



# Sisters School District

“Home of the Outlaws”

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Curtiss Scholl  
Superintendent

## SIA Application for Sisters School District Spring 2020

### PART ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Applicant

Sisters SD 6

Institution ID: ??

Webpage: [Sisters School District](http://Sisters School District)

#### Contact person

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### PART TWO: NARRATIVE

#### *Plan Summary*

Sisters Schools' 145+ employees serve 1,110 students across three schools. Approximately 24% of our students qualify for free- or reduced-price lunches; <5% are linguistically diverse; and slightly under 11% qualify for IEP's. Our students shine on many measures. Our graduation rate is 89%. Our students perform above the state average in third grade reading. The greatest challenge for our district is to ensure that all students have the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be successful in both the present and the future. After extensive efforts to listen to our students, staff, and families; to study student experience and outcome data; and to collaborate with key communicators across the district, Sisters Schools has committed its Student Investment Account (SIA) funds to three categories: promoting students' health and safety by greatly increasing social and emotional support; reducing class size targeting our K-5 classrooms, and looking at how we support our historically underserved students.

Our rapidly growing community population has led to increased class sizes throughout our elementary schools. One use of our SIA funds will be to reduce class sizes which will increase the individualized attention and care that each student needs in order to reduce disparities and increase academic achievement. Secondly, based on feedback from our students, families, and staff, it was clear that our students, like many across Oregon, are in desperate need of additional mental, social, and emotional support and care. With that in mind, a portion of our

SIA funds will be used to bolster our ability to provide quality counseling and mental health support for our students.

### **PART THREE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INPUT**

**Describe your approach to community engagement. (250 words or less). Ensure your response includes: • Who you engaged • Frequency / occurrence • How you ensured engagement of staff and each of the focal student groups and their families • Key information you collected • Who you partnered with in the engagement efforts • A sincere desire to engage the voices of all.**

As a community we have much to be proud of in Sisters. Through the Sisters Country Community visioning process, it was obvious that our schools are a large pride point for our community. By most traditional measures, we have one of the strongest school districts in the state. We believe that a comprehensive education grounded in the community's core values is key to the success of all students in Sisters Country.

In addition to the Sisters Country Community Vision process, the Sisters School District started to engage the community around creating a new mission and vision for our schools. This process included 12 meetings with diverse stakeholder groups (2 student meetings, 1 Latino focus group, 1 veteran group, 3 staff meetings, 1 age Friendly Sisters, 1 targeting community leaders and 3 with the general community) to get feedback on the community's core values and the district's role in relation to those values and supporting our students. A community stakeholder group was assembled to help navigate through this feedback. Our team heard loud and clear what we were doing well and what could use additional attention. It was an inspiring process to listen to the hopes and dreams our community holds for our children.

Through nine meetings, the ultimate goal of this 15 member group has been to refine this feedback into core values, and a mission and vision. This 36 hours of work lead us to some lofty ideals. We circled back four times to engage our staff to refine the ideas of Belong, Prepare, and Inspire. Additionally, we had two more Latino family nights, we visited an additional six classroom-three middle school and three high school had an additional online survey, surveyed families that utilized our Family Access Network, and held six Superintendent "Coffees" to get more feedback. This has been great work resulting in a strategic plan that will guide the district as we move forward into the next three to five years.

This Strategic Plan is a living document, designed to be updated on an annual basis as the district strives to enhance teaching and learning and strengthen our connection with our students and community. The Strategic Plan will be the driving force behind future decisions made by the district as we work to execute our plan to support our community, staff and students.

#### ***Self-Assessment of Community Engagement***

**Please share a self-assessment about the quality and nature of your engagement of focal students, families and the staff more broadly. If the goal is meaningful, authentic and ongoing community engagement, where are you at in that process? What barriers, if any, were experienced and how might you anticipate and resolve these issues in future engagement? (500 words or less)**

We are certainly proud of our ongoing efforts to engage our stakeholders in the improvement of our school system. With that in mind, there are still a number of improvements in our engagement efforts that we would seek to implement as we move forward. The greatest gap in regards to community engagement for our district is receiving a proportionate level of input from our students and families from historically marginalized demographic groups. For example, the percentage of parents who completed our parent survey through the Family Access Network was not proportionate to the percentage of our Free and Reduced families we have in our district.

