Immigrant/Refugee Student Success Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2026

Oregon achieves . . . together!

Time	Topic	Presenter(s)
1:00 pm	**Welcome** • Review of today's Agenda	Program Coordinator

1:05 pm	**Update on the 2026-2028 RFA Process**
	• Summary of RFA Process: Applications Reviewed, Scoring, and Selection
	  ○ Between December 15, 2025, and February 2, 2026, ODE reviewed 80 eligible applications from across the state.
	    ▪ The level of interest and the quality of proposals– reflect strong statewide engagement in supporting immigrant and refugee students and families.
	  ○ On February 5th, ODE awarded 13 grants in aid, totaling just over $3 million — specifically $3,013,372 — to support implementation over the next two years.
	  ○ Our 2026–2028 IRSS cohort is listed below.
	    ▪ These grantees represent a strong mix of community-based organizations, school districts, education service districts, and higher education institutions — reflecting the cross-sector partnerships that are essential to advancing student success.
	  ○ ODE expressed appreciation to all applicants and shared its commitment to supporting the funded cohort as implementation begins.
	• Announcement of 13 Grantees and $3 Million Awarded:
	  ○ Active Children Portland
	  ○ Afghan Support Network
	  ○ Better Together Central Oregon
	  ○ Centro Cultural
	  ○ Chinese Friendship Association of Portland
	  ○ Consejo Hispano
	  ○ Eastern Oregon University
	  ○ Genesis Reading Academy
	  ○ Klamath Falls City School District
	  ○ Multnomah ESD/East County Bridges
	  ○ Oregon State University
	  ○ Phoenix-Talent School District
	  ○ Weaving Fala
	• AG Feedback regarding RFA Application Questions & Lessons Learned was incorporated into internal review and planning
		Program Coordinator

| | | discussions: | |
| | | o At last month's Advisory Group meeting, ODE requested feedback regarding funding distribution. | |

discussions:
- At last month's Advisory Group meeting, ODE requested feedback regarding funding distribution.
  - Recommendations were taken back to our Grant team.
  - Members shared that it was important to fund a higher award amount, and to consider a tiered approach, to increase the number of grantees.
  - ODE awarded funding to the 13 highest-scoring applicants in alignment with the published evaluation criteria.
    - ODE was able to fund the top 13 highest scores – close to the funding level they requested.
    - Because two grantees requested less than the maximum available award, remaining funds were distributed among the other funded applicants, resulting in awards of approximately $245,000 for 11 grantees.
    - This funding strategy aligns available resources with the scope of proposed activities for the 2026-2028 biennium.
- Member question: Will the grantees' service areas be posted on the IRSSP website?
  - Yes, once grantees have been onboarded and initial paperwork is completed, we will be posting their information on our website.
- IRSS Advisory Group insights around clarity, scoring, communication, and equity considerations were incredibly valuable. ODE took that feedback seriously and is actively incorporating it into improvements for the next Student Success Plan RFA cycle.
  - Specifically, those refinements will be reflected in the upcoming AI/AN grant cycle.
  - The AI/AN Student Success Plan Coordinator will present those updates in more detail next month, including what changes were made and how the IRSS Advisory Group input directly informed them.
- Member question: Which grantees will be supporting services to Salem?
  - ODE will have more information once we complete the grantee's onboarding process, and they provide

	more clarity as to activities and projects by location. ▪ Once more is known, it will be shared with the Advisory Group.	

1:20 pm	**Technical Assistance for IRSS Grantees**
	• Monthly email communication
	• Monthly Community of Practice meetings
	• 1:1 virtual meetings
	• Site Visits
	
