

FOSSIL SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT SUCCESS ACT - STUDENT INVESTMENT APPLICATION

Fossil School District, Institution ID - 2248, www.fossilschools.com

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Fossil School District has 70 students in 2 buildings in the lovely enclave of Fossil, Oregon. We have one Elementary School and one High School. Fossil Schools employs 9 certified teachers, a certified Title 1 director, 3 teacher assistants, 1 cook, 2 administrative assistants, 1 counselor, 1 registered teacher, teaching music, 1 library assistant, 2 part-time bus drivers, 1 business manager, and 1 Amazing Superintendent :)

Our classroom and grade configurations for our 70 students are as follows:

- 16 - Preschoolers, One classroom, 1 teacher and 1 aide
- 6 - Kindergartners, One classroom 1 teacher
- 9 - 1st graders and 5 - 2nd graders, One classroom, 1 teacher
- 3 - 3rd graders and 2 - 4th graders, One Classroom, 1 teacher
- 7 - 5th graders and 6 - 6th graders, One classroom, 1 teacher.

We have 2 classroom paraprofessionals that serve 1st - 6th graders full time.
Also, a full-time Title One teacher for 1st - 6th grade

- 2 - 7th graders
- 4 - 8th graders
- 2 - 9th graders
- 4 - 10th graders
- 0 - 11th graders
- 4 - 12th graders.

5 full time teachers at the junior-senior high school to serve 16 students.

Currently, our district provides free breakfast and lunch to all students. Many of our students come from very low-income families. Many families are single parent homes. Demographics are as follows:

- 14 homeless students.
- 4 Hispanic students.
- 2 Multi-Racial.
- 2 Native American.
- 1 Black/African American.
- 61 White Students.
- 35 Female
- 35 Male
- 0 Non-Binary

Engagement:

- A. **Approach:** We are a very small school district. I sent invitations home to all our families posted the meeting notice in five places around the community. I personally called several community members and invited them to the meeting. I felt my team did a good job on getting the message out. Still we had low turnout. What I heard from patrons was, we believe in our teachers and you as the superintendent, we trust you and your staff to do it right.
- B. **Self-Assessment:** As I have taken time to reflect on our process and procedure to engagement I am satisfied with the process and the overall support of as a district we have from our patrons. It truly is remarkable. I wish more would have attended, but I am comfortable with our efforts to truly invite them in and be a part of the process.
- C. **Cultivate partnerships:** This process did not cultivate new partnerships. I am fortunate that the Fossil school district is located in the county seat. Located here are the Sheriff's office, juvenile counselor, C.A.S.A. and community counseling solutions. The process did deepen our connections and they know our school goals are to make sure every kid is safe and that they all reach their maximum educational potential. So, it is great to have these supports to help these students and our staff, assist students getting back on grade level, or stay on grade level as they process through their educational experience.
- D. **Other Resources:** I am extremely fortunate that my school district is on great financial footing. I have 16 students in my 7-12 building with 5 full-time teachers. We have continuously had great support for these students. Test scores and graduation rates are very high. On the other hand, my elementary school has many students that have dyslexia, read below grade level (title 1), and/or are in our SPED program. More than 50% of these students are students navigating poverty, homelessness (14), and foster care; and other students that have historically experienced disparities in our schools. We are going to use our SSA funds to employ 2 teaching assistants to serve and support these children in their educational needs.

E. Artifacts.

PCompactk-6.pdf pcompactWHS.pdf ODE SSA.pdf Engagement Intro Sheet.pdf Engagement repsonses.pdf Sign in Sheet.pdf

- F. **Why I Selected these Artifacts:** I used these five artifacts because they are the proof that I did as I was asked by ODE and held my community engagement meeting. Even though in my opinion I didn't need to because I as the lead educator, and totally trusted by my board, staff, and community, know what is best for our students. We had a very low turnout and the feedback I received from my parents and community, was "that's your job to figure this stuff out, isn't that we pay you for" Our parents want their teachers and principals and superintendent to do this work, They care deeply for their children, they want them safe and happy and to graduate with the ability to get a living wage job. Many do not want their children going off to college, they want them to remain in Wheeler County and work and raise their families here.

G/H. Strategies and Activities Families and Students: I didn't think about or concentrate on any one specific strategy or activity. I simply set up and advertised a meeting and gave the community the information on what the CIP was and the SSA and the process we as school districts are mandated to go through from ODE. They were asked to do a survey that my vision and planning team put together, to give them some guidance on how our little district could spend the money. In my community this was just common sense. As our CIP came together it became apparent that our focus was going to be on early childhood learning, a focus also, on 3rd thru 8th grade reading and writing. As I do not believe 11 years old or younger have a lot of experience to comment or interject on what strategies we should do for their learning, we held no student focal groups. This was my professional decision and I stand by that. Those meetings would have been a waste of time. No student focal groups either with my 10 high school students. Since our CIP was driving our SSA ideas and the investment application funds were going to be focused at the Elementary school, we decided to not have an upper grade focal group.

