



**OREGON DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION**

**School Improvement Fund
Final Report
SB 318**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the two-year, School Improvement Fund (SIF) Grant project, taxpayer dollars amounting to \$247,798,584 were divided among, and used by, 191 Oregon school districts, 20 Education Service Districts, one Oregon Department of Education Charter school, three Juvenile Programs, and 11 Youth Districts to improve student academic achievement throughout the state. Of the budgeted amount, a total of \$223,265,977 or 90 percent was spent. Districts spent the most money in the improvement areas of Class-size Reductions—22 percent of total expenditures—followed by the improvement areas of Remediation, Retention, and Alternative Learning (16%) and Closing the Achievement Gap (13%). The most often cited Key Performance Measure (KPM) by grantees across all improvement areas was KPM #3—Student Achievement. The next three most frequently listed were KPM #9—Schools Closing the Achievement Gap, KPM #7—Schools and Districts Meeting AYP, and KPM #5—High School Graduation.

If the number of students impacted over the course of two years through *each SIF area* is reflected, and the number includes a separate count of each student in each SIF area (e.g., one student may be counted three times if that student participated in each of three SIF areas), a total of more than 2.5 million students from pre-kindergarten through high school were challenged and supported to make academic gains in achievement across all SIF areas. *Please note: this number of students represents a duplicative count—some students were served in two or more SIF areas over both years.*

Over the two-year grant period, grantees reported high levels of implementation of their improvement strategies. Year one data showed that the most frequent improvement strategy implemented by grantees across all improvement areas was to increase staff FTE. This included (but was not limited to) hiring the following: licensed teachers, math coaches, literacy coaches, a vocational education teacher, and ELL instructional aides. By adding staff members, many grantees expected to decrease class size, identify at-risk students more quickly, increase attendance, and improve student achievement. Professional development was also utilized at fairly high rates across areas for improvement as was the acquisition of instructional materials and supplies. Finally, another major strategy implemented across multiple areas was the addition of courses and/or changes to programs to increase instructional time.

Grantees were quite successful in meeting their student performance targets for the two years. Across improvement areas, one-half or more of the targets identified by grantees were met in eight out of ten of the improvement areas (80%). In the improvement area for Early Childhood Support, 68 percent of the targets were met. At least three out of five targets were met in the areas of Class-size Reductions and Vocational Educational Programs.

From another perspective, at least 50 percent of the grantees met at least one-half or more of their identified targets in each of the improvement areas. In fact, approximately 70 percent of the grantees met their targets at this level in the improvement areas of:

- Early Childhood Support (73%)
- Class-size Reductions (71%)
- Instructional Time Increased (69%)

- Mentoring, Retention, and Professional Development (69%)
- Other Research-based Strategies (68%)

Moreover, 50 percent or more of the grantees were successful in meeting three-quarters to all of their targets in Vocational Educational Programs (59%), Early Childhood Support (57%), and Other Research-based Strategies (50%).

After the completion of a project, a critical question often asked is “To what extent are efforts being continued?” In late fall/early winter of 2009–2010, the year after the SIF grant project, grantees reported on their continuation efforts. While a very small percentage of grantees were still implementing their strategies with SIF carry over money, almost three quarters of the grantees (74%) were continuing their efforts in the improvement area of Early Childhood Support either at an increased level or at the same level as stated in their grants. In three other areas, over 50 percent of the grantees were sustaining their efforts at this same level, including:

- Vocational Educational Programs (67%)
- Class-size Reductions (51%)
- Closing the Achievement Gap (50%)

In the other improvement areas, more than two out of five grantees reported a continuation of efforts, while the greatest percentage of grantees reported efforts not sustained in the improvement areas of Class-size Reductions and Instructional Time Increased.

Grantees reported that sufficient funding, supportive leadership, and positive student outcomes were the key factors in the sustainability of their improvement strategies. The key barrier to continuation was lack of funding.

Results are encouraging and provide evidence for cautious optimism for sustained efforts and student improvement in future years. While a five- to ten-year time frame is far more realistic period in which to expect sustained and consistent growth, the results suggest that the grant has played a catalytic role in school efforts to improve student academic performance and their future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION

Background

In June 2007, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 318, creating a \$260 million School Improvement Fund (SIF). The SIF is independent of the State School Fund, and the 2007–2009 appropriation was intended to support activities directly related to increasing student achievement. The Department of Education was charged with administering the SIF in the form of grants to districts and programs.

The legislation outlined a set of ten school improvement areas from which SIF grant applicants (districts, Education Service Districts, and other eligible programs) could choose. Applicants were also provided with flexible implementation guidelines for determining specific evidence-based improvement strategies within the ten allowable areas. Grant applicants were required to link their proposed activities for a given area to at least one of the 13 applicable state-level Key Performance Measures (*taken from the full list of ODE's 25 KPMs*) and were asked to include all KPMs their proposed activities would support.