	IRSS Grantee Technical Assistance Framework:
	• Acting as Grant Managers - approving project plans (Budget + Activity Table) and reimbursements
	   o Ensure alignment with the IRSSP goals, allowable uses, and intended outcomes.
	• Sending monthly email communication
	   o ODE's goal is clarity and consistency — making sure grantees know what's due, what's coming up, and where to access resources, without overwhelming.
	• Holding monthly Community of Practice with all SSP grantees
	   o These are not just compliance check-ins — they're designed as collaborative learning spaces where all Student Success Plan grantees can share strategies, challenges, and promising practices with one another.
	• Holding 1:1 virtual office hours & meetings as needed
	   o Creating space for more tailored support — whether that's budget questions, implementation challenges, or partnership development.
	• Site Visits
	   o Seeking Advisory input — AG members were asked what ODE should prioritize during site visits.
	      ▪ Potential areas of focus included:
	         • Relationship-building
	         • Observing programming in action
	         • Data conversations
	         • Student and family voice
	         • Sustainability planning
	         • Additional recommendations
	      ▪ ODE shared that site visits are intended to be supportive and collaborative in nature rather than evaluative.
		Program Coordinator

| | | Advisory Group input will help us inform the structure and focus of site visits. Member Discussion: Shared that ODE should attend/observe activities to better understand how programming is delivered and how families and community members are engaging. Members noted the importance of observing participant engagement and gaining a clearer understanding of each grantees' program facilitation with the goal of identifying promising practices to share across the cohort. One main goal is for grantees to find areas to collaborate with not only ODE, but also with each other and similar organizations focusing on the same bodies of work. Will grantees be able to meet monthly or quarterly to share out ideas or resources? Yes, ODE holds a virtual community of practice meetings monthly with all SSP Grantees. Last year there was an in-person Resource Development Retreat. This year, due to budget restrictions, we will be holding another event, although it will likely be virtual. Time is allocated to the entire group for cross pollination between programs, as well as individually per program. Inquiry: Members discussed whether additional opportunities for grantee collaboration should be considered: The IRSS community has specific needs that are unique and may not be of priority or importance to other groups. It would be helpful to have a separate meeting series for just the IRSSP grantees. Maybe quarterly, or | |

	monthly. ○ The other SSP Grantees have been a part of their cohort for a full year before this new IRSS cohort joined. ○ A new cohort of IRSS grantees will require time to build a relationship with one another and support this partnership across the state. They may be working on similar activities for similar communities. Time for just their cohort will allow space for collaboration and support.	
1:35 pm	**AG Feedback on Grantee Presentations** Breakout Discussion: What would Advisory Group members like to hear from grantees when they come before the group to present? • What information is most valuable? • What level of detail regarding programming? • Alignment to the IRSSP? • Data? Stories? Implementation challenges? Group Share-out: • Would like to hear narratives of successes/struggles • What does community action and outreach look like? • Is there a curriculum or framework that is being used or implemented? • How are student and community voices truly being implemented? • What do they need from ODE to pivot in the event of programming or funding changes beyond their control due to external policy or environmental factors impacting immigrant and refugee communities? ○ The previous IRSS cohort achieved a high expenditure rate. Members emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility to accommodate necessary spending adjustments. • Members asked how grantees demonstrate accountability for the funds received and how grantees select specific activities; how do they relate back to the plan outcomes and strategies? What type of data is being collected?	Program Coordinator

	• How are grantees able to show accountability for the funds received?	
2:02 pm	***Break***	

2:12 pm	**Safe and Inclusive Schools (SIS) Presentation**
	
	Team Welcome and Introductions
	
	The SIS Team noted that the presentation would cover sensitivetopics including violence and suicide. These topics may be activating for some individuals.
	
	When you notice heightened emotions:
	• Slow down
	• Take some deep breaths
	• Observe what you are feeling in your body
	• Process and proceed
	
	Participants were encouraged to take care of themselves as needed.
	
	School Safety & Prevention System:
	• ORS / OARS:
	   o Oregon Revised Statute: 339.341
	   o Oregon Administrative Rule: 581-029-0001
	• Three main parts:
	   o Behavioral Safety (threat) Assessments
	   o Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention
	   o Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation, Sexual violence, & Cyberbullying Prevention
	• School Safety & Prevention System:
	   o Scope of the System: Assistance to school districts and education service districts in:
	      ▪ Decreasing acts of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying and acts of Cyberbullying (OAR adds Sexual Violence)
	      ▪ Decreasing youth suicidal behavior Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention
	      ▪ Implementing a multidisciplinary student safety assessment system to identify, assess, and support students who present a potential risk for violence to others Behavior Safety Assessment
		Safe & Inclusive Schools (SIS) Team