As we seek to improve our future engagement of stakeholders, we hope to maintain and cultivate a number of partnerships to better reach key focal groups. For our students and families battling homelessness and poverty, our district will continue to partner with the Family Access Network (FAN) Advocates. Our Special Education (SPED) department and Individual Education Plan (IEP) case managers will be integral for helping to personally connect with our families of Individual Education Plan (IEP) students. In reflection, we feel we made a strong effort in engaging the community.

**What relationships and/or partnerships will you cultivate to improve future engagement? (150 words or less)**

As we seek to improve our future engagement of stakeholders, we hope to maintain and cultivate a number of partnerships to better reach key focal groups. For our students and families battling homelessness and poverty, our district will continue to partner with the Family Access Network (FAN) Advocates. Our Latino Community Liason will continue their outreach and support of our Latino Family Nights to get continued and better feedback from our Latino Community. Special Education (SPED) department and Individual Education Plan (IEP) case managers will be integral for helping to personally connect with our families of IEP students. In addition, we will continue and strengthen our district's relationship with certified and classified association representatives in order to be responsive to the needs of staff.

**What resources would enhance your engagement efforts? How can ODE support your continuous improvement? (150 words or less)**

Like many issues in public education, the greatest resource needed is time. Our scarcity of time is the biggest barrier we face in properly enhancing our engagement efforts. Fortunately, due to our district's "Strategic Plan" initiative we had already been receiving feedback from students, parents, and staff. While we will be refining our engagement strategies each year, a strong foundation for authentic engagement has been established. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) can support the further refinements of our engagement processes through continuing to provide resources and examples of best practices taking place throughout the state.

**Who was Engaged? (Preloaded boxes on application)**

***How did you engage your community?***

A sincere desire to engage all of the Sisters School District's community stakeholders has been at the heart of our work for several years now. Even prior to the Student Success Act, our district embarked on collecting community input to develop a new Sisters School District Strategic Plan.

As part of our community outreach efforts, we engaged students and families from all of the Student Success Act designated focal groups as well as some other historically marginalized community stakeholders. Our community engagement efforts were varied and frequent through the spring and fall of 2019. Through parent, staff, and student surveys, student listening groups, monthly “Superintendent Coffees”, emails, newsletters, and face-to-face conversations, we collected a vast array of information relating to our district’s strengths, weaknesses, and insights for improvement.

- Surveys
- Focus groups/listening sessions
- School board meetings
- Partnering with unions

### ***Evidence of Engagement***

**Upload top five artifacts of engagement. Artifacts may include, though are not limited to: survey data, meeting minutes, synthesized/summarized reports of input collected, evidence of how input was collected, communications and engagement plans and processes for outreach. Artifacts may be in the form of documents, pictures, videos, etc.**

**Tell us why you selected the artifacts you did. How do they show evidence of engaging focal student populations, their families and the community? (250 words)**

1. Sisters Country Community Visioning:
2. Sister School District Mission and Vision process to develop The SSD Strategic Plan
3. Stakeholder Representative Data Review Responses
4. Latino Family Night Community Listening Sessions
5. Superintendent “Coffee” Listening Session
6. Employee Engagement Process

***Strategies and Activities for Engaging Focal Student Populations and their Families* Describe the strategies (at least two) that you executed to engage each of the focal student groups and their families present within your district and community. Your response should include why the strategies were used. (500 words).**

1) Strategic planning process: See Sisters School District Strategic Plan

2) Stakeholder Representative Data Review Responses – This document contains the data sources and comments/insights from representatives from each of our key demographic groups as they reviewed key data as part of our comprehensive needs assessment.