Key Performance Measures (KPMs)

- # 1: Access to pre-kindergarten
- # 2: Kindergarten readiness
- # 3: Student achievement
- # 5: High school graduation
- # 6: College readiness
- # 7: Schools and districts meeting AYP
- # 8: Low performing school improvement
- # 9: Schools closing the achievement gap
- # 10: Schools offering advanced courses
- # 11: Suspensions, expulsions, truancy
- # 12: Safe schools
- # 14: Highly qualified teachers
- # 15: Minority staff

Ten Allowable School Improvement Areas

- Early childhood support including establishing, maintaining or expanding quality pre-kindergarten programs and full-day kindergarten programs
- Class-size reduction with an emphasis on the reduction of kindergarten through grade three class sizes
- Increases in instructional time, including summer programs and before- and after- school programs
- Teacher development, including mentoring, teacher retention and professional development
- At-risk students, including remediation, alternative learning and student retention
- Services to at-risk youth
- Programs to improve student achievement gaps among student groups identified by culture, poverty, language and race and other student groups
- Vocational education programs
- Literacy programs
- Other research-based student improvement strategies approved by the State Board of Education

Funding Requirements

To receive approval for 2007-2009 funding, districts were required to submit grant applications to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) by October 12, 2007. In the application, districts were asked to identify improvement areas they planned to target using SIF funds and to explain how these efforts would support their Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP) goals. Districts were also asked to provide a quantifiable performance measure (e.g., Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) that would be used to verify progress on their selected KPMs. In addition, districts were required to submit a detailed expenditure plan to illustrate how the SIF Grant would move them towards achieving their stated goals for the implementation period.

Funding Statistics

ODE approved SIF grants for 191 districts, 20 Educational Service Districts (ESDs), one state-sponsored charter school, three juvenile detention programs, and 11 youth corrections schools. Districts were approved for funding in November 2007. Funding was allocated using a weighted formula based on student attendance. A “weighted” student generates funding as a percentage of his or her attendance (e.g., a student attending 80% of the time would generate only 80% of the potential funding amount). Table 1 shows the actual “weighted per student” amounts applied per funding year.

Table 1
Funding Formula Weights

FUNDING FORMULA WEIGHTS		
Formula Type	Year	Weighted Per Student Amount
District and Program Funding Formula	2007-08	\$182.50
	2008-09	\$191.82
ESD Funding Formula	2007-08	\$9.13
	2008-09	\$9.59

Six districts did not submit grant applications and formally declined funding. The amount of funding these districts would have received is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2
Amount of Funding Declined by Districts

AMOUNT DECLINED BY DISTRICTS		
	2007-2008	2008-2009
Ashwood SD	\$4,887.20	\$4,610.12
Black Butte SD	\$11,369.40	\$11,298.91
Drewsey SD	\$6,084.36	\$6,266.59
Frenchglen SD	\$5,832.52	\$5,862.36
Malheur County SD	\$2,073.14	\$1,922.38
South Harney SD	\$6,673.82	\$6,467.82

METHODOLOGY

Keeping in mind the desire for a high level of accountability from grantees for the expenditure of the SIF grants, the data collection for the SIF project was purposefully designed to provide a means for each grantee to report on the specific uses of the funds proposed in their application. This process consisted of four distinct phases:

- Designing the online data collection tool
- Preloading the online tool with each grantee's specific information
- Cleaning and validating the data for analysis
- Conducting qualitative and quantitative analyses

Designing the Online Data Collection Tool

Year 1—2007–2008

The design of the online data collection tool, in the first year, was a collaborative effort between the program and technology offices at ODE. The tool was designed to correspond with parts of the initial grant application that grantees submitted to receive funding, so as to ensure data was collected that was relevant to the specific strategies implemented by each grantee. This customization of the data collection tool to include qualitative data in the 2007–2008 collection was a feature never implemented on any other data collection conducted by the ODE. The inclusion of qualitative data allows for a deeper understanding of how and why specific strategies implemented may or may not have the intended impact on student achievement. However, when ODE analyzed the data in 2007–2008, the multiple areas and multiple strategies within each area posed unanticipated challenges (see Data Analyses: Qualitative Data, page 9). To view the 2007–2008 online data collection tool and directions for data entry, see Appendix A and B.

Measures. The online data collection tool enabled grantees to provide data on multiple aspects of their grants. For each improvement area that grantees had selected, they were asked to provide descriptive information regarding:

- The *expected* impact of the improvement strategy they had selected
- The *actual* impact at the end of the first year
- The *next steps* grantees would be taking, based on the allowable improvement areas chosen and the KPMs linked to those areas

Grantees also completed information for each of their improvement areas about:

- The actual money spent in the first year
- The number of students impacted
- Student performance

For student performance, grantees selected performance measures to track student progress and entered them in the first year's online tool. Grantee selections included: Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS); Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), an early reading assessment; local formative assessment tools; and other assessments available for general purchase. For each measure, grantees established student performance percentages for:

- *Baseline*—percentage of students (prior to implementation) meeting or exceeding a predetermined performance benchmark or criteria
- *Target*—desired increase in percentage of students meeting or exceeding performance from the baseline percentages as a result of the implementation of an improvement strategy or strategies over the two years

A third category, *actual*, captured the percentage of students reported as having met or exceeding the performance benchmark, or criteria at the end of the first year.

Year 2—2008–2009

ODE slightly modified the online tool for the second and final year of data collection. ODE included six fields for the SIF grantees to complete. Grantees provided data that directly related to the second year of their grants and information about the two years of implementation. Appendix A and B contains a copy of the modified online screen and directions for data entry.

