the grant agreement and the longitudinal performance growth targets by the school board at an open meeting following:
  - a. An oral presentation of the SIA plan at an open meeting;
  - b. Opportunity for public comment; and
  - c. The availability of the SIA plan on the district webpage and at the district office.

# 2019-2020 Year-At-A-Glance

## Student Investment Account Calendar



### Year At-A-Glance – Have the Big Picture in Mind

#### August 2019

Learn about the Student Success Act;  
Make a plan for engaging your community.

#### September 2019

Community engagement continues; consider holding a school board meeting on SSA.

#### October 2019

Facilitate & document community engagement for priority populations and needs assessment process.

#### November 2019

Develop, complete & submit the component parts of Continuous Improvement Plans to ODE. The CIP needs assessment should inform SIA planning along with more focused and sustained community engagement.

#### December 2019

Begin to gather all of the information you will use to inform your SIA plan development and have process plan for moving through the next few months.

#### January 2020

Engage in a SIA planning, budgeting and application process to meet requirements to apply for SIA funds.

#### February 2020

Facilitate public review and board approval of your SIA Plan. For districts applying with charters, ensure you have agreements in place.

#### March 2020

Prepare & submit SIA application, which includes evidence of meeting application requirements along with your SIA plan & budget.

#### April 2020

Begin grant agreement process & co-develop longitudinal performance growth targets.

#### May 2020

Co-develop and complete a grant agreement with ODE including longitudinal performance growth targets. Continue to update stakeholders & your community.

#### June 2020

Facilitate public review and board approval of final grant agreement.

#### July 2020

SIA plans go into action. ODE anticipates first payments of SIA funds for those with completed grant agreements to release on August 15<sup>1</sup>.

### Key Dates – Mark your Calendars

**December 6, 2019:** CIP submission window closes

**January 23-25, 2020:** Learn about SIA Plan & Application Process

**March 2-April 15, 2020:** SIA Application submission window

<sup>1</sup> More information and additional SIA Implementation Guidance will be released in November following temporary rules adoptions in October 2019.

# Part Three:

## Suggestions & Guidance on Meaningful Community Engagement



# Meaningful Engagement



## Why Engagement?

The Student Success Act represents the hopes, dreams and values for Oregon’s students and schools. The law is an explicit call to action and investment in our schools. But who do schools belong to? Engagement is about co-creation, sharing ownership, breaking down barriers and building bridges. Authentic and meaningful engagement is an iterative process where leaders must continuously ask “whose perspective is missing and what supports ‘a bigger we?’” Then, inclusive processes and actions must follow that build trust and respond to community needs and assets.

Engagement is a foundational educational principle that is borne out of the science of learning, culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy, and literature on combatting chronic absenteeism and sustaining authentic family and community engagement.

## What is “Stakeholder Engagement?”

Stakeholders are the people who have a “stake” in the outcomes of students and the climate, culture, and learning conditions of students, educators, classified staff, and the larger community - even folks who don’t have a student currently enrolled in a school.

Engagement is the process of communicating to, learning from and alongside, and collaborating with stakeholders to leverage the unique needs and strengths of the children and their families. It is a process where expertise and resources between multiple community partners can help make a true difference in realizing a shared vision for children and youth in our education system.

# Principles for Community Engagement

Every Oregon community collectively benefits when each and every student and family is engaged. Community engagement processes are a means to understand what conditions and differentiated supports are needed to provide every student the opportunity to reach their full potential. And for any community engagement process to be effective, significant attention must be paid to equitable practices.

To guide successful community planning, the following four principles are excerpted from the [Governor's Community Planning and Engagement Guidance](#).

## Principle One: Promote Equitable Engagement

Equity is foundational to community engagement. All aspects of community engagement must recognize, honor, and respect the diversity of the community—including its many cultures—through an inclusive and representative process that brings forward the assets and needs of the communities you serve.



## Principle Two: Partner Up

Partnering with the community is necessary to create change and improve opportunities for all children. Connecting with the community in meaningful ways is possible in partnership with trusted groups and organizations, especially those that serve and support children, youth and families who are less often included.