- Promotion and use of the statewide school safety tip line (SafeOregon)
- School Safety & Prevention Specialists:
  - Role of System Specialists in Statute:
    - The system shall be supported by School Safety and Prevention Specialists (SSPS) who:
      - Serve regions of this state
      - Are cross trained in safety assessments and in the prevention of youth suicide, of acts of bullying, intimidation or harassment and of acts of cyberbullying
        - Provide or facilitate training, the development of programs and plans, the coordination of local teams and the provision of ongoing consultation to regional partners, school districts and education service districts
- Adi's Act: Passed in 2019 as Senate Bill 52, Adi's Act requires district boards to adopt a policy and districts to adopt a plan for suicide prevention.
  - ORS / OARs:
    - Oregon Revised Statute: 339.343
    - Oregon Administrative Rule: 581-022-2510
  - Adi's Act Requires School Districts to:
    - Adopt a policy requiring a comprehensive district plan on student suicide prevention for students in kindergarten through grade 12
    - Have a suicide prevention plan that meets all legislatively mandated components, is available annually to the community of the school district, and readily available at the school district office and on the school district website, if applicable
- Youth at High Risk for Suicide:
  - Youth suicide deaths in Oregon decreased from 2022 to 2023. This continues to be a downward trend since 2018.
  - However, the data also shows a troubling fact: Suicides among youth of races and ethnicities other than non-Hispanic white have increased from 2018 to 2023. This is a national trend for Black, African or African American youth and American Indian and Alaska Native youth.
  - This trend was described as concerning and warranting

continued attention and response.
- Building Belonging is Suicide Prevention
  - Research is clear: there is a substantial correlation between students' sense of belonging at school and their well-being.
    - While this is true for all youth, this is especially true for youth at high risk for suicide
    - For example: This study "revealed that as Black adolescents' sense of school belonging decreased, they were 35% more likely to be at risk for suicidal ideation and attempts. Findings from the study support the assertion that the school microsystem plays a substantial role in modifying the risk of suicidal behavior among Black youth."
- Student Success Plans
  - One way to intentionally integrate suicide prevention plans with efforts to build belonging is to implement strategies from the Student Success Plans.
  - Born out of the Student Success Act, the Student Success Plans were developed under the purview of ODE to further address the needs of specific student populations.
  - These focal student populations align with the groups of youth at high risk for suicide named in Adi's Act:
    - African American/Black
    - American Indian/Alaska Native
    - Latino/a/x & Indigenous*
    - LGBTQ2SIA+
    - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
    - Immigrant/Refugee

Bulling, Harassment, Intimidation, Cyberbullying, & Sexual Violence Prevention
- Current Trends - Cyberbullying and Beyond
  - Online Social Media
- Cyberbullying to Sexploitation
  - Fake school social media accounts - Trends (bathroom feet and celebrity impersonation accounts)
  - Deepfakes of classmates
    - Use of altered images to create explicit content involving classmates.
    - Posted and shared on social media
  - Sexploitation
    - Scammers target youth online and build

	relationships with them.
	     ▪ Convince youth to send nudes, ask for large sum of money to keep taking photos/videos offline.
	     ▪ These incidents may have significant impacts on youth mental health, and possible suicide.
	 • Oregon Prevention Campaign
	     o SafeOregon, Oregon's anonymous tip line, started a new campaign supporting the prevention of cyberbullying, digital threats, and other online concerning behaviors students may encounter.
	     o The campaign includes both high school and middle school curriculum to support students with online safety and using the tipline.
	 • Bullying Prevention Resource
	     o An ODE resource created by School Safety and Prevention Specialists.
	     o Provides information and guidance for parents and guardians about bullying including what it is, how to recognize it, and how to support children who may be involved.
	     o Includes practical steps for working with schools to create safe, inclusive learning environments.
	     o Found on Oregon Department of Education's website in multiple languages
	
	 Tips and Resources for Caregivers
	 • Every school district in Oregon is required to have a policy on harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Find your local district policy and become familiar with it.
	 • If bullying is based on race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, Civil Rights Coordinators are available in each school district for support.
	 • Install the SafeOregon app on youth phones for easier reporting instances of bullying.
	 • If bullying is done through text or social media, screenshot on phone or device for reporting and investigation if applicable
	 • Remind your student that nothing is private; do not share personal information on the internet, including photos.
	 • Red Flags of Grooming: Asking to chat on another platform.
	     o Report them on App
	     o Screenshot conversation
	     o Block them	

