

Foundation Aid Increase Survey - Foundation Aid Increase**Background/Instructions**

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Background and InstructionsBackground

Section 10-d of part A of chapter 56 of the laws of 2021, as amended by §5-b of part A of chapter 56 of the laws of 2022, requires school districts receiving a foundation aid increase of more than 10% or \$10,000,000 to create plans on how these funds will be used to address student performance and need. These plans are required in advance of the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 school years. This is the final year that this requirement is in effect. Plans for the 2023-24 school year must be completed, submitted to the department, and posted to district websites by July 1, 2023.

Each district subject to this requirement is required to:

- Seek public comment from parents, teachers, and other stakeholders;
- Take public comments into account in the development of the plan;
- Include an analysis of public comments within the plan;
- Describe in the plan how the foundation aid increase will be used, including portions of the increase used to address the priority areas identified by law;
- Post the plan on the district website; and
- Submit the plan to the State Education Department in a form prescribed by the Department to be posted publicly.

This requirement does not replace any requirements under Contracts for Excellence. If your district is required to submit a contract for excellence, more information is available at this page.

The list of school districts that are required to submit a plan aligned with the increase in foundation aid may be found in the "*Foundation Aid Increase Notification Guidance*" memo located in the *Documents* library at the lower left of the application. It should be noted that this requirement does not obligate districts to spend additional foundation aid funds in specific ways, but does require district seek public comment and share plans on how they intend to spend these additional funds. Plans are required to cover only the foundation aid *increase*. The plan should *not* cover how the district intends to use its *entire* foundation aid amount. Describe in the plan how the foundation aid increase will be used, along with key goals, metrics, or ratios, and the community feedback reflected for portions of the increase used to address any of the following priority areas, as well as any additional areas identified by the district:

1. Increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap;
2. Reducing class sizes;
3. Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas;
4. Addressing student social-emotional health;
5. Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities; and students experiencing homelessness;

Instructions

- The *Foundation Aid Increase Survey* is due by July 1, 2023.
- Districts must complete all sections and are required to answer questions marked with a red asterisk. If a required question has not been completed, the business portal will highlight it in red and the section of the application will be flagged. The district will be unable to submit the application to NYSED for final review if a required question remains unresolved.
- The online application may only be submitted/certified by the chief school officer of the district. The designated superintendent or the chief executive officer, or board of trustees president are the only administrators with the submit/certify rights necessary to successfully submit and certify a completed application for NYSED review.
- Districts are NOT REQUIRED to send hard copies of survey materials to the Department.

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Use of Foundation Aid Increase Survey

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Use of Foundation Aid Increase

1. Please describe how the district plans to utilize funds provided by the foundation aid increase in the following priority areas.
If these funds will not be used for one of the priority areas listed below, please respond with "N/A."

	Key Goals, Metrics, or Ratios (250 words or less)	Community Feedback Reflected (250 words or less)	New Foundation Aid Funds to Support Initiative (\$)
Increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap	1. Science Investigations will be implemented in 2023-24 in grades 3-8 in an effort to increase student performance results in science by building a more solid foundation for future instruction. This expenditure will provide the necessary kits and training for teachers in six different grade levels across three buildings; 2. The high school will add a new program, the Business Education Alliance, to give high school students the opportunity to shadow real work experiences in the greater school community; 3. Itopia software will be purchased to help with a continued problem in the district, providing students with better access to software at home. This was a pronounced problem during the remote learning component provided by the district during the pandemic; 4. The district continues to purchase additional licenses to provide high school students with an opportunity for Credit Recovery. This budgeted item will provide 30 additional licenses; 5. Although this particular expenditure for a 1.0 FTE high school counselor could fit several priority areas, including providing additional supports for students and addressing social-emotional health, this 1.0 addition will become part of the high school Panther project, designed to give extra supports for struggling students.	As explained in detail in Question 3 of this survey, efforts to focus parents on the priority areas as required by the NYSED Survey produced helpful information but input was very minimal. Only ten of a possible 1300 or more families responded to the survey. However, as is the case with many of the budget plans in this document, the Board of Education and district and building committees comprised of varied stakeholders provided significant input. The high school has developed plans to focus on increasing graduation rates and many of them do not require using additional Foundation Aid resources. The high school Curriculum Advisory Council recommended adding more Academic Intervention Services (AIS) sections for struggling students in the core subjects without adding staff by remaking the schedules of current staff. Departments reviewed last year's Regents' results and student appeals to establish new expectations for student success. Plans were developed to improve communications to families about grading procedures and exams. Parents' input clearly supports the addition of the new counselor and credit recovery will boost graduation rates.	1. Science Investigations - \$10,700 2. Business Education Alliance - \$5,386 3. Itopia - \$20,000 4. Credit Recovery - \$12,000 5. 1.0 FTE Counselor - \$77,818
Reducing class sizes	1. The district will use the increased Foundation Aid funds to employ nine 1.0 FTE Aides at the elementary level in an effort to provide more adult support in classrooms. The two elementary school Principals will work with teachers to develop effective plans for the deployment of these aides. The extra adults available in classrooms serves as a method to reduce	Despite the small sample size of the input provided, parents did focus on reducing class size and adding staff. The district will continue to provide an additional nine 1.0 FTE classroom aides at the elementary level. This will allow a better ratio of adults to children in classrooms. The placement of these aides has not yet been determined. Funds will also be used to provide an	1. Nine 1.0 FTE Aides - \$239,558 2. 1.0 FTE Elementary Teacher - \$77,818