## Principle Three: Mobilize & Empower Decision-Making

Community engagement can only be sustained by mobilizing, strengthening, and empowering diverse community partners and their knowledge. Maintaining and sustaining these connections requires an ongoing openness to new approaches, and flexibility in meeting changing needs.

## Principle Four: Keep Going!

Collaboration requires a commitment over time to working together and building relationships toward the creation of collective solutions.

### We Believe

Effective community engagement facilitates a process of co-creating a common vision, goals and a plan where the community is involved in identifying needs and assets, developing ideas and making decisions. It also comes with the shared responsibility among all participants to be engaged in ensuring the success of strategies to achieve the community's goals.

# Planning for Engagement

## Clarify your Goals for Communication and Engagement

Before reaching out to stakeholders, district and school leaders must be clear on what they want to hear from partners. Start at the top by asking:

- What is the district's vision for student success?
- How can community members and stakeholders help inform the district's work toward these goals?
- Are these the right goals?
- How can you work with partners to ensure that the district's goals and the community's goals are aligned?
- What does authentic partnership look like? If you show up with a baked plan community partners will be less inclined to engage or support the district.
- How will the district create the conditions necessary to promote authentic engagement?

Keep in mind why the district is engaging stakeholders in the first place, and develop goals and a plan to support and guide engagement efforts. Focus on facilitating timely, authentic, two-way dialogue by:

- Asking stakeholders what brings them to the meeting.
- Letting stakeholders know why they were invited.
- Making engagement activities public.
- Coming prepared to listen and learn from stakeholders.
- Being transparent about how feedback will be incorporated into the district's goal setting and final plans.
- Creating a plan to follow up.

### A Tip from Coos Bay School District

Involve your school board in your planning process by including them in reviewing data. Most school board members have obligations during the day, so scheduling time that is convenient for them to regularly review a district's data as it relates to their strategic plan and offer input is a great way to involve the community.

## Who Are Your Stakeholders?

- Your staff
  - Students and youth, including historically underserved
  - Families
  - Communities
  - The nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon and AI/AN youth
  - Civil Rights Organizations
  - Community-Based Organizations
  - Service Clubs
  - Early Learning Advocates and Providers
  - School Board Members
  - Budget Committee Members
  - PTAs, PTOs, Boosters, Parent Clubs, Site Councils
  - Researchers and Advocacy Organizations
  - Elected Officials
  - Faith-Based Organizations
  - Higher Education
  - Health and Social Services
  - Youth Development
  - Business Community
- ...and many more!



## Consider Your Audience

Engagement strategies that may be successful with one group may not work with another. The timing of meetings, the primary language(s) spoken, and supports for child care and transportation can all have an impact. You can improve your engagement efforts with something as simple as agenda design. Stakeholders have much to contribute to the conversation and everyone has input that matters.

Staying open to listening well, holding space for diverse perspectives and learning from one another are hallmarks of high quality, inclusive stakeholder engagement. This means that more spacious or less formal agendas could be generative if the right tone and conditions are created at the outset. Our schools serve *all* students and *all* community voices should be heard. Recognize that many stakeholders will not be education experts and may need context to fully contribute and engage in a valuable discussion.

- Ask stakeholders what interests them and about their hopes and dreams and worries.
- Anticipate stakeholders' concerns and questions so you have information to share while also avoiding being defensive.
- Have documents translated and reviewed in advance.
- Avoid "edu-speak," use plain and clear language.
- Create ample time for stakeholders to share.
- Identify a clear point of contact for people to stay engaged.

### Ideas for Engaging Your Audiences

- Social media
- Websites
- Webinars
- Online Chats
- Livestreaming
- Email lists
- Personalized emails
- Surveys
- In-person forums
- Roundtable discussions
- Newsletters
- Monthly coffee chat
- Community group gathering
- School board meeting
- Connect with your local media



**Check it Out!** Oregon Student Voice [created this survey](#) that empowers all students to be authentic partners with K-12 education decision makers.

## Ask for Input Before Decisions are Made

Approach stakeholders with rough ideas to get their reaction and to start an open dialogue through small group feedback.

- Clarify what is possible.
- Come with questions your district needs answered.
- Ask for ideas.
- Close the feedback loop by reporting out to stakeholders.