- If youth send compromising photos: www.takeitdown.org

Behavioral Safety Assessment:
- Fall 2024 National Trends
  o Over 700 children and teenagers, including at least one fourth grader, have been arrested and accused of making violent threats against schools in at least 45 states, according to a New York Times review of news reports, law enforcement statements and court records. Almost 10 percent were 12 or younger.
  o And in Ohio, a state school safety center had already received more reports of threats this year than in all of 2023, the vast majority this month (September).
  o "Five years ago, we averaged 29 school threats per month. Last year, we averaged 785 per month", Don Beeler of TDR Technology Solutions, a software company that tracks threats using data from schools, the police, and news accounts. On the Monday after the Georgia shooting, he said, 500 schools were under threat.
- A Behavioral Safety (threat) Assessment (BSA) helps identify situations that may pose a risk of violence or harm, determine the seriousness of that risk, and develop both safety and supervision strategies.
- BSA teams follow an assessment protocol based on evidence-informed practices ensuring issues of bias and equity are addressed throughout the process.
  o BSA Level 1:
    ▪ School Based Team
      • Behavior indicates possible threat of harm or violence to school or others
      • Level 1 forms completed including interviews, investigations, student background
      • Assessment on risk of harm/violence for potential referral to Level 2 Team
  o BSA Level 2:
    ▪ Community Based Team coordinated and facilitated by SSPS
      • Receive information from Level 1 team to assess level of harm/violence and review
      • Consult with school team on recommendations for intervention,

supervision, and further referrals
- Recommendations for re-entry and placement considerations

Oregon Model: Behavioral Safety Assessment
- Behavioral Safety Assessment with an emphasis on cultural responsiveness and transformative practices.
    - Statewide model of best practices for BSA—grounded in the SK Cascade model—to be implemented through the School Safety and Prevention System to reduce and eliminate disparities in exclusionary discipline
    - Addresses prevention, intervention, and re-entry strategies; team approach to managing risk while supporting students, families, caregivers, and the community
    - Includes collaboration and ongoing consultation with field practitioners in Behavioral Safety Assessment, School Safety and Emergency Management, Behavioral Health and Wellness, Restorative Practices and Restorative/Transformative Justice.
- Development of a framework, toolkit, and training/technical assistance for integrating restorative and transformative justice into school safety (BSA) assessment practices
    - Statewide resources and guidance for Education Service Districts, districts, and schools to implement the Oregon Model.
    - Professional development, training, and technical assistance to education partners across the state in equity driven BSA, and restorative and transformative justice in school culture and climate.
    - Training materials and facilitation guides for SSPS Specialists across all 19 ESDs statewide to continue to refine, maintain, and sustain implementation of the Oregon Model.
- Utilizing a multidisciplinary, multi-agency approach, the SK Cascade Model is the first school-based threat assessment model to integrate school and community-based teams within a single system, effectively facilitating coordination between education, mental health, and law enforcement agencies in information-sharing, assessment, and students and family mental health service delivery processes.
- Equity in Behavior Safety Assessment: Use an Equity Lens to assess the impact of your process on underrepresented populations
    - Centering equity in student behavior safety assessment

processes helps ensure that responses to student behavior are fair, non-discriminatory, and culturally responsive, while maintaining safety.
- o A framework for integrating an explicit focus on equity encompasses six core themes:
    - Bias Mitigation
    - Contextual Understanding
    - Inclusive Decision Making
    - Focus on Support Over Punishment
    - Data & Accountability
    - Student Voice and Family and Caregiver Engagement

Learning Policy Institute:
- Student Mental Health and Education Fact Sheet July 2025
- "Schools that increase their use of social-emotional learning and restorative practices—approaches that teach conflict resolution and reduce exclusionary discipline—show significant decreases in student depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation, as well as improvements in attendance and achievement."
    - o Learning Policy Institute, July 2025