**#17 Strategies and Activities for Engaging Staff** Describe the strategies (at least two) that you executed to engage staff. Your response should include why the strategies were used. (500 words) Please note: your

**strategies for staff may be the same or different for the focal engagement with student populations and their families.**

A number of strategies were implemented in order to gain insight and feedback from our various employee groups. One of the strategies utilized to engage our staff was to leverage the district's existing partnerships with the certified and classified associations. At monthly labor management meetings, SSA updates and invitations to engagement activities were provided to the respective associations. This allowed key representatives from the associations to ask clarifying questions as well as collaborate on survey questions and results analysis.

Leveraging these existing networks led to a greater engagement and clarity with our staff.

This strategy ensured that the various staff groups had a representation and a "voice at the table" to ensure equity in our decision making.

**Describe the activities (at least two) that you executed to engage each of the focal student groups and their families present within your district and community. Your response should include why the activities were used. (500 words) Activities may include, though not limited to: social media, websites, webinars, personalized emails, surveys, in-person forums, focus groups, community gathering, school board meeting, use of community based organization, coffee chat, newsletter, local media, roundtable discussion. Students & families who are emerging bilinguals**

For our students and families who are emerging bilinguals, we used a variety of activities to engage them in the SSA process. Parent surveys in both English and Spanish were provided in both hard copy and electronic version in order to gain family views on our educational system and recommendations for improvement. We had two additional Latino Family night to get specific feedback on how we can continue to support our Latino families. In order to provide equitable opportunity for these families to provide insight, we provided one-on-one translation services at this event. It was especially gratifying to see our families take advantage of this opportunity.

For our students receiving special education services and their families, we also provided an opportunity for feedback at our community listening session. A particularly poignant moment of our SSA engagement process was a conversation with a father who was especially appreciative of the services his student was receiving at one of our high schools. Another activity provided to students who receive SPED services was our Youth Truth student survey. This survey was provided during class time so that students with disabilities could receive any individualized support needed to provide their feedback.

We engaged our students and families navigating poverty and homelessness through a number of activities. In order to best gather input, we planned activities that members from this focal group could attend in person or provide feedback electronically. Our parent and community survey allowed members of this group to respond either electronically or through hard copy. In addition, the community listening sessions intentionally provided refreshments as a way to increase family participation. Our student surveys were provided at school and results could be disaggregated dependent on socioeconomic status (SES)

**Strategies and Activities for Engaging Staff Describe the strategies (at least two) that you executed to engage staff. Your response should include why the strategies were used. (500 words) Please note: your strategies for staff may be the same or different for the focal engagement with student populations and their families.**

A number of strategies were implemented in order to gain insight and feedback from our various employee groups. One of the primary strategies utilized to engage our staff was to leverage the district's existing partnerships with the certified and classified associations. At monthly labor management meetings, SSA updates and invitations to engagement activities were provided to the respective associations. This allowed key representatives from the associations to ask clarifying questions as well as collaborate on survey questions and results analysis. Leveraging these existing networks led to a greater engagement and clarity with our staff.

Based on the variety of input sources, we were proud that parents, students, and staff, generally speaking, felt safe in our schools, found Sisters School District a positive place to work, were proud of our recent graduation rate improvements, and are excited about the direction of our school district. In addition, we saw many of our parents speak to the positive relationships that they have formed with our teachers and school system. A thorough external and internal analysis found key themes that emerged from the multitude of data sources. In terms of improvement, our students, families and staff were clear about the need for further support in a number of areas. Social and emotional learning, Math and English Language Arts (ELA) performance, mental health, students with disabilities' overall academic performance, and family involvement in school functions were all areas identified as needing additional support and improvement. Increased mental health support, reducing class sizes, and staff professional development and planning time were our keys themes. This input from our community and staff engagement efforts not only became the focus of our strategic plan, they became the cornerstone of our SIA planning efforts.

ODE support in the future:

Like many issues in public education, the greatest resource needed is time. Our scarcity of time is the biggest barrier we face in properly enhancing our engagement efforts. Fortunately, due to our district's "Voices" initiative and the expectations of the SSA, we have implemented institutionalized systematic feedback loops for students, parents, and staff that will lead our engagement efforts in the future. While we will be refining our engagement strategies each year, a strong foundation for authentic engagement has been established. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) can support the further refinements of our engagement processes through continuing to provide resources and examples of best practices taking place throughout the state.