## Leverage Already-Existing Networks

**Classified staff** are vital parts of what make schools work and can be helpful in spreading the word about community meetings and providing important feedback that should be utilized in planning.

**Parents, families and guardians** care deeply about their children and their school. Lean on social media as one way to engage with some parents. Connect with partner organizations whom families' trust. Offer food, child care and translation services to increase participation. Provide engagement activities at different times of the day including evenings and mornings; consider transportation.

**Indian education (Title VI), migrant education, Title I parent groups as well as STEM Hubs, CTE Regional Coordinators and leaders, your local business community, community college and university partners, culturally specific and community-based organizations, tribes, and other regional collaboratives, such as Early Learning hubs** can and should be partners in your engagement process.

Many people in your community are not formally connected to any of these groups but may be reached through networks that include Parks-and-Recreation, libraries, community centers, and places of worship or community gathering. Consider mapping the networks and relationships you have or could reach via these channels of invitation.

### A Tip from Lincoln County School District

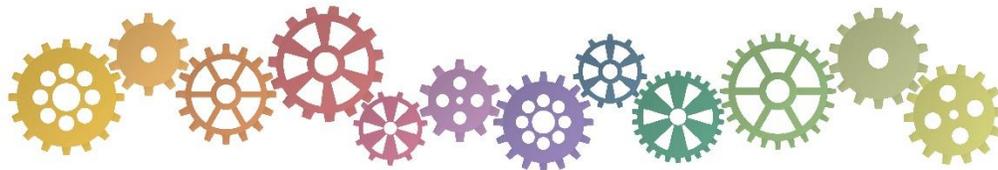
Educators are champions for student success. Working with licensed and classified staff, including association leadership, ensures educator voice is represented in the district-level Improvement Planning Process.



**Check it Out!** Beaverton School District has developed [a webpage for Student Success Act information](#) and a robust engagement plan including [collecting needs assessment input](#) through an online survey. Eugene 4J School District is asking for community input through [an online survey](#), also available in [Spanish](#).

### A Pivotal Partner & Regional Resource Hub!

Oregon's 19 Education Service Districts serve as key partners for school districts in their region. To support the grant application process and implementation of Student Investment Account funds, the legislature dedicated \$24 million to ESDs. A portion of the funds must be spent on at least .25 FTE of dedicated staff to serve as a Student Success Act Liaison – the primary point of contact and collaborator – between the Oregon Department of Education and the districts within the ESD service region. Consult the [OAESD map](#) to locate the ESD near you.



## Recognizing, Honoring and Including Oregon’s American Indian / Alaska Native Youth and Communities

The American Indian / Alaska Native (AI/AN) population is about 1.4% of the total population in Oregon. This includes the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon and other tribal nations that American Indian /and Alaska Native youth and communities identify with.

Tribes are geographically dispersed, and may need time to convene and engage in SSA efforts. Many tribes have Education Departments and a director who can connect the district to its parents and community members. Information on the tribes including contact information is available on the [Oregon Tribal page](#).



### Sovereignty

Tribes are sovereign governments. Sovereignty describes the inherent right of Native American Nations to exercise self-governance. Tribes interact independently in government to government relationships with other tribes, the federal government, states, and counties.

Tribes also interact with school districts, cities, municipalities, businesses, non-profits, higher education institutions, and other non-governmental organizations. While not all tribes choose to exercise all powers as a sovereign government, the right to self-govern is inherent to tribes.

### Tribal Consultation & Engagement

Tribal Consultation is a separate process from stakeholder engagement; consultation recognizes and affirms tribal rights of self-government and tribal sovereignty, and mandates state government to work with American Indian/Alaska Natives on a [government-to-government](#) basis.



Photo courtesy of The Burns Paiute Tribe

## Meet People Where They Are

Traditional outreach methods like parent nights or flyers are no longer the only – or even the best – ways to reach every audience. Blogs, websites, social media, webinars, SMS (texting), focus groups and surveys are among a myriad of other strategies to connect with specific stakeholders. Meet people



where they are and consider using a combination of communication vehicles.

