

- 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)**

Despite the reduction in funding and the pandemic which has shifted many aspects of our work, the implementation of the district's SIA plan has had numerous positive impacts. Given the limited funds and the aim to have ongoing costs attributed to SIA be sustainable, some one-time purchases were prioritized at the front end of the district's SIA planning.

The district has significantly increased staffing to support student needs aligned with our district vision. This includes greater support for early literacy practices, inclusive practices, and high-leverage instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners. Highly trained, caring educators make a difference every day for our students. Having funds available to create and fill these positions will lead toward academic and behavioral growth.

During the pandemic, we have prioritized meeting the immediate needs of students and families, connecting our families most impacted by the pandemic with needed services, and supporting students' mental and behavioral health. The immediate needs of our students and families have been supported with SIA funds and initiatives, other district funds, and partnering with outside agencies. Examples include professional development for staff on suicide prevention and trauma-informed practices, and providing direction to community resources to families in need.

Other impactful efforts that were prioritized include extended learning opportunities such as our summer reading program to address the learning losses that were realized over our time in distance learning, focused professional development on early literacy best practices and the Learning For All model, and forming the elementary adoption team and launching the adoption process to update language arts and social studies materials.

- 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)**

There have been significant and real challenges to the implementation of the SIA plan, largely due to the pandemic. First has been the inability to hire staff to fill positions that have been created. The district is experiencing extreme staffing shortages and unfilled district positions including SIA-funded positions. Second, with the focus on mental health and safety and COVID response, many instructional initiatives have been paused. District staff did not have the bandwidth to take on more at this time, and needed to prioritize a level of care and connection over some of our academic goals established before the pandemic. Finally, the constantly changing public health conditions and state guidance for schools necessitated repeated shifts in planning and implementation of changes in learning programs, making it difficult to focus on implementing initiatives beyond the daily operations of Comprehensive Distance Learning, Limited In-Person Instruction, and then the Hybrid Learning Model. Some areas of the district's SIA plan that have experienced more implementation progress and completion of tasks have been in the area of health and wellness.

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)

The district engaged extensive staff and community input in 2019–20 to inform development of its SIA plan to best support student success. Throughout the process, the district sought and collected substantial community input, applying an equity lens by prioritizing focused engagement with historically underserved students and families to inform our plan, and by disaggregating data to focus on our students in greatest need of additional support and identify the most pressing student needs. District staff participated in 49 engagement events and collected over 1,400 responses from two surveys.

Many priorities identified in the SIA development process have not been initiated to the full extent due to reduced funding and other pandemic-related priorities that have needed to be implemented. Focused feedback on the district's SIA plan and implementation progress has not been solicited during the pandemic so there is little information directly about SIA gathered from stakeholders during 2020–21. However, stakeholder engagement and input has continued throughout the pandemic.

Additional stakeholder input was solicited in spring 2021 to inform planning for federal ESSER funds. More than 1,550 responses were received from staff, parents, students and other community members. Stakeholder feedback also was solicited on other topics throughout the year, including more than 5,100 student responses on school climate and distance learning, and more than 2,300 parent and 550 staff responses to surveys about distance learning and support services while school buildings were closed.

All community engagement in 2020–21 was virtual for COVID safety reasons. Families were informed and engaged online at the school and district level. Schools engaged with their communities in a variety of virtual events for learning, care and connection, such as open houses, learning management system tutorials, bingo nights, family fitness nights, cooking nights, and more. Supports were offered to families throughout the year.

The district increased communication to parents to record-setting levels, and developed our platforms to engage with students and families at a distance. The district held virtual meetings and information sessions on different topics. While some virtual formats were less interactive than regular in-person events, attendance and participation was often higher than usual due to the ease of accessing events online.

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)

4J's prioritization of investments during the first year of SIA implementation with reduced funding was informed by key factors including:

- Our district's data on student needs and disparities between groups of students
- Our community's input on values and priorities
- Impacts of the pandemic including learning losses and mental health needs
- Immediate needs of impacted students and families
- Future sustainability

The district prioritized services directly supporting historically underserved groups of students, supports for the mental and emotional wellbeing of our students, extended summer learning opportunities to help address learning losses realized during distance learning, and early steps toward improving student reading by 3rd grade (a key factor for future student outcomes and identified as a high community priority), including beginning the elementary language arts adoption process and plan.

Finally, much of 4J's original SIA plan included additional staffing for services to students and families. With the significant reduction in funding for 2020–21, we pushed forward one-time purchases so that ongoing staffing costs in future years will be sustainable.