

Immigrant and Refugee Student Success Advisory Group Meeting September 18, 2025

Introductions and Welcome

- Introduced program coordinators and SSP Director Jenny Donovan
- Member introductions
 - Why did you join the advisory group?
 - What is one hope for the future work together?
 - What is going to make you want to log in each month?
 - What will make this a safe space?

Overview of the IRSSP

- **Background and Timeline**
 - SB1532 passed 6/13/24 to address unique challenges of immigrant and refugee students. First of its kind in the nation. Reviewed SSP plan timeline. Statutory objectives are nearly identical across all plans. Advisory groups provide perspective and recommendations on how to achieve those objectives for the students.
 - Phase I Implementation of IRSSP is 2024-27. Currently have permanent rules, appointed AG members, and awarded GIA funds for RFA 24-25 SY. Preparing to release new RFA for 25-28 and establish full program.
 - Student success programs are a combination of the Student Success Plan, the Advisory Group, the Grant Program, and the new initiative of providing free, open resources by grantees to be used in classrooms across the state.
- **Goals and Framework**
 - Framework>1 Vision (SB 1532)>4 Goals>11 Statutory Objectives>17 Progress Indicators >25 Strategies>74 Actions
 - Goals
 - Create a Safe and welcoming School Environment – employing newcomer specialist, employing multilingual specialists
 - Increase Academic Rigor for Plan Students – strong early learning foundations, curricula
 - Enhance Social Emotional Wellbeing – centers trauma informed practices, mental health supports, reducing disparities in discipline
 - Strengthen Family and Community Engagement – families are essential partners in learning, expand family engagement efforts, expand multilingual engagement efforts.

Discussion Breakouts

- **Explore the SSP and answer the following questions:**
 - *What elements of the Plan align to your priorities and vision for Immigrant/Refugee students in Oregon?*
 - Group 4: Trauma-informed, early learning, creating a safe and welcoming school environment, having students see adults in buildings who look like them.
 - Group 3: Strengthening integrational pathways, cultural focus for curriculum, alignment of objectives, including houseless students, family engagement, community schools, biliteracy seals.
 - Group 2: Importance of stewards of cultural knowledge in schools to help navigate school for new arrivers, working with agencies and community partners to strengthen support for school. Focused on goals and felt that they covered most of the things that we could imagine were needed.
 - Group 1: talked about the difference between integration and assimilation. Assimilation asks families to leave parts of who they are behind, while true integration means systems also adapt to honor language and culture. A sense of cultural involvement for students and their families is important.
 - *What elements of the Plan are missing? Where did we miss opportunities to accelerate the success of our Immigrant/Refugee students?*
 - Group 4: Hopefully more early learning, more family-centric, more collaboration and communication w/schools on implementation, access to ongoing trainings (only got through part of the plan though).
 - Group 3: Accelerated learning opportunities for new arrivers, expanding dual credit access to lead to robust career opportunities.
 - Group 2: What are resources that already exist? Hard to know where culturally specific or accessible mental health resources are, which is such a huge need for recent arrivers. Which agencies hold that information or power?
 - Group 1: Our group feels integration should be multi-generational — including students, parents, and elders together. And we noted that while refugees and migrants may come through different pathways, their children often sit side by side in the same classrooms. This raises an important question: where do migrant children fit in this picture? We don't want them to be treated as outsiders. Communication with the students and families is very important. They often don't know the systems are in place and their value. How do state programs interact with immigration?

<p><i>Time-Sensitive Question:</i> Members discussed the need for clarity on coordination with local and federal programs supporting migrant families.</p>
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Grant Program

- **Overview:** Map/data of Recent Arrivers helped identify where greatest needs were.
 - 24-25 grants were awarded to districts that had the highest proportion of Recent Arrivers and were already a recipient of an SSP Grant.
 - 18 grantees in urban and rural areas.

Advisory Group Charter

- **Purpose:**
 - To provide guidance and recommendations to ODE on plan development and implementation.
 - Input on grant making criteria and processes (reviewing applications if able).
 - Reviewing related policies and practices to identify barriers and solutions.
- **Member commitments:**
 - Attend monthly meetings and annual in-person retreat.
 - Engage with local communities.
 - Complete required training (EEL account).
 - Update contact information (communications, dietary restrictions & travel reimbursement).

Meeting Schedule

- **Annual Retreat Preview**
 - Location: October 16 12-4 PM at DAS Executive building in Salem
 - Purpose: Deeper planning & team building.
- **Smartsheet Dashboard preview:** will not be linking documents in chat or sending them via email because they will all be in the dashboard.

Group Discussion

Priorities and Alignment:

What should our priorities be for 25-26?

- W/current Federal climate, is there any way of tracking interactions that might affect the IR student community within school systems? If so, what is the conversation around those issues?
 - Agency-wide sanctuary state huddle to discuss how to track this better – figure out which areas of state are having more issues, how CBOs are responding, etc. We will bring information to this body as this becomes clearer. We also want to build more robust resources to get into the hands of our community members. This group can help figure this out – there's a place for it on our website.
 - In some counties there are clear directives for interacting with federal mandates and in others there are not. Concern that we will wait too long before figuring out how to intervene and families need it immediately. We need a response plan

now for organizations that are not clearly defined within state or federal government jurisdictions. Find out who is doing what, collaborate, channel help to the families.

- We need to also consider focusing on the overall success of schools, because IR students will not succeed if schools are failing. Oregon is not doing very well right now. We need good teachers with good training who are paid well and who look like our students. CBOs that we fund need a rubric to which they are held accountable – some kind of results as far as how many students they are serving, what their goals are, how they are achieving those goals, etc.

How can we align our priorities with the 4 IRSSP Goals?

- Better schools goal aligns with academic rigor
- Academic rigor – students w/limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) are a large percentage of recent arrivers. Concerned it's not mentioned in the plan.
 - We can add these specific requests and make the program more detailed as the community gives feedback. The initial Plan is very closely tied to what was written in the legislation, with the understanding that it would become more robust as the community informed ODE what was needed through the Advisory Group.
- Building career pathways “Grow Your Own Teachers” to funnel our students to become educators. Build a desire to become an educator.

Note: Advocacy can happen outside the advisory group, and storytelling is an important part of building awareness of this program.

Next Steps Workday

- **Updates/Account Setup**
 - EEL Account setup and required training
 - Contact Information Update Form

Closing Reflection

One word to describe how you are feeling as you leave this meeting?

Attendance

Members Present: Member Astorga, Member Avila, Member Bautista-Sanchez, Member Burns, Member Dhote, Member Elizabeth Elliott, Member Hernandez, Member Antonio Huerta, Member Nelson, Member Pickens, Member Ramirez, Member Saeed, Member Safi, Member Sedda, Member Shelehoff

Members Absent:

ODE Staff Present: Mujidat Saaka, Heidi Harless, Meghan Rogers-Czarnecki