Your district will need to utilize more than one strategy that authentically engages community, with a particular focus on the students, parents and staff required by the SSA. To be most effective – and to ensure that no one is inadvertently left out – districts need to intentionally seek out and use the vehicle that works best for the people they are trying to reach. Consider the following:

- How will you engage participants, particularly those from historically underserved communities, based on who they are and what they do (i.e. classroom teacher, parent, student, community leader, school board member)?
- What type of forum works best for each audience (i.e. small group conversation, large forum, partner-led discussion, online)?
- What supports and services will promote and encourage greater engagement (i.e. childcare, translation, food)?
- Where does your audience feel most safe (i.e. coffee shop, school, church, community center)?

### A Tip from David Douglas School District

Student voice is essential in gauging how the district efforts are impacting the end-user. As part of our needs assessment for our Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), David Douglas School District utilized various strategies to engage with students and get feedback on school culture, relationships and overall school experience. One highly-effective strategy was the use of *YouthTruth*, a student survey administered to students grades three through high school. The anonymous survey gave us feedback based on grade level, school and demographics. To go deeper with the survey data, we engaged in one-on-one empathy interviews with students at all levels to learn more about their school story. In addition, we held three community events and public input forums for our general population and culturally-specific groups. Feedback was solicited from those who attended. Perception data from all three sources were analyzed in conjunction with student outcome data to inform our plan.

## Convene Stakeholders

Bringing together parents and families to engage in meaningful conversations requires thoughtful planning. Hosting an input session is **not a one-time event**. The intent of meaningful engagement is to make sure the people affected are at the table from the start.



**Check it Out!** In Central Oregon, [Better Together](#) is responding to community

expressed needs for “affinity spaces” that are safe, reflect identity and lived experience, and can build trust. Working in partnership with local school districts, Better Together has trained and resourced community partners to facilitate spaces with families of color that can inform and shape district priorities and planning, including SIA planning. In order to ensure families feel safe to share their experiences and perspective, initially these affinity groups don’t include school leaders. As trust and momentum is built, families are brought into circles with educators and plans and shared accountability is built. Better Together, as a backbone, is supporting qualitative data gathering and analysis for districts throughout the process. Over 40 parent and family groups met in October, and the aim is to continue to engage families in affinity spaces regularly for the next three years. Districts consider this a strategic investment in building and using local capacity and community partnerships.



# Part Four:

## Tools & Resources



# Using Stakeholder Input to Inform Planning



## The SSA Requires Ongoing Engagement and Use of Data to Inform Equity-Based Decisions

One of the highest priorities and aims of the Student Success Act is to support the use and integration of:

- Ongoing family and community engagement;
- The data gathered during the needs assessment; and
- The focused review of equity-based data the district is collecting to inform decision-making.



**We encourage school districts to identify staff, students, parents, families and community partners who are interested in joining a core team focused on implementation of the Student Investment Account plan in your district to build support for this work.**

## Questions to Support Your Planning

The following questions can assist district teams and engaged community partners with considering and deciding how best to utilize the input gathered from the engagement processes employed by your district:

1. Who will or can use the input gathered?
2. How can the knowledge generated from the needs assessment and community engagement process be shared?
3. How are existing strategies, programs, and investments considered, or adjusted, based on the information gathered and where trends, patterns, or important outliers exist?
4. What are we doing well and what should we continue doing?
5. What can we improve?
6. What do we need to consider to better address the organizational practices needed based on what we are learning?
7. Who is responsible for making changes in practice or policy? What are the timelines?
8. How might the following questions ensure district investments meet the needs of students who have been marginalized or underserved in the current system?:
  - Who are the racial, ethnic and underserved groups affected?
  - What is the potential impact of the resource allocation and SSA investment to these groups?
  - Does the decision being made ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce unintended consequences?
  - What is the impact towards eliminating the opportunity gap?
  - What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

# Incorporate Staff and Community Voice



## The SSA Requires School Districts to Conduct Local Needs Assessment Processes and Facilitate Authentic Engagement

Districts are explicitly encouraged to strategize about the use of input from ongoing and continuous authentic engagement. Using and integrating the input gathered in the engagement process goes beyond reporting and dissemination. Reporting and dissemination may be a means to facilitate use, but it should not be confused with making decisions, improving programs, changing thinking, empowering participants, and generating knowledge<sup>3</sup>. Find more information in ODE’s [Frequently Asked Questions](#) resource.

