Section Three: Application Evaluation and Review Process

Values and Principles Informing Evaluation and Review Process

Meeting the vision and fulfilling the promise of the Student Success Act (SSA) and the Student Investment Account (SIA) requires significant partnership, attention, and commitment from each community, district and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Oregon education leaders have been listening to the hopes, concerns and calls for accountability from many different voices and perspectives. New funding and investments that come from the Student Success Act will make a difference in relation to our state's capacity and will take responsibility to grow "internal accountability"[1] for what happens with each and every child and community. ODE has identified five principles that will guide our approach to reviewing SIA applications and co-development of the longitudinal performance growth targets for each eligible applicant.

1. **Keep it as simple as possible.** The SIA is complex. In seeking to support nuance and honor different community needs and contexts, the legislature put forward detailed expectations for districts and ODE. Within that framework, ODE aims to keep what it asks of districts and other eligible applicants to document and communicate as simple and tied to the language of the act as possible.

2. **Offer the right amount of challenge and support.**[2] Student development theory offers a helpful framework for thinking about how to approach engagement between ODE and applicants. ODE's constant challenge and priority will be to balance offering steady and useful support to applicants while being clear about the role ODE plays to monitor, evaluate and intervene where called to do so.

3. **Treat "complying with application requirements" like educators treat student work**. As a student applies effort in coursework but needs time to revise, re-engage with materials or be supported with an accommodation, educators step in to provide needed supports. While the relationship between ODE and SIA applicants is not entirely the same, this principle will inform our review process. SIA applicants will either meet the requirements put forward in the

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[1] Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
[2] "Sanford's Challenge & Support Theory." *Imjoeboe*, 28 Apr. 2011, c.

legislation or they won't. If they don't, the standard doesn't change but ODE can mobilize and partner to support the applicant in meeting application requirements as long as the effort is mutual.

4. **Grow shared responsibility and public confidence.** According to research from the Pew Charitable Trust, more than 80 percent of Americans believe we can and must improve confidence and trust in each other and in public institutions.[3] In Oregon we must work together to build trust and confidence across communities in a reimagined educational system that centers well-being, equity and excellence for each and every child. How we collectively implement the SSA and SIA is essential to the outcomes we seek. New ideas and approaches to building shared ownership and growing public confidence will be pursued so that we can ensure patience, sustained investment, and trust as we implement the SSA over the decades to come.

5. **Lay groundwork to increase alignment between state and federal investments and initiatives.** As we design and launch the SIA, ODE will identify ways to merge or link process steps, effectively pruning and prioritizing what is asked of districts and identifying opportunities to braid funding sources, while decreasing the impact and workload from more than 80 distinct statewide educational investments.

Not Meeting Requirements
ODE will work with each applicant until the application is complete and meets all requirements. **The only way an applicant would lose the opportunity to access non-competitive SIA funds is if an application is not submitted by April 15, 2020 or if the applicant doesn't engage and complete work to meet application requirements that need attention after initial review.**

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[3] Rainie, Lee, et al. "Americans' Trust in Government, Each Other, Leaders." Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 22 July 2019, www.people-press.org/2019/07/22/trust-and-distrust-in-america/.

> ### *What Makes a Complete SIA Application?*
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> SIA Applications consist of:
> - Responses to the application form (general information, executive summary, community engagement and input, data analysis and equity tool or lens);
> - [A completed SIA Integrated Planning Tool](#) (applicants may use ODE's provided tool or an alternate that meets the requirements);
> - Identification of the use of funds and how plan priorities will meet the purposes of the law and address the needs of focal student populations; and
> - A completed budget.
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> **Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets are not formally part of the application and will not be reviewed in determining if application requirements are met. ODE is asking applicants to share their drafted Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets so that when an application is determined as meeting requirements, ODE and the applicant can move quickly into the "co-development" and approval of the Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets.*

Evaluation Criteria

All applicants will be expected to meet the requirements outlined in law. For this first year of evaluating SIA applications, a simple and standard review tool will be used by ODE to determine if an applicant meets the following requirements:

1. Planning Process and Community Engagement
2. SIA Plan and Budget
3. Public Review and Board Approval

Evaluation Tool

ODE staff reviewers will use the tool below to evaluate each SIA application.