Measures. Grantees provided new information for each improvement area on six items:

- Budget amount for improvement activities in 2008–2009
- Actual amount of money spent in 2008–2009
- Number of students impacted by the improvement activities during 2008–2009
- Actual student performance, or percentage of students meeting or exceeding, a predetermined benchmark or criteria at the end of 2009
- If the actual student performance met or exceeded the two-year targets set at the beginning of the grant
- Final biennium overview

The final biennium overview consisted of two parts—fidelity of implementation and sustainability. For the first part, grantees reviewed their stated improvement strategies and indicated the extent that they had implemented their strategies as planned during the two-year period. They used a scale of 1 to 10, where “1” was “did not implement the strategies at all” and “10” was “implemented them completely.”

Grantees also rated the extent that they were able to sustain their improvement plans after the grant ended. On a second scale of 1 to 6, where “1” represented “yes—we are continuing but at an increased level of effort” and “6” represented “not applicable—we are still implementing our strategies with SIF carryover money,” grantees also reported the extent that they were continuing strategies beyond the SIF grant funding.

For each of these two ratings, grantees wrote brief descriptions of why they had rated their implementation of improvement strategies as they did and why they were continuing, or not continuing, their state improvement strategies beyond the SIF grant funding.

Preloading the Online Data Collection Tool

Because of the wide variation in grantees’ choices of areas, strategies within those areas, and measures to gauge progress, the online data collection tool for the first year needed to be flexible

enough to accommodate this variation, yet standardized to a level that would allow efficient data analysis. It was acknowledged early in the project that the tool would have to be preloaded with information from each grantee's application to facilitate reporting by the grantees that was consistent with their originally stated intentions. Once the format of the tool was determined and the electronic infrastructure built, seven different ODE staff members spent nearly 300 hours reading portions of the grant applications and entering information from those applications into each grantee's specific electronic submission form.

For the second year, the previously entered information remained in the online data collection tool. However, a few grantees changed or amended their original grant application. ODE re-entered this new information for the 2008–2009 online tool.

Cleaning and Validating the Data

Oregon districts had not been asked previously to supply data in a form as was requested in the data collection for the SIF grant. The first time a new collection methodology is introduced, challenges are to be expected. In the first year of data collection, ODE staff members worked in close communication with grantees to clarify the type and form of data being requested in different sections of the tool. Careful checking was done across grantee submissions to identify places where data had not been entered correctly, and to note the degree of completeness of the data submissions. As an example, the usual direction of the relationship between *baseline* and *target* is that the target should be higher than the baseline; however, some of the measures used to gauge progress inherently indicate a reverse relationship, where the desired outcome is for the target to be lower than the baseline, as in a drop-out rate. It was these types of details that were checked and clarified with grantees to the extent possible to ensure the quality of data submitted.

In the second year, to address the problems that grantees had encountered in the first year while entering baseline and target information, ODE added "radio" buttons for grantees to click to report if they had met or not met their targets. For the newly entered data, ODE ran frequencies and other analyses to find if any values were out-of-range and if so, to determine the correct value.

Data Analyses

Qualitative Data

Year 1—2007–2008. First-year qualitative data produced a considerable amount of comment that provided an interesting look into the process of strategy implementation. However, after an initial review of the responses looking for common themes, ODE analysts determined the commentary was not as detailed as was needed to tell the story of this project. When ODE analyzed the first year of data, the multiple areas and multiple strategies within each area posed unanticipated challenges. ODE content-analyzed the qualitative data to identify common themes among implementation strategies within each improvement area and focused more on the analysis of the quantitative data for the interim or first year report.

Year 2—2008–2009. Based on the initial experience with the qualitative data encountered in the first year, the decision was made to rethink the methodology for collecting and analyzing the qualitative responses for the final report. In the second year, the biennium overview generated brief descriptions about the extent to which grantees were able to implement all of their improvement

strategies and to sustain their efforts after funding. The descriptions were reviewed by improvement area to identify common themes within improvement areas and across improvement areas. These are reported as appropriate.

Quantitative Data

Year 1—2007–2008. Frequencies and sums were calculated for budget amounts, actual budget, and students impacted. First-year student performance on measures presented the need for a slightly different strategy. As mentioned previously, for each category of measurement, grantees were asked to report their baseline percentage of students meeting the benchmark or desired criteria. This was designated as the *baseline*. They were also asked to set a target percentage representing improvement over their baseline, identified as the *target*. According to the logic of the measure, the target could be numerically higher or lower than the baseline. Finally, grantees were asked to report the *actual* percentage of student performance on their selected measures.

A difficulty encountered in the analyses was that grantees reported on multiple strategies in a single improvement area using different measures for each strategy, and sometimes even different measures for different age groups of students within the same strategy. Finding a methodology for aggregating results and quantifying improvement was challenging. The complexity of these data made it difficult to track which improvement strategy contributed to the improvements observed, and to what extent.

Realizing that a comparative analysis of the quantitative data was not methodologically feasible, the approach to analysis taken was to examine reported percentages within measure type and improvement area, regardless of strategy, to discern patterns of district improvement or progress towards the target percentage. It was worthy to note that because these data represented only one year of implementation, the results obtained were considered preliminary.