I/J. Strategies and Activities with Staff: Again, I didn't have any specific strategies or activities for staff. I asked staff if they wanted a separate meeting to discuss our CIP and the direction, we were headed in looking at options to spend our small portion of the SSA funds. Staff chose to attend the community meeting. The majority of our staff live in the district and/or have their children in our school. 9 of my 11 teachers showed up for the community meeting. I only had a few support staff attend. So, our staff engagement activity was included with our community forum. I did have several side conversations with staff over the course of a few weeks about the whole process and our direction. I got nothing but support. Our high school staff was in great support of the elementary school getting the support for our students with disabilities; Students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care; and other students that have historically experienced disparities in our schools. In a small school district with less than 70 students and 11 teachers, these kinds of authentic conversations can happen at any time. Rural small schools are the best.

Data Analysis: Data that we used during our discovery, planning and community engagement sessions were, State report card, at a glance summary, and detailed reports from 2017-2018, and 2018-2019. Staff and community surveys. Leadership team conversations. Anecdotal conversations with staff. What we discovered, well we truly already knew, because it has been a focus area and goal here in the Fossil school district for several years, is that our 3-8 math scores over time have not been great. The one caveat was school year 2018-2019 we had our best results in several years. The discussion we had was, well we finally have some good data on what we are doing in math, let's not abandon ship on that just yet. So are big focus will continue to be in math grades 3-8.

Three-year plan: As the legislature was in session last spring, (2019) we were receiving information from ODE that the funding of the SSA was going to pass and the first funds would be available to school by the spring of 2020. So, we were told to budget for it and begin to put your plan in place. In Fossil we did just that. Being a small school with virtually no culturally diverse students, we choose to focus on our students that we had targeted through a very formal evaluation of their reading needs and other disabilities they may have. We concluded that in grades 3-6 over 75% of our students fall into the following category; they are a student of poverty, they are one or more age levels behind in reading/math, they have been placed on an IEP, and several have been identified with dyslexia.

With this information we choose to hire 1.4 FTE. These are split into 2 positions and the time is focused best for when students and teachers need the support.

We assumed as small as we are, that the funding was going to less than \$80,000. We felt these 2 new staffing positions would cost us about this amount.

Our three-year plan is to target resources and support for our most needy learners. We will use Three data sources to judge our effectiveness. Students will be assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the year in Reading using Fountas and Pinnell. In Mathematics we use I-Ready in the same manner. Our other assessment will be the Oregon state wide assessment, Smarter Balanced.

School Year 2019-2020 has become our baseline year. We recently received the hard figures of dollars from the state, our investment will be about \$73,000. We feel really good about our use of these funds, our process for targeting the money where we did, the support from our parents, community, and staff.

Fossil schools are committed to ensuring every child gets the attention and support they need at all grade levels. We want every student to reach their maximum potential for themselves at this point in their academic lives. We still we keep a high level of attention on our 7th-12th graders to ensure they progress through high school and graduate. We have a great year-to-year graduation rate and we will continue to keep those efforts and focus on those students.

With our funding from the SSA we will be focusing on 3-8 grade math, support for our very low and struggling students, most whom are from homes of poverty, have defined learning disabilities and our being serviced with an I.E.P., and we have many that have been diagnosed with dyslexia.

We our focus on these students as well as addition of time for our now full time Phycologist on staff. We feel fantastic about our process and now implementing our plan.

At this time, I have tremendous buy in from staff and the community, as we started this year, we are already seeing some very good results with our kids. Only time will tell.

As with any long- or short-term plan we will evaluate how wea re doing. How this looks for us in the Fossil School district, each quarter we have a staff meeting to discuss students progress and what is working for each of them individually and what we discover doesn't work. This process has been in place several years and it seems to function really well for our small school, staff really like it are sold on the process. This will continue for the life of this SSA plan. (See the attached Strategies and Outcomes Sheet)

Equity Lens: Basic Features of the Equity Lens:

Objective: By utilizing an equity lens, the OEIB aims to provide a common vocabulary and protocol for resource allocation and evaluating strategic investments. The following questions will be considered for resource allocation and evaluating strategic investments:

1. Who are the racial/ethnic and underserved groups affected? What is the potential impact of the resource allocation and strategic investment to these groups?