1. Planning Process and Community Engagement

Requirement	Meets Requirements	Does Not Meet Requirements
1.1 Engagement efforts were inclusive of staff; students of color; students with disabilities; emerging bilingual students; students navigating poverty; homelessness and foster care; and the focal student groups' families.		
1.2 The planning process takes into account input from the engagement process.		
1.3 A minimum two strategies and two activities were described and five artifacts were provided as evidence of community engagement.		
1.4 Review of disaggregated data by focal student groups were used to inform equity-based decisions.		
1.5 Considers the recommendations from the Quality Education Commission.		
1.6 The CIP needs assessment informs or was considered in SIA planning.		

2. Three-Year Plan

Requirement	Meets Requirements	Does Not Meet Requirements
2.1 Identifies which of the allowable uses will be designated to meet student mental and behavioral needs.		
2.2 Includes an informed description of how the allowed uses will be used to meet students' mental and behavioral health needs; increase academic achievement for		

students; and reduce academic disparities for the focal student groups.		
2.3 An analysis of the potential academic impact for all students and focal student groups is included in the use of funds.		
2.4 Includes and applies an equity lens or tool to examine the impact on focal student populations.		
2.5 Activities and investments are sufficiently described (budget narrative) and outline uses of funds that align with the plans provided.		

3. Public Review and Board Approval

Requirement	Meets Requirements	Does Not Meet Requirements
3.1 SIA Plan is available on district or eligible charter school webpage and main office.		
3.2 Oral presentation of the SIA Plan to the governing body of the grant recipient at an open meeting was completed by an administrator.		
3.3 Opportunity for public comment was provided.		
3.4 Evidence of approval by the school board or governing body of the SIA Plan, Application, Budget, and any agreements with charter schools covered in a district's application.		

Review Process

Three steps make up the SIA application review process and will be utilized to ensure the application meets the requirements outlined in Section 10 of the law, informed by the values and principles outlined above.

STEP ONE:
ODE Staff Evaluation & Assessment

STEP TWO:
Quality Assurance & Learning Panel

STEP Three:
Additional ODE Review (if needed)

STEP ONE: ODE Staff Evaluation and Assessment

The initial step for application review will be completed by ODE staff reviewers, who will be trained to review and evaluate plans according to the evaluation criteria and overall SIA guidance. Attention will be given to teaming ODE reviewers who bring a diversity of lived and professional experience.

Purpose: The purpose of this review is to conduct a *comprehensive evaluation* of the application to ensure 1) application completion; 2) legal sufficiency; and 3) clearly defined use of funds that meet the intent of the law.

Method: Reviewers are expected to review the information submitted by the applicant and make an assessment using the evaluation criteria. Reviewers will have access to applicant's disaggregated data and CIP submissions. Reviewers will reach agreement on one of four assessments:
   A. Application Complies with Requirements
   B. Application Will Comply with Requirements with Small Changes
   C. Application Needs Additional Review to Make a Compliance Determination
   D. Application Needs Significant Changes to Comply with Requirements

Reviewers will develop and complete a distillation of their findings to present to a Quality Assurance and Learning Panel. This will include a summary of the application, location and demographic information of the applicant, description of community engagement, planned uses for SIA funds and the sharing of the reviewers' assessment regarding if the applicant complied with the requirements set forth in HB 3427.

STEP TWO: Facilitated Quality Assurance and Learning Panel

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Learning Framework for 2030[4] identifies the importance of the mobilization of knowledge to support educational systems change. In plain language, this is about learning within and across schools, districts and communities. This step is also designed to meet our value to **grow shared responsibility and public confidence** in the SSA and our public schools**.**

The basic concept is to bring together panels of people to review and affirm the work of *ODE staff* while increasing learning about the work being done in districts, charter schools and communities across the state of Oregon.

Given that this is a new approach for ODE, please review the following details closely.

Purpose: The purpose of the Quality Assurance and Learning Panel is to:
1. Support public understanding and grow confidence in the implementation of the SIA;
2. Create conditions conducive for learning across districts and communities; and
3. Support ODE's review efforts with a quality check.

Panel Design, Composition and Process: As applications are submitted within the submission window of March 2 - April 15 2020, ODE will facilitate panels that will convene each week for approximately six weeks. Each panel will have the capacity to review –eight to 12 ODE assessments on a given day.