Year 2—2008–2009. To address the difficulties encountered in the first year with multiple measures and targets in each improvement area, as well as the different number of targets identified by each grantee, ODE chose a different approach to examine student performance over the two years. As noted previously, the online data collection tool incorporated three “radio” buttons after each row of measures. Before clicking one of these buttons, the grantees compared the actual percentage in the second year with the stated two-year target. Next, they decided if the actual student performance “exceeded” the target, was the “same” as the target or “did not meet” the target; they then clicked the corresponding button. In this manner, the percentage of targets met/exceeded for each grantee in each improvement area was calculated. Also the total number of targets identified, the total number of targets met/exceeded, and the percentage of targets met/exceeded was calculated for each improvement area.

In addition, percentage distributions and averages were computed for the extent that grantees had implemented their improvement strategies as planned and the extent to which they were continuing efforts beyond the grant. Statistical tests were performed to determine if a relationship existed between level of implementation and continuation of efforts.

RESULTS FOR 2007–2009

While the focus of the first year was on both qualitative and quantitative data and on monitoring progress, the second year focused on a few summative measures—the extent to which two-year targets were met/exceeded, improvement strategies were implemented, and improvement efforts continued beyond SIF funding. Data regarding budget allocations and expenditures and number of students impacted, have been aggregated across years to present a cumulative picture on these dimensions. Table 3 on the next two pages presents a summary of this information.

Reporting Rates

Of the 211 districts and ESDs who were asked to report in the grant's first year (2007–2008) of SIF data collection, 85 percent of them responded. Twenty-seven of these grantees (13%) partially reported for one or more of the improvement areas they had selected. Thirty one grantees (15%) did not to report. At the time of this report, only eight districts and three ESDs had not responded, resulting in a response rate of 95 percent for all district and ESD grantees for the second year of data collection. Appendix C provides a list of these non-responding districts and ESDs.

Table 3
Summary of Findings for School Improvement Fund Project—2007–2009

	Area 1: Early Childhood Support	Area 2: Class-size Reductions	Area 3: Instructional Time Increased	Area 4: Mentoring, Retention & PD (Teacher Development)	Area 5: Remediation, Retention, & Alternative Learning (At-Risk Students)	Area 6: Services to At-risk Youth	Area 7: Closing the Achievement Gap	Area 8: Vocational Educational Programs	Area 9: Literacy Programs	Area 10: Other Research- based Student Improvement Strategies
Top KPMs identified	#2, #3 #9	#3, #7, #9	#3, #5, #9	#3, #7, #9, #14	#3, #5, #9, #11	#3, #5, #11	#3, #7, #9	#3, #5, #6	#3, #7, #9	#3, #7, #9
Funding										
Yr 1-N of grantees	74	78	57	102	78	58	62	38	68	29
Total <u>budgeted</u> amt	\$12,392,156	\$26,571,214	\$3,275,510	\$15,188,200	\$19,765,378	\$7,476,256	\$18,001,350	\$3,526,196	\$13,945,515	\$2,791,383
Total amount spent	\$11,986,849	\$22,954,662	\$2,062,988	\$12,342,610	\$18,351,010	\$6,784,876	\$14,312,529	\$2,686,037	\$12,460,503	\$1,134,674
Cost per Student	\$1,257.80	\$185.55	\$77.31	\$28.33	\$220.75	\$80.73	\$83.41	\$324.36	\$59.52	\$12.91
Yr 2-N of grantees	66	62	48	75	62	51	52	33	55	18
Total amount <u>budgeted</u>	\$13,153,785	\$27,376,884	\$3,057,036	\$15,726,292	\$18,572,905	\$9,755,876	\$15,239,326	\$3,896,206	\$15,041,784	\$3,045,332
Total amount spent	\$12,572,761	\$25,254,714	\$2,191,335	\$14,945,389	\$18,393,995	\$8,983,585	\$14,902,347	\$3,716,567	\$14,182,930	\$3,045,616
Cost per student	\$1,443.65	\$220.65	\$86.49	\$39.24	\$227.87	\$95.19	\$71.92	\$496.67	\$75.02	\$13.22
2007-2009 Budgeted	\$25,545,941	\$53,948,098	\$6,332,546	\$30,914,492	\$38,338,283	\$17,232,132	\$33,240,676	\$7,422,402	\$28,987,299	\$5,836,715
2007-2009 Spent	\$24,559,610	\$48,209,376	\$4,254,323	\$27,287,999	\$36,745,005	\$15,768,461	\$29,214,876	\$6,402,604	\$26,643,433	\$4,180,290
Students										
Yr 1-Total number of students impacted	9,530	123,714	26,685	435,689	83,131	84,040	171,594	8,281	209,334	87,869
Yr 2-Total number of students impacted	8,709	114,455	25,336	380,907	80,720	94,377	207,218	7,483	189,054	230,353
TOTAL number ¹	18,239	238,169	52,021	816,596	163,851	178,417	378,812	15,764	398,388	318,222
Accomplishments—Extent Grantees Met/Exceeded Their Program Targets Over Two Years										
N of grantees	67	62	49	73	58	51	53	34	56	22
Total number of identified targets	433	670	545	643	457	309	575	148	595	114
Total number of targets <i>met</i>	293	431	288	328	224	134	293	91	319	58
Percentage of targets met	68%	64%	53%	51%	49%	43%	51%	61%	54%	51%
Percentage of grantees meeting/exceeding their program target goals in the following quartiles²										
0 < ¼ of their targets	22%	8%	16%	10%	21%	28%	13%	26%	20%	18%
¼ to < ½ of their targets	4%	21%	14%	21%	23%	20%	28%	12%	25%	14%
½ to < ¾ of their targets	16%	23%	24%	24%	16%	16%	24%	3%	30%	18%
¾ to all of their targets	57%	48%	45%	45%	39%	37%	34%	59%	25%	50%