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	Key Goals, Metrics, or Ratios (250 words or less)	Community Feedback Reflected (250 words or less)	New Foundation Aid Funds to Support Initiative (\$)
	class sizes by allowing teachers to work in small groups with students; 2. A 1.0 FTE teacher will be added at the elementary level in order to accommodate the necessary restructuring of the CPSE/CSE position that is reported in more detail in a different priority area of this report; the district will also provide two 1.0 FTE mathematics specialists at the elementary level and one 1.0 Literacy specialist at the elementary level. These positions are detailed more specifically in another priority area section. They are explained here because the presence of three new 1.0 FTE positions will not only provide more resources for teachers and students but also serves to	additional 1.0 FTE teacher at the elementary level.	
Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas	1. The district will purchase PC's for student academic use at Grades 1, 5, and 9. These computers will become part of the district's overall inventory to better accommodate any remote or emergency situations. It will also provide more opportunities for students to practice computer based testing (CBT) as NYSED moves more aggressively in that direction; 2. The district will add two 1.0 FTE mathematics specialists at the elementary level. Audits conducted during the 2022-23 school year show mathematics results lagging behind ELA results at the elementary level. The specialists will coordinate building AIS, provide in-class interventions, help monitor student progress, utilize data to inform instruction, consult with teachers, and other duties assigned by Principals; 3. The district will add a 1.0 FTE Literacy specialist at the elementary level. This position will function very similarly to the mathematics specialists; 4. In order to supplement mentor training and professional development, the district will provide Kagan workshops (three day training for 30 teachers) designed to help teachers with	The parent survey did not include any specific comments regarding technology or teacher training and professional development. There was support on the survey for adding counselor help. The two new mathematics specialists and the literacy specialist could also fit in the reduce class size priority area because their use will often allow better ratios of adult to children in the classroom. Reducing class size was advocated by the parent survey.	1. Student PC's - \$182,674 2. 2.0 FTE Mathematics Specialists - \$155,636 3. 1.0 FTE Literacy Specialist - \$77,818 4. Kagan Workshops - \$22,000 5. 0.6 FTE Technology Integrator - \$49,619