**What did we learn from our community? Describe and distill what you learned from your community and staff. (250-500 words) Ensure your response includes:**

- **What you learned or are actively learning**
- **How you applied the input to inform your planning** (Add link to Strategic Plan)

Our community and staff engagement strategies and activities reinforced some known strengths and weaknesses of our district and also revealed a number of previously unidentified insights and improvement areas. Based on the variety of input sources, we were proud that parents, students, and staff, generally speaking, felt safe in our schools, found SSD a positive place to work, were proud of our recent graduation rate improvements, and are excited about the direction of our school district. In addition, we saw many of our parents speak to the positive relationships that they have formed with our teachers and school system.

A thorough analysis found key themes that emerged from the multitude of data sources. In terms of improvement, our students, families and staff were clear about the need for further support in a number of

areas. Social and emotional learning and mental health (Strategic Plan Belong Goal), ELL math and English Language Arts (ELA) performance (Strategic Plan Prepare Goal), maintaining class sizes, and students with disabilities' and ELL students overall academic performance were all areas identified as needing additional support and improvement.

This input from our community and staff engagement efforts became the cornerstone of our SIA planning efforts. Once our key themes were apparent, we sought out research-based best practices and strategies that had proven results in improving those identified areas and incorporated them into our plan.

#### **PART FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS**

##### **Data Sources (checklist on application)**

Examining data sources to ensure equity for all students and families was the central focus of our team's data analysis. Student Trend Data, and Stakeholder Input Data were analyzed based on traditional sub-group criteria (i.e. race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, students receiving ELL services, students with disabilities, migrant students, etc.). In addition to our customary subgroup disaggregation analysis, for a number of our community outreach items, student surveys, and student interviews, we also analyzed the data based on other historically marginalized and underrepresented subpopulations. By examining the disaggregated data we were able to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the needs of all our students.

#### **PART FIVE: SIA PLAN**

##### ***Key Elements of SIA Plan: Outcomes, Strategies, Activities, Priorities***

The Sisters School District Student Investment Account Plan is both comprehensive and targeted to meet the needs of our diverse school communities. The structure of the plan is broken into 4 key strategies that are the driving forces to help us better meet the mental and behavioral needs of our students as well as increasing academic achievement while reducing academic disparities for the focal student populations. Within each strategy, the expected outcomes, planned activities and priorities are described in full.

Strategy #1: Create a clearly aligned, research-based, high-quality system of social, emotional, mental, and physical health support for K-12 students. Our first strategy fully aligns with the Student Success Acts' intention to meet the mental and behavior needs of students. There are several expected outcomes associated with our first strategy.

##### **Strategy #1 Outcomes:**

- Increased student achievement and overall school climate.
- Elimination of achievement gaps among groups.
- Greater student mental well-being through increased access to timely and high-quality mental health support in schools.
- Increased small-group Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) intervention and enrichment for K-8 students.

There are a number of activities that we will implement in order to achieve the desired outcomes for strategy #1. Our first activity will be to increase the amount of mental health support available to our students K-12 by

creating and hiring for an additional mental health support position. Our Oregon Healthy Teen & Youth Truth Survey data, parent comment data, and staff input clearly revealed that our students are in need of more mental health support opportunities. Additional mental health support is proven to help student outcomes (Lapan, Gysbers, & Kayson, 2007). A similar proposed activity aligned with strategy #1 is the creation and retention of elementary school counselor. Our elementary school counselor is the foundation of our mental health support to our students. With our SIA investments in additional mental health support, we expect to see more students receiving timely attention, education, and assistance with their mental health needs. Ensuring adequate mental health support is a top priority for our district.

Strategy #2: Properly staff K-5 elementary classrooms to ensure that all students, particularly those from our focal populations, receive adequate attention, care, intervention, and support to meet their individualized needs. Our second strategy is aligned with the needs revealed in our comprehensive data analysis as well as a substantial amount of input from our community and staff.