1 Total number of students does not represent unduplicated counts. Some students received services in two or more areas both years. 2 Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

	Area 1: Early Childhood Support	Area 2: Class-size Reductions	Area 3: Instructional Time Increased	Area 4: Mentoring, Retention, & PD (Teacher Development)	Area 5: Remediation, Retention, & Alternative Learning (At-Risk Students)	Area 6: Services to At-risk Youth	Area 7: Closing the Achievement Gap	Area 8: Vocational Educational Programs	Area 9: Literacy Programs	Area 10: Other Research-based Student Improvement Strategies
Extent Grantees Implemented Their Improvement Strategies Over the Past Two Years²										
Average (SD) (N)	9.1 (2.2)(49)	8.8 (2.1)(45)	8.1 (2.6)(38)	8.2 (2.3)(65)	8.1 (2.2)(43)	8.7 (1.8)(38)	8.8 (1.9)(46)	8.6 (1.7)(27)	8.3(2.3)(40)	8.9 (2.2)(17)
Levels:										
1=Did not implement at all	2%	2%	5%	3%	2%	--	2%	--	2%	6%
2	2%	--	--	3%	2%	--	--	--	2%	--
3	2%	2%	5%	--	--	--	--	--	2%	--
4	--	--	--	--	--	3%	--	--	--	--
5	4%	4%	5%	6%	9%	5%	4%	4%	2%	--
6	4%	2%	--	5%	2%	5%	6%	11%	8%	--
7	--	11%	13%	12%	16%	10%	9%	15%	8%	6%
8	6%	4%	8%	12%	21%	18%	9%	15%	18%	12%
9	6%	11%	21%	12%	7%	--	11%	4%	12%	12%
10=Completely implemented strategies	78%	62%	42%	46%	40%	58%	59%	52%	45%	65%
Extent Grantees Are Continuing their Improvement Strategies Beyond the SIF Grant Funding²										
Average (SD) (N)	2.4 (1.1)(45)	2.8 (1.2)(45)	3.0 (1.3)(31)	2.7 (1.0)(54)	2.6 (0.9)(40)	2.7 (1.0)(35)	2.4 (1.0)(39)	2.2(0.8)(25)	2.7(1.2)(33)	2.4 (0.6)(13)
1=Yes—continuing; increased level of effort	8%	7%	6%	6%	7%	8%	14%	11%	14%	6%
2=Yes—continuing; same level as stated in the grant	66%	44%	29%	34%	36%	36%	36%	56%	32%	38%
3=Somewhat—fewer strategies, the same/modified strategies and/or strategies with a smaller group	6%	24%	31%	31%	38%	39%	32%	22%	27%	38%
4=No—modified/replaced <u>most</u> of our improvement strategies with others	4%	11%	3%	11%	12%	8%	2%	--	3%	--
5=No—doing almost none/none of the stated improvement strategies	11%	13%	20%	5%	2%	6%	4%	4%	14%	--
Not applicable—implementing strategies with SIF carry over money	4%	--	11%	13%	5%	3%	11%	7%	11%	19%
N of grantees	47	45	35	62	42	36	44	27	37	16

² Percentages might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Top Key Performance Measures (KPMs) Identified

The most often cited KPM by grantees across all improvement areas was KPM #3—Student Achievement. The next three most often listed were KPM #9—Schools Closing the Achievement Gap, KPM #7—Schools and Districts Meeting AYP, and KPM #5—High School Graduation. Since the beginning of the SIF grant, the KPMs have been revised. The KPMs that were part of the grant application are the ones applicable to this report. A detailed listing of the KPMs can be found in Appendix D.

Funds

The biennium allocation for the SIF Grant project was almost \$250 million and the amount spent during school years 2007-08 and 2008-09 was slightly more than \$220 million. (Carryover funds expire June 30, 2010.) Grantees spent the most money in the improvement area of Class-size Reductions—22 percent of total expenditures— followed by the improvement areas of Remediation, Retention, and Alternative Learning or At-risk Students (16%) and Closing the Achievement Gap (13%). The charts below show the percentages budgeted (Figure 1) and actually spent (Figure 2) for all of the improvement areas.

