

Student Investment Account (SIA) Annual Report Questions

Eagle Charter School’s goals for 2020-2021:

- Increased student mental health support (including support for parents during distance learning).
- Increased student academic supports through additional LRC (special education) support.
- Attendance at 95% or better in distance learning.
- Improved systems for PBIS, SST, and others that support student academic support through supporting mental and behavioral health.

Eagle Charter School was able to meet its goals by using funding to hire a full-time special education teacher (an increase from 0.5FTE in 2019-2020) and hire additional school counseling FTE. This increased student mental health support and academic supports. Eagle staff also began improving systems (PBIS, SST, etc.) that support student mental and behavioral health as well as academic support and used their knowledge and experience to plan for the return to full-time in-person learning in Fall 2021.

Budget (reduced allocation): \$31,530.26

- Special education (LRC): \$15,116.88*
- Counseling: \$11,878.51
- Professional Development: \$700
- Curriculum/Supplies: \$3,834.87

**The additional FTE for Special Education is through an MOU with Salem-Keizer School District.*

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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,</i></p>	<p>Eagle Charter School was able to support student mental health and engagement during distance learning and hybrid learning by hiring extra school counseling support and special education supports using the SIA funds. The reduction in SIA funds meant that we had to supplement these positions with general funds as well, which impacted other areas of our budget. However, the positives were clearly seen: our special education teacher was able to provide students one-on-one and small group instruction and support throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Our school counselors provided direct support to parents and caregivers to help with their processes and parenting skills, which in turn benefited our students. The majority of our students had fantastic attendance through distance learning and hybrid learning and maintained or built strong relationships with their teachers. Our goals were to increase student mental</p>

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<p><i>consider and speak to the impacts to student mental and behavioral health, and the reduction of academic disparities for focal students.</i></p>	<p>and behavioral health supports in order to reduce discipline issues and to improve attendance and we did both of those things.</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><i>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.</i></p>	<p>One of the biggest challenges (outside of trying to implement a grant with new school supports in the middle of a pandemic) is that there is a high demand but very short supply of school counselors. If state leaders want schools and districts to make long-term improvements there needs to be a steady pipeline of graduate students who are going to school to be school counselors; they need to have incentives to work in small/rural/charter schools (which can't compete otherwise with larger districts to attract school counselors), mentor programs to help with retention, and programs to help schools who are willing and able to "grow their own."</p> <p>Additionally, we want to hire more support staff to connect with students and thus improve school (and academics in the long run), but it is challenging to recruit people into education. We have not found a solution for this yet.</p> <p>Finally, every time the state or federal government provides additional education funding through grants (like SIA or ESSER), there are additional reporting requirements. In schools that are already short-staffed and have support personnel working 50-65 hours per week, any additional requirements are burdensome. If government leaders truly wanted to help education they would adequately fund it in the first place and not require myriad additional reports for schools.</p>

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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</i></p>	<p>The pandemic forced us to move from in-person events that promoted strong relationships between the school and families to Zoom events and attempts at engagement. Engaging families from a distance is far less successful. We've tried Zoom at a variety of times (morning, lunch time, afternoon, evening, night), but rarely get more than the same small handful of families to attend. We send messages on paper (monthly packet pick-up/drop-off), email, ClassDojo, and Facebook, and still there is not the same level of engagement and understanding as there was prior to the pandemic when we were able to gather in person. Even though Eagle staff have attended professional development and read books about family engagement</p>

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<p><i>plan.</i></p>	<p>in attempts to improve it from a distance, there has not been widespread success in reaching every family. That being said, the families that do engage with Eagle from a distance do so consistently and are well-informed about everything that happens at the school. The distance environment the pandemic created allowed Eagle to more easily connect with community members and guest speakers who appreciated the ease of using Zoom and that piece improved our ability to keep our MicroSociety model even in distance learning.</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>At Eagle Charter School, our first priority was to improve mental health supports, both directly and indirectly, for students. We improved support directly by increasing school counseling time (FTE) so that students could more easily access a school counselor. We improved support indirectly by offering an experienced school counselor to the parents to meet on a regular basis. The first year of SIA was also the first full year of the COVID-19 pandemic and we knew that our focus had to be on care and connection because mental health has a large impact on academic success. When the scaled-down budget was announced, we determined to backfill the gaps with general fund spending, which meant that we had to make sacrifices and cuts elsewhere in our budget. It was worth it to keep the focus on mental health. However, it was a bit frustrating that Eagle Charter was given a scaled-back amount of funding (just over \$31,000) but was not allowed to determine how much went into each subcategory; because of this, we were somewhat constrained by what we could do. The funding helps, but ultimately schools are still underfunded and short-staffed, especially in this global pandemic when students should receive even more support and guidance without strings attached.</p>