Strategy #2 Outcomes: · Increase in student achievement and overall school climate. · Increased small-group math, English Language Arts, and Social Emotional Learning intervention and enrichment for K-5 students. One of the primary investments we plan to utilize in order to achieve our strategy #2 outcomes is to reduce class sizes through hiring additional elementary teaching staff. Since our district has experienced a dramatic enrollment increase this past year, reducing elementary class sizes is a top priority. Reduction in elementary class sizes is a research-based strategy to improve student academic outcomes (Hoxby, 2000). In line with target universalism, a reduction in class size will not only help students from focal populations receive more individualized support, but all k-5 elementary students will benefit from this investment.

Strategie #3 Increase Professional Development Time for all staff. 3 day pre-inservice professional development focused on the implementation of Leader-in-Me K-5 and AVID literacy strand 6-12.

Strategy #3 Outcomes:

Strategy #4: Create a trauma-informed culture of care in all schools with teachers utilizing research-based techniques that support the academic, social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of all students. Our fourth and final strategy centers upon equipping our teachers with the research-based skills and practices necessary to meet the differentiated social, emotional, and mental needs of our student population.

Strategy #4 Outcomes:

Students experience greater mental well-being through increased access to timely and high-quality mental health support in schools. · Increase in small-group SEL intervention and enrichment for K-5 students. Partnering with the Child Center to provide additional mental health counseling services to our students in all buildings. In order to achieve our desired outcomes from strategy four, we plan to partner with a regional initiative through the High Desert Educational Service District called 'Culture of Care'. This group is a small team of educational professionals that work with individual schools to elevate school culture through a variety of practices. Our plan is to work with the Culture of Care team to further train our employees in trauma informed practices, and to refine our PBIS practices. All these practices are research-based methods to help improve students' social and emotional health, mental well-being, and overall school climate. We would analyze the

success of these initiatives through fidelity of implementation, Youth Truth Student survey, and the Oregon Healthy Teens survey.

***SIA Integrated Planning Tool***

This tool provides elements for continuous improvement planning, including outcomes, strategies, activities and priorities. Each of those elements is aligned to multiple documents reflecting long-standing continuous improvement efforts. The district is aligning the SIA planning process to our existing Comprehensive Plan, linked here:

**Budget**

priority	Expenditure details	Focus Area	Estimated Cost	Estimated Cost
1	3 Days Professional Development	E	\$195,000	
1	Elementary teacher (Kindergarten)	MH & E	\$99,576	
1	Elementary teacher (First Grade)	MH & E	\$99,576	
1	Elementary teacher (Fifth Grade)	MH & E	\$99,576	
1	Elementary Counselor	MH	\$114,495	
1	SEL paraprofessional	MH	\$50,000	
1	Mental Health Partner (Child Center)	MH	\$20,000	
1	ELL teacher	E	117,765	
1	ELL Community Liason	E	\$50,000	
1	AVID	MH & E	\$20,000	
1	Leader-In-Me	MH & E	\$15,000	
2	MSW	MH & E		\$99,576
2	Rural Schools Consortium	E		\$35,000
2	No Co-Curricular fees	MH & E		\$65,000
2	Expanded options FTE	WRE		\$99,576
	Totals		\$880,988	\$299,152

*SIA Budget 20-21*

***Equity Lens or Tool***

We incorporated the Oregon Equity Lens throughout our SIA planning process to ensure that our decisions were equitably aligned with needs of our underserved student and community groups. As part of this process, key group stakeholders reviewed disaggregated student academic and behavioral data. This process helped highlight the different outcomes and needs of our underserved focal populations.

This tool has a rich equity perspective underlying many aspects of the needs assessment. In addition, the district convened multiple meetings with a groups stakeholders to complete it strategic plan. As a critical component of its work, the stakeholder group carefully reviewed and discussed the Sisters School District Strategic Plan. We focused on investment priorities based on this community feedback.