Figure 1. 2007–2009 Percentage of Budgeted Funds per Improvement Area

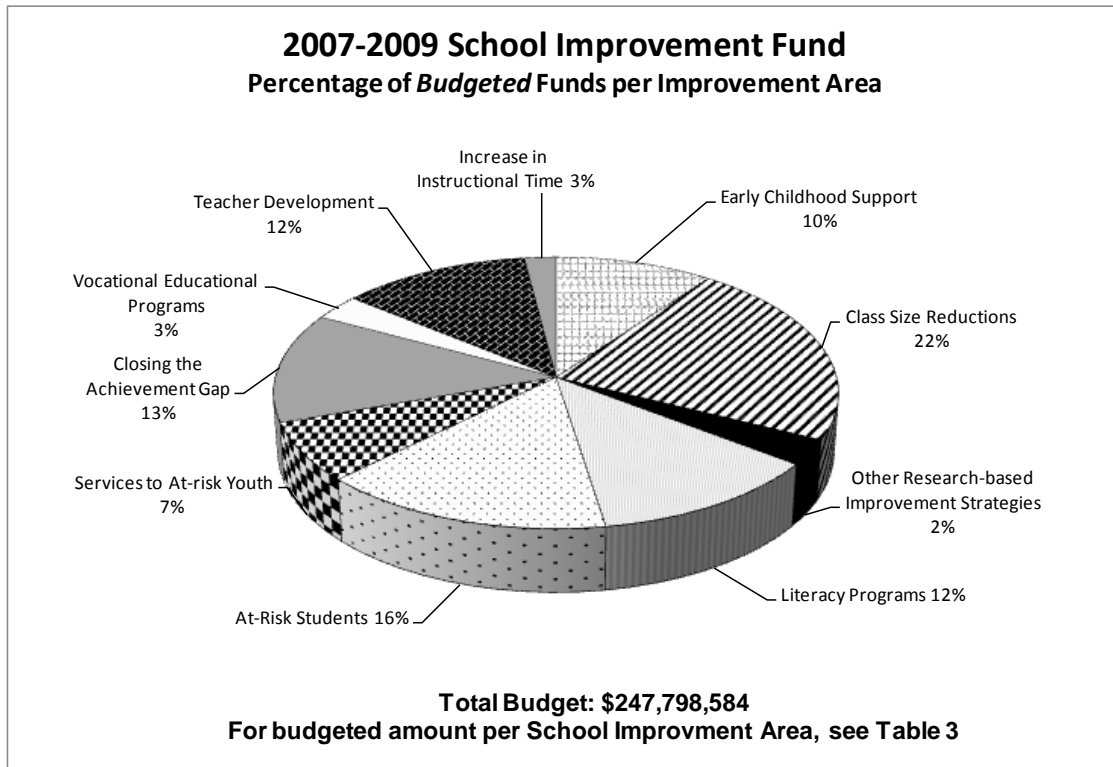
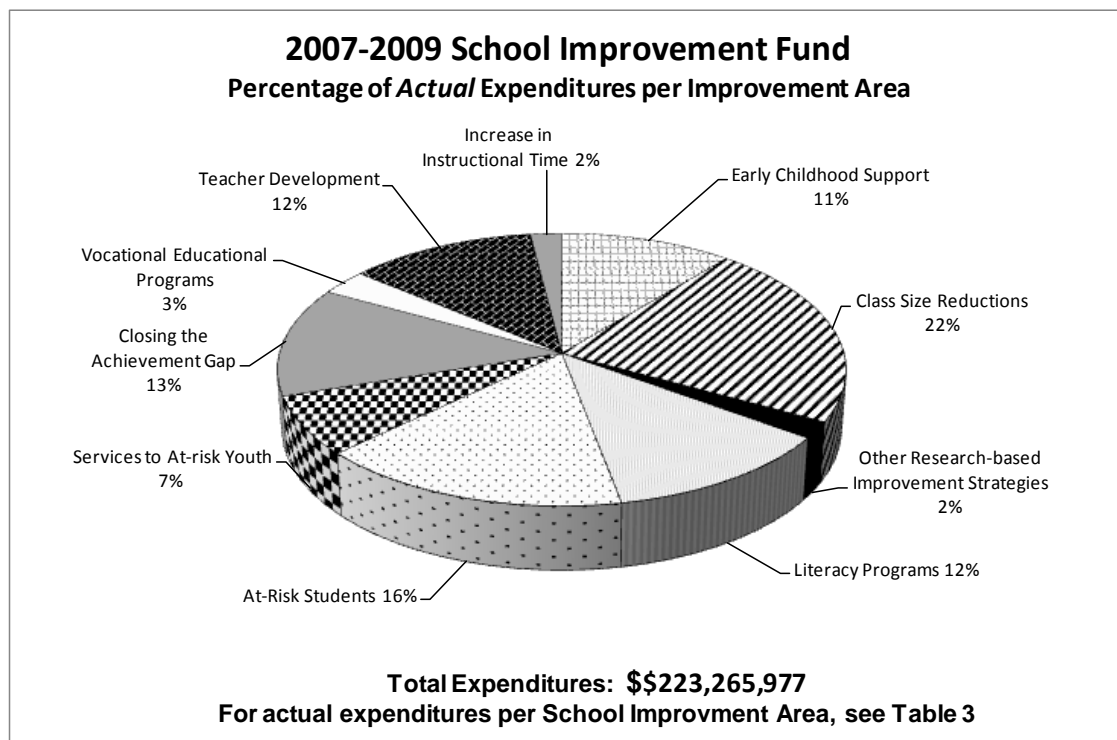


Figure 2. 2007–2009 Percentage of Actual Expenditures per Improvement Area

Improvement Strategies

Year 1—2007–2008

The most frequently chosen strategy for improvement, across all 10 improvement areas, was to increase staff FTE. This included (but was not limited to) hiring the following: licensed teachers, math coaches, literacy coaches, a vocational education teacher, ELL instructional aides, specialists focusing on students using alternative education, an alternative education specialist for the Drug and Alcohol Youth Treatment Center, a drug and alcohol student and family counselor, an attendance officer, a homeless coordinator, a parent involvement specialist, and a Spanish speaking home-school liaison.