Best Practices in School Safety and Prevention:
- Behavioral Safety (threat) Assessments:
    - o Appropriate district and school staff are trained in BSA Level 1 & Level 2 with opportunities for refresher training yearly
    - o All districts have access to a comprehensive Level 2 BSAT Team.
    - o Schools enroll in and promote the use of SafeOregon Tip Line for reporting risk of harm/violence
    - o Create a safe, inclusive, and welcoming school environment where students thrive because they first belong
    - o Center student identity, needs, and pathways to education
- Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention:
    - o Continuous improvement, including opportunities for community input, by regularly updating districts' suicide prevention plan and making it actionable at the school level
    - o Ensuring that all school personnel have the appropriate suicide prevention training(s) for their role
    - o Promoting a positive and inclusive school culture – belonging and positive connections to trusted adults are highly effective protective factors
    - o Connecting suicide prevention efforts across school/district

	curriculum, programs, and initiatives
	    ○ Implementing culturally relevant suicide prevention programming
	• Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation, Sexual Violence, & Cyberbullying Prevention:
	    ○ Create a safe, inclusive, and welcoming school environment where students thrive because they first belong
	    ○ Regularly teach students and families about the harm of bullying through integrated initiatives across curriculum and grade levels
	    ○ Promote and provide multiple avenues (including SafeOregon) for students, staff, and community members to report bullying incidents
	    ○ Have clear and posted policies for bullying prevention and response with an emphasis on restorative practices and decreasing exclusionary discipline
	    ○ Provide online safety training for students and parents
	
	Questions & Discussion:
	• Connection to earlier conversation today centering around the recent IRSS Grantee cohort. Would like to hear how the SIS team is coordinating with other agencies or teams that are serving the Immigrant/Refugee communities across the state? What type of 'easy button' resources are available that we could share?
	    ○ There really is no 'easy' answer as needs can vary so greatly from region to region or community to community and need to be as situational as possible.
	    ○ There is no one size that fits all when it comes to student safety.
	    ○ The SIS team is coordinating and working in collaboration with community groups and programs such as this to create and provide catered materials and resources to best suit as needed.
	• Given the current political climate, has there been a noticeable increase in these types of activities (bullying, suicidal tendencies, etc.) among youth? If so, are there any areas that are reporting higher rates of incidents? Specifically, within the last year.
	    ○ SafeOregon collects data via their call in information and currently bullying and harassment is their topic area as per their call volume.
	    ○ We won't have data to compare last year and this year until the end of this calendar year.	

	○ There has been an increase in outreach concerning school supports and inquiries regarding attendance and safety. ○ Antidotally, to the SIS team's firsthand knowledge, there has been no increased occurrence of complaints ODE has received; however, there is lagging or incomplete data regarding some aspect of this inquiry as it has not been released yet. • Have you seen any patterns or have any implantations in response to ICE activity around Oregon? ○ Yes, there is data centering around attendance and how it has been affected by heightened immigration enforcement. ▪ [Supporting Immigrant, Migrant, Refugee and Undocumented Students' Attendance](#) ○ Members voiced that this has been shared through their districts, however it was quite late and it stated that remote learning should be accessible, however in practice that has not been provided and there are no accountability processes to ensure it's being implemented. ▪ SIS team has seen districts supporting each other; larger districts or regions are doing their best to provide spaces or access to online academies to smaller neighboring districts. ▪ It is disappointing to hear that these policies are not being followed through as intended. • Family and community members can file a public complaint. • [581-022-2370 Complaint Procedures](#) • Recognizing it is a form of a barrier that requires additional action and visibility that should not be needed; however, it may be one viable option for accountability. • Please feel free to reach out to the SIS team if you would like additional or more detailed information.	
3:02 pm	**Meeting Adjourned** Next monthly meeting: • March 19th, 2026 • 1:00pm – 3:00 pm	Program Coordinator

Members Present: Member Avila, Member Bautista-Sanchez, Member Burns, Member Huerta, Member Nelson, Member Pickens, Member Ramirez, Member Saeed, Member Safi, Member Shelehoff

Members Absent: Member Dhote, Member Elliott, Member Hernandez, Member Kong, Member Sedda

ODE Staff Present: Heidi Lee Harless, Jenni Amado, Jennifer Johnson, Nole Kennedy, Danica Jensen Weiner