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	Key Goals, Metrics, or Ratios (250 words or less)	Community Feedback Reflected (250 words or less)	New Foundation Aid Funds to Support Initiative (\$)
	the instructional skills to better engage students in their classroom instruction; 5. The district will add a 0.6 FTE Technology Integrator at the elementary level to support staff efforts to infuse technology into their instruction and for help with curriculum.		
Addressing student social-emotional health	1. The district will provide eight days of building level training and workshops focusing on a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The training will be provided by a reputable external consultant; 2. The high school and middle school will continue to expand their Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program for all students in their buildings; 3. The additional counselor budgeted for and explained in another priority category could also fit in this priority area since the counselor will also be focusing on the social-emotional needs of students.	Although not specifically mentioned by the parents, various stakeholders in the district have repeatedly recommended both proposed budget items in this priority area during budget deliberations.	1. MTSS - \$29,900 2. PBIS - \$3,000
Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness	1. Add 1.0 FTE Elementary CPSE/CSE Chair. Currently there are 776 elementary students and 202 are Classified. There are 212 CSE meetings that had been primarily facilitated by school psychologists. Creating this position allows psychologists to devote all of their time to serving this growing segment of the student population at the elementary level; 2. Add 1.0 CSE Chair at the middle school. Currently there are 665 students in the middle school and 175 are Classified. There are also 35 students on 504 plans and the building conducts 210 CSE that were facilitated by psychologists. Creating this position allows psychologists to devote all of their time to serving this growing segment of the student population at the elementary level; 3. The district will add a 1.0 FTE Special Education teacher to one of the elementary buildings to serve as an integrated co-teacher for an increase in Classified students at the 4th grade level; 4. Add a 1.0 FTE special education administrator/TOSA to serve in a district	Special education needs are at the top of the list in Pioneer for almost all stakeholder groups. This was reflected in the frequent references made by teachers, aides, administrators, and parents during the course of the last school year and during the budget process. This should come as no surprise since close to 25% of all students in the district are classified. The two new CSE positions will allow psychologists to focus their time on students and classroom support. The new administrative position allows for roles and responsibilities for leadership to be refocused and better distributed throughout the district. The additional teacher at the elementary level is necessary due to the increase in classified students. The district continues to provide a full-time ENL instructor who works with students in all four buildings and additional materials will be provided in various languages for this program.	1. 1.0 FTE Elementary CPSE/CSE - \$105,371 2. 1.0 FTE Middle School CSE - \$87,504 3. 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher - \$77,818 4. 1.0 FTE Special Education Administrator - \$131,400 5. 1.0 FTE ENL Instructor - \$90,237

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	Key Goals, Metrics, or Ratios (250 words or less)	Community Feedback Reflected (250 words or less)	New Foundation Aid Funds to Support Initiative (\$)
	capacity due to the large enrollment of Classified students in special education programming (almost 25% of Pioneer students are classified); 5. The district will employ a 1.0 FTE ENL instructor for daily services provided to eight students across four separate buildings.		

2. Please use the chart below to describe 'Other' priority areas not otherwise addressed in Item #1. Click on "Add Row" as applicable for additional priority areas.

Priority Area	Key Goals, Metrics, or Ratios (250 words or less)	Community Feedback Reflected (250 words or less)	New Foundation Aid Funds to Support Initiative (\$)
N/A	N/A	N/A	(No Response)

Use of Foundation Aid Increase (Cont.)

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- 3. Please describe your analysis of public comment from parents, teachers, and other stakeholders on the plan. This analysis should include the approach to outreach that was implemented and common recommendations or suggestions. For recommendations not reflected in the plan above, what limitations or rationale led to the decision to not include? (250 words or less)**

In addition to input provided by the Board of Education and administrators, Pioneer supports numerous standing committees involving varied stakeholders at the district and/or building levels, including Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Wellness Planning, Curriculum Advisory Council, Safety Committee, Technology Committee, Building Learning Team, Helping Children Achieve, and Teacher Mentor Advisory Board. Department leaders are also involved in making program recommendations.

The district was also determined to engage in very aggressive outreach to all Pioneer families. A letter was sent home to families explaining the Foundation Aid Increase Survey. They were given specific directions and a timeframe for submitting suggestions anonymously to the district website. In a district with approximately 1300 families, only ten submitted comments, offering a total of 19 suggestions that focused on the priorities outlined by the New York State Department of Education. Their input focused on class size (four comments); social-emotional needs (two comments); increasing staff (six comments); increasing academic supports for students and teachers (seven comments).

Although input from ten families certainly does not represent a valid sampling of the community, numerous suggestions made by the contributors were addressed in the plan either directly or indirectly. For example, there have been significant inclusions for budgeting in the areas of special education, especially since almost 25% of the student population has been identified. Some suggestions – although excellent – were not incorporated in the spending plan for the assessed inability to sustain such funding for these initiatives long term.