Fossil Schools has very few racial or ethnic underserved students. (See demographic data on page one) Our most underserved students, I wouldn't call them that, because we are so small and have such small class sizes, are our students of poverty. ALL our students get served, no student is not supported or served when they are in our school. As ODE already knows the most important statistic for school success at an early age is attendance. We have great attendance grades k-6. Still we have a student or 2 that we need to constantly be in communication with the parent that they need to get their child to school. Theses students are the ones we see as needed the most support.

2. Does the decision being made ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences? What is the impact on eliminating the opportunity gap?

Our decision, direction, and plan are great for all students. WE IGNORE NO ONE!! Anytime you can level the playing field in any arena, Corporate America, College admissions, k-12 school system, the better long-term outlook a society with have. The better local communities you we see develop.

3. How does the investment or resource allocation advance the 40/40/20 goal?

Any investment in public education, when used effectively will have a positive outlook on whatever the intended goal is. If mismanaged or lead by ineffective people, which quite frankly I see mor and more of in the state of Oregon, it will then fail. As per the 40/40/20 goal, Former Governor Kitzhaber was brave in setting this standard, but it is unachievable. Why you as? Well it is not for the excellent teachers we have in our public schools; it is housing costs in our state. Our students can find a way to pay for tuition, but living a way from home for the first time and finding the money to do so is a daunting challenge.

I hope 40-40-20 is a success but I doubt it will succeed, just like CIM, Cam, and PASS were all failures and waste of tax payer dollars.

4. What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The main barrier is family wealth. ALL THE DATA for student success says; a student has a greater chance to be successful in high school and college if they have 2 college educated parents at home, family wealth of over \$125,000 per year. A passionate educator in the classroom, and attendance over 95. Until this societal element is even, it won't matter how much money you throw at a problem, success will be limited

Public agencies can't just throw money at a societal issue and hope for more even outcomes. The realities of schools are this; teachers aren't, can't be, and won't be, the saviors of student success. The task belongs to the parents. How the parents behave and what standards they set at home, will determine their own child's success.

5. How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by the strategic investment or resource allocation? How do you validate your assessment in (1), (2) and (3)?

We intentionally sent home a letter inviting our families and several community members to attend our community engagement and information night regarding the Student Success Act. I hope ODE understands that the community of Fossil only has about 350 people. Our average age is over 63 years old. Our community is a retirement haven for folks that do not have much income. We are the least wealth county in Oregon. The average house hold income is about \$23,000.00 at last report. With that information you can see why the turnout at our engagement night was not well attended. But who we did get to attend we feel we got good input and support? We feel the goals we selected meet the desire of the families and staff that did attend. Onward we go!!

6. How will you modify or enhance your strategies to ensure each learner and communities' individual and cultural needs are met?

We are so small that we will not need to modify or adjust. We already serve every student and support and focus their academic and cultural needs.

7. How are you collecting data on race, ethnicity, and native language?

In the Fossil School district, we collect all the data on race, ethnicity, and native language. We collect this data on our registration paperwork at the beginning of each school year. We also are so small each teacher talks to each parent and discusses their child's needs; language is a part of this conversation. Then our Title one teacher keeps all that information. (See our demographics data on page one) We have zero non-English speakers of our 70 students.

8. What is your commitment to P-20 professional learning for equity? What resources are you allocating for training in culturally responsive instruction?

I totally believe in P-20 learning and education. If I was king of America, I would stop public education with a basic high school degree at age 16. Those students that want to continue on in a college prep program, maintain a course of work through their local high school working in that direction. Of course, this means throwing out the archaic credit process have now. Our top students don't need all those core credits we demand for graduation. We simple don't change, because if we did, we would need significantly less teachers. And god forbid the democratic, liberal establishment of this state would allow that to happen. Anyway, just my 2 cents.

The 16-year old's that did not want to go on a college track, would attend a 2-year job training center. This could be a community college or some other skilled trade area that trains the student. The funded for creating and growing these training centers would come from the savings you get by reducing your teaching staff by 20-30 percent.

I am so tired of the questions about equity and culturally diverse learning and education. I have been in education for 32 years and I have never once discriminated against anyone. Our cultural differences and coming together as one community are what make us strong. For society and local neighborhoods to flourish, ALL members need a taste of the American dream and affordable housing and a good education. ALL students should be treated equal and have the right to pursue life liberty and happiness. But it shouldn't be handed to them, they must work for it and earn it, like our forefathers did.

Longitudinal Growth Targets:

Budget:

SIA_BUDGET_TEMPL
ATE_FINAL.xlsx

Board Approval: March 12th, 2020