

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 | N/A | N/A | 0 |
| Reducing class sizes | N/A | N/A | 0 |
| Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas | Increasing the support for students K-12 that are struggling to meet standards in core academic subjects areas. We will increase opportunity for this population of students K-12 to meet their need. | Community feedback indicated that addressing student academic needs and rigor of instruction was the top priority. Parents express a desire for more opportunities to join the classroom or parent conferences to gain insights into their child's progress and areas for improvement academically and socially. Suggestions are made for providing differentiated instruction and more challenging work to cater to students' individual needs and intellectual abilities. Respondents mention the need for a wider range of electives, especially in science, engineering, and trade instruction. They also express a desire for advanced classes and off-campus learning opportunities. Streamlining grading procedures and curriculum is suggested as a means to enhance academic experiences. | 74,827 |
| Addressing student social-emotional health | Increasing support for all students K-12 to ensure that they feel safe and that their social, emotional, behavioral, and wellness needs are being met throughout the district. | Concerns about students' emotional well-being, particularly anxiety related to school, indicate a need for additional support and resources in addressing these issues. Additionally, there is a desire for teachers to address students' social-emotional well-being and to use platforms like Canvas regularly for grading and communication. The community highlighted the importance of addressing bullying within the school environment, calling for measures to ensure a safe and inclusive atmosphere for all students, and the importance of introducing cybersecurity lessons to children, emphasizing the potential lasting impacts of their online activities | 16,350 |
| Providing adequate | | | |

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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 (\$) |
|--|---|---|---|
| resources to English language learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness | Improving the district's ability to communicate and provide additional support to students with disabilities or that are English Language Learners. | Feedback indicates concerns about certain teachers' lack of professionalism, inadequate support for struggling students. Suggestions are made for providing differentiated instruction and more challenging work to cater to students' individual needs and intellectual abilities. Parents express a desire for increased involvement and engagement in their child's education, including more updates and pictures of school activities, better communication about grades and classes, and improved collaboration between parents and teachers. Various other suggestions include more tutoring or remote learning opportunities. | 2,500 |

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 (\$) |
|--|--|--|---|
| Physical/Emotional Safety and Wellness | Inclusion of a School Resource Officer to be shared between Castleton Elementary School and Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School | Concerns are raised regarding improved safety measures and lockdown procedures, especially the traumatic experiences associated with them. Feedback is given regarding the school's physical environment, including the presence of police officers and the impact of lockdowns and threats on students' sense of safety and security. Additionally, addressing issues related to bullying, vaping, and student behavior is seen as crucial for maintaining a safe school environment and ensuring a safe and inclusive atmosphere for all students. Also mentioned was the importance of introducing cybersecurity lessons to children, emphasizing the potential lasting impacts of their online activities. | 127,763 |

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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)**

Schodack CSD provided several opportunities for outreach to gather information from stakeholders in an effort to include their feedback and thoughts. Surveys were sent to parents, students, faculty, and staff. An analysis of the survey data was used to help define priorities. In addition, there were multiple public comment periods at Board of Education meetings to offer insight, perspectives, and feedback regarding the use of dedicated funds. This data was analyzed throughout the budgeting process and feedback was incorporated to help shape budgetary priorities.

The surveys and meetings resulted in the following analysis of the information:

Theme 1: Safety and Security

- Feedback indicates there is a desire for teachers to address students' social-emotional well-being and utilize effective platforms for grading and communication.
- Stakeholders expressed concerns about safety measures, lockdown procedures, and traumatic experiences associated with lockdowns. There is a call for improved safety protocols and inclusion of a School Resource Officer.
- Students mentioned feeling overwhelmed by the workload and stressed due to the strict policies. They expressed concerns about the negative impact on their mental health and the need for support and resources to address these issues.

Theme 2: Workload and Academic Pressure

- Students feel overwhelmed by the amount of homework assigned and the frequency of tests and quizzes, leading to late nights and increased stress.
- Increased workload is negatively impacting students' mental health, contributing to anxiety and dissatisfaction.

Theme 3: Communication and Transparency

- Stakeholders express frustration over the lack of communication regarding student progress, leading to confusion and dissatisfaction.
- Parents, in particular, desire improved communication between the school and parents, including timely responses to inquiries and better dissemination of information about school events, progress reports, and upcoming activities.

Theme 4: Discipline and Student Behavior

- There are calls for consistent enforcement of rules and consequences for disruptive behavior, bullying, and vaping. Parents and teachers emphasize the need for student accountability and creating a safe and inclusive school environment.
- Students express a desire for consequences to be directed at those responsible for misconduct rather than the entire student body.
- Concerns are raised about student behavior during lunch and recess, as well as a lack of attention to student behavior and experiences during these periods.

Theme 5: Teacher Support and Professional Development

- Stakeholders express a desire for teacher training and support, including addressing social-emotional well-being, using platforms like Canvas regularly for grading and communication, and providing opportunities for professional development and collaboration.
- Participants mention the need for more support in the classroom, such as teaching assistants, substitutes, and special education teachers, to provide individualized attention and maintain consistency in teaching.

The feedback from the different stakeholder groups highlights several areas of concern within the school community. There is a clear need for improved communication and transparency, both between the school and parents and within the school administration and staff. The issues of student behavior, discipline, safety, and teacher support also stand out as significant areas that require attention and

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improvement. Additionally, the workload and academic pressure are negatively impacting students' mental health, suggesting the importance of addressing student well-being and providing appropriate support services. These themes provide valuable insights for school administrators to consider in order to address the concerns and create a more positive and effective learning environment for all stakeholders.

There were many other ideas and suggestions gathered through the communication but these were the items of focus throughout the budgeting process. We will continue to explore opportunities in the future for additional inclusion of ideas and suggestions.