## Collective Evidence of Engagement

For now, we recommend districts and eligible applicants create a filing system to capture and hold documents and artifacts that would be helpful for completing an application process that is not yet finalized and will be shaped by stakeholders across Oregon. Here’s one example of a folder structure and the kinds of files that we encourage be maintained until further guidance is issued:

FOLDER	TYPES OF FILES
Needs Assessment	Survey data, meeting dates, agendas, sign-in sheets with demographic breakdown, photos/video, outreach strategies and efforts to include specific communities, notes from meetings, any input collected, evidence of how information collected was included in the needs assessment.
Continuous Improvement	Long-term goals and metrics, strategies and action steps.
Strategic Planning	Show and document how determinations have been made through a process for consideration by engaging in strategic planning that includes input from the community (including school employees, students, and families from the focal groups identified).
Performance Growth Targets	Process notes for setting growth targets, data-considered, data monitoring tools for future tracking.

<sup>3</sup> Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2012, Sage Publications)

# Tools you can Use!

The following tools and templates are customizable and may assist school district leaders in bringing together stakeholders to contribute their input to a discussion about the Student Success Act's Student Investment Account. To get started, begin by reviewing the ["Start Here!" Guidance Document](#).

Some tools may be used by education advocates and partner organizations to help facilitate conversations with their community. Districts and other SIA applicants are not limited to these tools. Use what works and if you think you have a stronger tool to meet the spirit of what is outlined here, please use them.

## Know the Big-Picture:

- [SIA Requirements](#)
- [2019-2020 Calendar](#)
- [SIA Roadmap](#)
- [Talking Points on SSA and the SIA](#)
- [Infographic](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Crosswalk](#) – SIA's 5 Priority Areas and ODE's Needs Assessment Template

## Spark Interest and Generate Awareness:

- [Social Media Posts & Graphics](#)
- [Student Success Act Logo](#) and [Banner](#)
- [Letter to Staff](#)
- "What you can do" – Handout for [students](#), [families](#) and [educators](#)

## Listen to Your Community:

- [Email Invitation](#) & [Flyer](#)
- [Sign-In Sheet](#)
- [Agenda](#)
- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [Feedback Form](#)



Ongoing Engagement 2019-2020 and beyond

## Additional Tools

The following resources are from other states or are national in scope but can offer relevant and research-based insights for deepening community engagement:

- Learn more about developing needs assessments from NEA's [Asset Assessment document](#).
- Adopt a strong foundation on family and community engagement. Dr. Karen Mapp's [research](#) is a national best example.
- [Chart a Course to Equitable Collaboration](#) – a resource on engagement from the State of Washington.
- Consider the [Community School Standards](#) and their recommendation to create a representative site-based leadership team, including partners, families, staff, and representation of union and school administrators, to guide collaborative planning, implementation, and oversight.
- Check out [Research-Based Guidelines for Engagement](#) – A 2015 Hanover Report providing clear and practical strategies for engagement.

# Here to Help

The Oregon Department of Education is responsible for implementing the Student Success Act. The Student Investment Account is one of 28 investments within the SSA, albeit the largest. ODE is still early in the process of adding dedicated staff and partnering with ESDs to provide support and guidance to school districts and community leaders. Your questions are welcome and ODE staff will be as responsive as possible to further support SSA and SIA implementation over the next few months.

Please make use of the resources provided here, your ESDs, peer districts, and the culturally specific and/or school supporting organizations based in your community along with your own judgment and skill-building.

## Contact Information

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### Tim Boyd

Director of District & School Effectiveness  
Office of Education Innovation & Improvement  
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## General Inquiries

### Student Investment Account

General Mailbox  
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### Help Desk

503-378-5125

## Acknowledgements

Oregon's Student Investment Account Engagement Toolkit is the result of the dedicated efforts of staff at the Oregon Department of Education. Under the vision of Governor Kate Brown and leadership of Director Colt Gill, this toolkit is a co-created resource. Thank you to our partners for your dedication and support for Oregon's students, families and communities.



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<sup>4</sup> While not directly cited or quoted, these additional resources helped inform the development of this toolkit.