We will continue to ask our underserved population for feedback to remove any barriers to their ability to access educational and support services.

**Draft Longitudinal Growth Targets**

**Goal 1: BELONG**

*Every student is known and connected to adults, peers and resources to develop emotional self-regulation and a foundation of resilience.*

**Indicator 1a:** In order for the staff to develop stronger relationships with our students we will target a student-to-teacher ratio at or under 26 to 1 at the high school, 24 to 1 at the middle school and 22 to 1 at the elementary school based on the state report card calculation for student-to-teacher ratio throughout the life of this plan.

**Method of Measurement:** Use district data from the academic portion of the state report card.

**Indicator 1b:** Increase Regular Attendance to 95 % of Sisters Students regularly attending their school by the 2023-2024 school year.

School	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
SES	87%	89%	91%	93%	95%
SMS	86%	89%	91%	93%	95%
SHS	82%	86%	90%	93%	95%

**Method of Measurement:** Use district data from the attendance portion of the state report card.

**Indicator 1c:** Improve student resilience by 20% as measured through the Culture of Care and YouthTruth surveys by the 2023-2024 school year.

**Method of Measurement:** Use Culture of Care survey, YouthTruth survey and school data on referrals. A 5% gain per year is expected after implementation.

**Indicator 1d:** Have 100% of teaching staff trained in Collaborative Proactive Solutions, growth mindset, The ALSUP (Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unresolved Problems), AVID, Sources of Strength and/or trauma informed practices by the 2023-2024 school year.

**Method of Measurement:** Culture of Care Survey, YouthTruth Survey, and staff completion percentage (20% per year).

**Goal 2: PREPARE**

*Every student is on a purposeful path to graduation and is taking an active role in their academic achievement, goal setting and character development.*

**Indicator 2a:** Increase the number of students who meet or exceed state standards in reading and mathematics with an emphasis on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

- Increase reading scores to 90 % of Sisters 3<sup>rd</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the Oregon’s Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) by the 2023-2024 school year.
- Increase mathematics scores to 80 % of Sisters 3<sup>rd</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the SBAC assessment by the 2023-2024 school year.
- Increase reading scores to 90 % of Sisters 5<sup>th</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the SBAC assessment by the 2023-2024 school year.
- Increase mathematics scores to 80 % of Sisters 5<sup>th</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the SBAC assessment by the 2023-2024 school year.
- Increase reading scores to 90% of Sisters 8<sup>th</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the SBAC assessment by the 2023-2024 school year.
- Increase mathematics scores to 80 % of Sisters 8<sup>th</sup> graders meeting or exceeding state standards as measured by the SBAC assessment by the 2023-2024 school year.

Grade	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
3 <sup>rd</sup> reading	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%
3 <sup>rd</sup> math	55%	63%	70%	75%	80%
5 <sup>th</sup> reading	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%
5 <sup>th</sup> math	50%	58%	65%	73%	80%
8 <sup>th</sup> reading	74%	77%	81%	85%	90%
8 <sup>th</sup> math	62%	66%	70%	75%	80%

**Method of Measurement:** Use district data from the state report card.

**Indicator 2b:** Increase the freshman “on-track” rate to 100 % of Sisters 9<sup>th</sup> graders on track for graduation by the 2023-2024 school year.

**Method of Measurement:** Use the district’s state report card freshman on-track data.

**Indicator 2c:** Increase Sisters High School Graduation rate to 100 % of Sister’s seniors graduating by the 2023-2024 school year.

**Method of Measurement:** Use the district data on the graduation rate portion of the state report card.

**PART SIX: USE OF FUNDS**

**Allowable uses**

- Addressing students’ health and safety needs
- Evidence-based strategies for reducing class size and caseloads

- Expanding availability of and student participation in well-rounded learning experiences

*Meeting students' mental and behavioral health needs*

- Addressing students' health and safety needs
- Evidence-based strategies for reducing class size and caseloads

**Addressing the Needs and Impacts on Focal Student Groups**

The district is focused on meeting students' mental and behavioral health needs. We are currently in the planning stages of embedding new mental health and social-emotional supports into our already-existing Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) structures. This will involve training, and supporting staff in every school in the district. This will help build capacity among all staff at their schools to better address students' mental and behavioral health.