By adding staff members, many grantees expected to decrease class size, identify at-risk students more quickly, increase attendance, and improve achievement. For example, one grantee used funds to hire a youth transition specialist in order to enhance the probability of disabled students being able to enter and retain meaningful and competitive employment after leaving school.

Professional development was also utilized at fairly high rates across areas for improvement, and included strategies such as mentoring in effective teaching strategies, training teachers in new ELL strategies, training in the integration of technology into the classroom, and partnering with local universities to provide university coursework leading to a Read Oregon Classroom Teaching Certificate of Literacy.

A further strategy mentioned by many was the acquisition of instructional materials and supplies. Grantees identified a range of materials and supplies, such as student progress-monitoring software, classroom hardware, supplemental literacy programs, books (e.g., English language development texts), and books for the Accelerated Reader collection. Given the variety of instructional supplies, the expectations for what they could help teachers and students achieve were also varied. For example, expectations included such examples as increased student achievement, increased attendance, and increased parent-school communication.

The last *major* strategy to be mentioned across multiple areas was the addition of courses and/or changes to programs to increase instructional time. Once again, the range was fairly wide as grantees designed programs to fit their own needs. For example, some grantees expanded existing preschool programs or implemented new ones, while others offered small-group services provided by child development specialists. The SIF also funded tutoring, summer classes, and after-school programs. One grantee worked with the local university to more easily identify students in need of summer school. In one case, the grantee's migrant preschool was extended from 40 days to 164 days and participation was increased from 27 students to 40 students. Another grantee provided *Response to Intervention*, tiered support for reading, in kindergarten through third grade.

For a detailed summary of improvement strategies used by grantees for each improvement area, please see Appendix E.

Year 2—2008–2009

Over the two-year grant, grantees reported high levels of implementation of their improvement strategies. In the online database tool, grantees rated the extent to which they had implemented their improvement strategies over the two years of the SIF project using a scale of 1 to 10 where "1" represented "did not implement at all," and "10" represented "completely implemented strategies." On average, grantees were most successful in implementing their improvement strategies in the areas of:

- Early Childhood Support (average=9.1)
- Other Research-based Strategies (average=8.9)
- Class-size Reductions (average=8.8)
- Closing the Achievement Gap (average=8.8)

Not surprising, the highest percentages of grantees reported "completely implementing" their improvement strategies in these same improvement areas:

- Early Childhood Support (78%)
- Other Research-based Strategies (65%)
- Class-size Reductions (62%)
- Closing the Achievement Gap (59%)

Grantees commented briefly on why they gave the rating they did. Generally, only grantees with high levels of implementation reported that they had been able to implement all or almost all of their planned improvement strategies. Grantees that reported moderate levels of implementation often cited that they had partially implemented their strategies. They either implemented some of

the improvement strategies, implemented strategies in some of the grade levels, or implemented strategies with a portion of their target population. A few grantees reported that increased enrollment, unexpected revenue shortfalls, and school structures — such as varying dismissal times across schools or lack of sufficient time — had limited their implementation efforts. Grantees with low levels of implementation cited similar reasons as those with moderate levels of implementation; however they had encountered more difficult barriers. Barriers to higher levels of implementation included drastic changes in the staffing of improvement strategies, extreme budget cuts, and contextual factors, such as transportation problems or inability to find personnel for positions.

Students Impacted

Looking across all school improvement areas, the ones that impacted the greatest number of students in both the first and second years were Mentoring, Retention, and Professional Development (teacher development), followed by Closing the Achievement Gap, Literacy Programs, and Class-size Reductions. Overall, grantees impacted more than 2.5 million students across all SIF areas (students were counted separately for *each* SIF area) and in the course of two years through their improvement efforts. *Please note: this number does not represent an unduplicated count of students. Some students might have received services in two or more areas both years while other students may have received services in one area for one year.*

Accomplishments

Meeting Targets/Student Achievement Improvements

In the online data collection tool, grantees were asked to report whether or not they had met or exceeded their target goals in each improvement area. Because there were no limits on how many targets a grantee could have, the number of targets in any one improvement area ranged from one to as many as 34, which, however, was rare. Grantees identified the most number of targets for Class size Reductions, Mentoring, Retention, and Professional Development (teacher development), Literacy Programs, and Closing the Achievement Gap improvement areas.

Grantees were successful in meeting their targets. Across improvement areas, one-half or more of the targets identified by grantees were met in eight out of 10 of the improvement areas (80%). In the improvement area of Early Childhood Support, 68 percent of the targets were met. At least three out of five targets were met in the improvement areas of Class-size Reductions and Vocational Educational Programs.

