

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	The district is adding teaching staff to enhance our High School Pathways program, providing opportunities for students to gain knowledge and exposure to meet the most desired and applicable career experiences, college majors, associate degrees, and skilled trade professions. The district is also adding a counselor to support the two middle schools to provide earlier guidance to the students. In order to improve student engagement, the district added additional resources for extra-curricular activities and interscholastic sports.	Internal and external feedback shows the need to keep up graduation rates and decrease the achievement gaps.	350000
Reducing class sizes	Class size reduction is a focus at the middle schools and elementary schools, where sections were projected to be larger for the 2023-24 school year. Multiple staff are being added to cover those class sections in all core subject areas in Middle Schools. Additional staff are being hired for the elementary schools to support smaller class sizes.	Community feedback supports smaller class sizes are a priority across the board, especially at the elementary levels. This feedback along with data analysis supports this priority.	350000
Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas	The district is planning to maintain staffing that was added with stimulus funds for Math AIS and Reading Intervention supports to address students who are not meeting or at risk of not meeting learning standards.	Community feedback across the board, especially at the elementary levels. This feedback along with data analysis supports this priority.	2600000
Addressing student social-emotional health	While mental health supports for students have always been at the forefront for South Colonie teachers, staff, and families, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis has called for a greater response and coordination to continue addressing a wide-variety of needs. In addition to the continuation of providing social-emotional support to all students through our multidisciplinary team of district teachers, social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors,	The community expressed concern over social emotional supports for students in our surveys and throughout the year.	450000

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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 (\$)
	nurses, administrators, parents and community partners. Maintaining staff that was added with stimulus funds allows us to continue supporting students with social workers and counselors.		
Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness	We are enhancing our English New Language (ENL) program to continue to support our ELL students through the addition of staffing, growing the program to be available at all of our schools, this includes adding 2 teachers and teaching assistants. We are also continuing to support our students with disabilities by adding new programs and staffing including teachers, teaching assistants, occupational therapy and speech language staff in order to meet the evolving needs of our students. We also ensure our special education populations are met with the services needed through participation in outplacements. This is an additional cost to the district, but ensures the students are provided the best educational experience.	Our ENL and special education families continually advocate for students to be provided the resources they need and expand the ENL programs to every building as to not displace students to non-home schools.	2200000

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 (\$)
Enhance Facilities	Projects to enhance the facilities through the use of additional funding. These include replacing old, unsafe vehicles for staff and budgeting for maintenance projects that create safer facilities for students, staff, and community members.	Facilities improvement is important to the community	100,000
Technology Upgrades	Enhancements of new HR Software to improving the onboarding process for staff Transportation technology upgrades to improve ease of	This is an internal district initiative.	350,000

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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 (\$)
	transportation route mapping for staff to enhance safety and ease of use for staff, parents, and students. Instructional Technology increases for replacement plans of student chromebooks, carts, and staff laptops.		
Staff & Benefits	Additional staffing to help with the bus driver shortage Additional staffing for the facilities department to keep up on scheduled maintenance work. Continually increasing benefits costs were partially funded for new and existing staff.	This helps assist with the enhancements provided by the community feedback enhancements above.	550,000

Use of Foundation Aid Increase (Cont.)

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)**

Throughout the budget development process, internal and external,, the district sought feedback on the priorities listed above. The district received no comments from the public after seeking feedback. Internal input was used to establish these priorities and continual feedback until final budget adoption. Many of these priorities continued from the prior year's needs assessment, where the district conducted surveys on the district's direction moving forward. The focus was on what the district's direction should be going forward. There were concerns about wellness and the need for more mental health resources, especially social workers, for students. There was feedback on the need for support for ELL students, disadvantaged youth, and those students who are struggling academically following the return from COVID at all school levels. Comments included an emphasis on updating school buildings, facilities, and athletic fields. Feedback also focused on the district's class sizes, ensuring there is continual evaluation at each grade level with the effort to reduce as needed.