

Student Investment Account Annual Report Questions

This Student Investment Account Annual Report Questions template aims to help districts organize narrative responses to questions prior to submitting their Annual Report via SmartSheet. **Please note that this template will not be submitted** to the Oregon Department of Education; rather it is a tool to support grantees in compiling the necessary information that will need to be cut and paste into SmartSheet.

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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>Despite challenges related to partial funding and COVID-19, we have made progress in several areas of our SIA investments of 2020-2021.</p> <p>By engaging with focal groups, including students and families who identify as Black, African American, African, Native American, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander, as well as families of students who identify as having special needs, we were able to confirm the most urgent investments we could make on behalf of the students we serve during these difficult times.</p> <p>Investments we made from SIA are in the areas of 1) mental, emotional, and behavioral support, 2) expanded learning time, and 3) reduced class size and specialist support for more one-to-one teacher support for each student.</p> <p>We increased student access to direct mental health support in schools through partnership with local providers. We staffed Wellness Centers, Care Coordinators, Psychologists, Student Success Coaches, and nurses.</p> <p>We partnered with Greater Than to create extended day programs and culturally responsive mentorship programming, and we began an expansion project to bring afterschool programming to ten of our highest-need schools at an affordable rate for families.</p> <p>We invested in maintaining low class sizes in primary grades (K-2) and low caseloads for specialists in language acquisitions, special education, and speech and language.</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>As stated, we have had many successes as a result of SIA investments. That said, lower-than-expected funding and COVID-19 have presented some challenges.</p>

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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.

First, due to partial funding of SIA, we were unable to fully accomplish our goals in the following areas: Decreasing class size and caseload, student health and safety, increased learning time, and well-rounded learning.

The amount of resources we were able to invest in FTE for lowering class size, hiring counselors, etc. was about a third of what we will be able to invest with full funding for SIA.

Another challenge we have faced is in the area of social-emotional, culturally responsive professional development for staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that class size reduction alone will not improve students outcomes unless staff get the support they need in order to meet student needs. We have had success with curriculum development and online training, but it is clear that distance learning has limited staff engagement. We look forward to being together again for professional learning.

Full funding of SIA will be more investment in well-rounded learning, afterschool programs, caseload and class size reduction, and student support and wellness strategies.

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<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>We have developed a leadership structure whereby administrative supports, technology supports, and direct connection to Board and staff are in place ongoing for three of our PACs: Latinx Parent Advisory Committee, Native American Parent Advisory Committee, and Black Village Family Advisory Committee. These groups support our grant development and provide input based on the needs of focal groups directly to our Board and staff.</p> <p>Additionally, engagement opportunities have been developed to gain perspective and input from families of students who identify as Asian, Pacific Islander, and who experience disabilities.</p> <p>Staff who support students who are experiencing homelessness or qualify for migrant education services inform our grant development through direct input to the SIA team.</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 navigated through the last year, specifically as it relates to SIA implementation? (500 words or less)</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>Based on community feedback, during the budget development process we protected current service level areas of investment allowable under SIA.</p> <p>In addition, we invested proactively in mental health supports for students, lower class size in primary grades (K-2) and specialists to support students learning English as a second language, students experiencing disabilities, and speech and language supports.</p> <p>One difficulty in administering SIA grants has been the instability of the grant amount and the late timeline for the disbursement of the funds compared to our staffing timeline in spring. If we were to understand our SIA grant allocation at the same time we are developing our budget (each year in January), we would be able to accurately allocate FTE to schools and programs. We would also begin our recruitment of teachers and specialists earlier, avoiding staffing challenges over the summer and fall.</p> <p>It is important to know that there are discrepancies between the expressed needs of our focal groups (BIPOC families) and the more privileged and traditionally better-served segments of our communities. For example, class size is a popular demand from our communities of privilege, whereas, among communities of color, for example, investment in social-emotional supports, culturally relevant</p>

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	<p>curriculum, diversification of staff, and technology access get more traction as areas of proposed investment.</p> <p>It is also worth mentioning that SIA represents 2.43% of our 2020-2021 operating budget. It has been difficult to meet the report requirements and high expectations associated with SIA in comparison to the work we've done in our Continuous Improvement Plan (and the totality of our budget) to meet goals for educational equity in our school district. In process, the requirements for Board approval of both our operating budget and the SIA grant agreement is redundant (no other grants require this).</p>
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