The increase in small-group SEL intervention and enrichment for K-5 students, partnering with the Child Center to provide additional mental health counseling services to our students in all buildings, continuing to partner with a regional initiative through the High Desert Educational Service District called 'Culture of Care' to further train our employees in trauma informed practices, and to refine our PBIS practices; all these practices are research-based methods to help improve students' social and emotional health, mental well-being, and overall school climate. Students who experience greater mental well-being through increased access to timely and high-quality mental health support in schools will be able to more effectively access the academic supports they need to be successful.

Additionally, the district will invest in class size reduction K-5. It is well established that teachers' abilities to create close relationships with and among students (or "high affect" classrooms). The findings in our own Strategic Planning certainly echo this research, as students, families, and staff all addressed the importance of relationships. This investment will have an impact on both academics and the social emotional/mental health support of our students.

The Sisters School District has seen growth in our English Language Learner population. Along with class size reduction, the district is investing in staffing to directly support our linguistically diverse students.

While the district is putting a large investment into staffing, we recognize that adding staff is a necessary but not sufficient step towards increasing academic achievement and reducing disparities for our historically underserved students. Included in the investments above is a commitment to build capacity among all school staff. The district is investing in additional professional development days for the staff to be sure that our students are getting consistent support and instruction in all classrooms.

**PART SEVEN: DOCUMENTATION AND BOARD APPROVAL**

***Evidence of Board Approval***

Link to February and March board agendas and minutes

**Applicant Assurances**

Sisters School District makes the following assurances:

- Adherence to the expectations for using its Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) needs assessment to inform SIA planning;
- Input from staff, student focal groups, and families of focal student groups was used to inform SIA planning (other community engagement input may also be used);
- Disaggregated data by focal student groups was examined during the SIA planning process;
- The recommendations from the Quality Education Commission (QEC) were reviewed and considered;
- The district's SIA plan is aligned to its CIP; and
- Agreement to provide requested reports and information to the Oregon Department of Education.

We are certainly proud of our ongoing efforts to engage our stakeholders in the improvement of our school system. With that in mind, there are still a number of improvements in our engagement efforts that we would seek to implement as we move forward.

The greatest gap in regards to community engagement for our district is receiving a proportionate level of input from our students and families from historically marginalized demographic groups. For example, the percentage of parents who completed our Spanish Language parent survey was not proportionate to the percentage of bilingual families we have in our district. Similarly, the percentage of families of color who attended our community listening sessions was not proportionate to the percentage of families of color that we have in our district. While we received some feedback from each focal group, we certainly want to reach more students, families, and staff in the future.

Everyday our districts' SPED department works hand-in-hand with our students and families who receive special education services. With their real-time personal knowledge of this focal group, one of our key strategies was to leverage our SPED staff network to engage this key population. Our district's SPED director was instrumental in ensuring information regarding our SIA activities reached our students and families that receive IEP support.

Another strategy used to engage students with disabilities and their families was to utilize various communication methods to inform this focal group about SSA opportunities. For example, SSA information was delivered through electronic communication methods and hard-copies made available at key contact points so that those with inequitable access to technology would still be informed.

Students & families navigating poverty, homelessness Similar to our students with disability and their families, we used a variety of communication methods as a strategy to engage families navigating poverty and homelessness. As many of the families for this particular focal group may not have equitable access to technology, we provided SSA info through digital and non-digital methods to ensure student and family voice could be heard regardless of access to technology. In addition, we provided opportunities for families to provide input in non-technological ways (i.e. hard copy surveys and listening forums). A second strategy used to engage families navigating poverty was to continue our engagement with our Family Access Network which deals exclusively with this particular population. Students & families of color Our data shows that the vast majority of

our students & families of color are emerging bilingual, Hispanic/Latino families. With this in mind, we implemented two of the same strategies for engaging this focal group.