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[4] *Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development,* www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20(05.04.2018).pdf.

A Quality Assurance and Learning Panel will ideally be composed of:

- Practicing or retired educators;
- students;
- Community partners;
- Family members and/or advocates representing/serving parents and families;
- Representatives from philanthropy or business;
- School board members and elected representatives;
- School and district administrators - including ESD leaders.

Panelists will engage with ODE staff when reviewing applications that are outside of their experience and region and no conflicts of interest will be permitted.[5] While the make-up of each panel may be unique, the process will follow a consistent and uniform protocol.

Panelists will receive a video orientation and meet for an orientation session on the day of their service.

Panel sessions will follow a consistent protocol facilitated by ODE staff. ODE will document their learning throughout the process to improve future planning and review cycles.
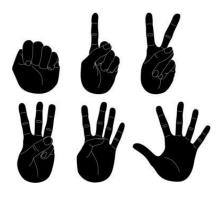
The session will begin with the ODE staff reviewers completing a seven-minute summary and distillation of the application along with naming their assessment:

- A. Application Complies with Requirements
- B. Application Will Comply with Requirements with Small Changes
- C. Application Needs Additional Review to Make a Compliance Determination
- D. Application Needs Significant Changes to Comply with Requirements

> ### *Sample Agenda*
> ### *Quality Assurance and Learning Review Panel*
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> **Orientation**
> **ODE Staff Summary and Assessment**
> - Summary of application (name, location, demographics)
> - Summary of SIA Plan
> - Description of community engagement
> - Assessment
>
> **Protocol for Questions**
> **Process for Decision-Making to Affirm**
> **ODE Assessment**

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[5] ODE will document and confirm that panelists don't consider ODE assessments for any applicants based on conflicts of interest, including being in the same region of the state or prior experience.

Panelists will be facilitated through a protocol to ask clarifying questions, questions that have brief factual answers and then probing questions.

Panelists will then be asked to move through a sequence for decision-making supported by the facilitator.

The first vote will use a participatory decision making structure called "Fist to Five."

The question panelists are asked is, "Do you affirm the assessment made by the ODE Staff reviewers?"

Panelists will then communicate their answer to the question with a show of hands using the following guide.

Fingers	Perspective
5 = Moving Forward	*"I think the ODE reviewers' assessment is very accurate."*
4 = Solid Support	*"I have confidence in the ODE reviewers' assessment."*
3 = Comfortable Enough	*"I'm not in total agreement with the assessment but I feel comfortable enough and can support the assessment without further discussion."*
2 = Minimal Support	*"I am moderately comfortable with the assessment as it has been offered, but would like to discuss some minor issues."*
1 = Strong Reservations	*"I have strong reservations about the assessment and want to discuss certain issues."*
Fist = Strongest of Concerns	*"I have the strongest of concerns and need to talk more about the assessment. This application and the ODE assessment needs additional review."*

Quick Decision: If the panel is all 3's, 4's and 5's the review is complete and the assessment of the ODE reviewers is advanced.

If any panelists hold up a 2 or below, they have the opportunity to briefly name their insights or concerns to the group. Those with a fist have time to share why they believe the direction contradicts

a core value or aim of the legislation. While brief, this time for the sharing of concerns offers a powerful practice of hearing concerns and needs that might otherwise be missed in moving directly to a majority vote.

2nd and Final Round: An "official" majority vote is then taken by a show of hands or voice vote with the results standing, recorded and announced. If the panel affirms the ODE reviewers' assessment by either Quick Decision or 2nd and Final Round, the process moves ahead.

In the case that the panel does not affirm the assessment offered by ODE reviewers, the application is forwarded into the third step for additional review. **The panel is not determining whether or not an application meets the requirements. The panel is either affirming or challenging the assessment made by *ODE Staff* and spurring additional review processes for that given application.**

STEP THREE: Additional ODE Review

A diverse team of senior ODE leadership will meet and provide additional review for any applications that are advanced to this step. This team will meet with the initial ODE staff reviewers and consider notes from the Quality Assurance and Learning Panel. Applicants and their supporting ESDs may be consulted or engaged with additional questions in this process. The team will make a final assessment which will be reviewed and signed off on by the Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Education Innovation and Improvement.