From another perspective, 50 percent or more of the grantees met at least one-half of their identified targets in each of the improvement areas. In fact, approximately 70 percent of the grantees met their targets at this level in the improvement areas of:

- Early Childhood Support (73%)
- Class-size Reductions (71%)
- Instructional Time Increased (69%)
- Mentoring, Retention, and Professional Development (69%)
- Other Research-based Strategies (68%)

Moreover, 50 percent or more of the grantees were successful in meeting three-quarters of all of their targets in Vocational Educational Programs (59%), Early Childhood Support (57%), and Other Research-based Strategies (50%).

Continuation of Improvement Strategies Beyond SIF Grant Funding

After the completion of a project, a critical question often asked is “To what extent are efforts being continued?” In late fall/early winter of 2009–2010, the year after the SIF grant project had ended, grantees reported on the extent to which they were continuing their improvement strategies, by selecting one of these categories:

- Yes—we are continuing but at an increased level of effort
- Yes—we are continuing at about the same level as stated in the grant
- Somewhat—we are doing fewer strategies, doing the same and modified strategies and/or doing strategies with a smaller group
- No—we have modified/replaced most of our improvement strategies with others
- No—we are doing almost none/none of the stated improvement strategies
- Not applicable—we are still implementing our strategies with SIF carry over money

While a small percentage of grantees were continuing to implement their strategies with SIF carryover money, almost three quarters of the grantees (74%) were continuing their efforts in the improvement area of Early Childhood Support either at an increased level or at the same level as stated in their grants.

In three other areas, over 50 percent of the grantees were sustaining their efforts at this same level, including:

- Vocational Educational Programs (67%)
- Class-size Reductions (51%)
- Closing the Achievement Gap (50%)

In the other improvement areas, more than two out of five grantees reported a continuation of efforts, while the greatest percentage of grantees not sustaining efforts was found in the improvement areas of Class-size Reductions and Instructional Time Increased. Almost one-quarter of the grantees in these two areas struggled to continue efforts.

Accompanying each selection, grantees briefly explained why they had chosen the rating they did. After a content analysis of these comments, ODE found that many were compatible with results from research done in this area. In a review of the literature on sustainability, Taylor (2005) identified a series of key characteristics associated with sustainability:

- Sufficient funding
- Leadership stability and support
- Positive outcomes
- Staff member retention
- Staff commitment
- Sustained professional development

- Supportive political context and protection from competing reforms
- Practical components structured into daily life

Aggregating across improvement areas, the most common reason that grantees cited for continuing or not continuing, their improvement efforts, focused on sufficient funding. Not surprising, reform efforts often require significant amounts of funding to initiate and implement; at the same time, they also have a greater chance of being sustained over time if they do not require continued high levels of funding. Schools and districts need to use recurring resources optimally to support reform efforts by setting priorities and allocating funds accordingly. They also need to establish a stable source of funding that can last through policy and leadership changes. Grantees that were continuing efforts reported that they were doing so with funds from various sources, such as Title 1, Title II-A, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), district's general fund, 21st Century grant, and other grants. For some grantees, the stated improvement efforts had become a district priority and were financially supported.

Another key factor to sustainability is leadership stability and support. Grantees continuing their improvement efforts identified strong support from their district leadership, school boards, stakeholders, and region as conditions that helped them to sustain their efforts.

In addition to sufficient funding and strong support, grantees stated that positive student outcomes helped their sustainability efforts. These outcomes are critical to continuing improvement efforts, as they provide the rationale for continuation. Grantees commented that improvement strategies had produced positive results. The programs were "good for our kids" and helped "struggling students." Across improvement areas, grantees reiterated that positive student achievement was the reason for the continuation of their stated improvement efforts.

On the other hand, budget restraints were the major reason cited by grantees that were only "somewhat" continuing their efforts or not continuing at all. For grantees that were "somewhat" continuing their efforts, budget restraints necessitated a reduction in staffing, smaller numbers of students served, or fewer strategies implemented. In a few rare cases, grantees reported that they had chosen to discontinue strategies in favor of another model, they were moving in another direction from their stated strategies, or that all students had exited from the program, thus no longer requiring the program.

Relationship between continuation and level of implementation. The relationship between continuation and level of implementation was investigated. Across all improvement areas, a significant relationship existed between implementation level and continuation. It was found that a grantee was significantly more likely to continue its efforts if it had a high level of implementation over the grant's two years. For those grantees with high implementation (a rating of 8, 9, or 10), 88 percent of the grantees reported continuing their efforts. For those grantees with moderate levels of implementation (a rating of 4, 5, 6, or 7), 80 percent of the grantees continued. Only 40 percent of the grantees with low implementation (a rating of 1, 2, or 3) sustained their efforts.¹

¹ Chi-square=25.22, df=2, p=0.000

After examining each improvement area, it was found that of the grantees with high implementation levels, the greatest percentage of them were continuing their improvement strategies in the areas of Early Childhood Support (80%) and Vocational Educational Programs (72%). In addition, almost 60 percent of the grantees with high implementation levels were continuing efforts in the areas of Closing the Achievement Gap (57%), Remediation, Retention, and Alternative Learning (56%), Literacy Programs (56%), and Services to At-risk Students (50%).

On the other hand, two-thirds or more of grantees with low levels of implementation in an improvement area were not continuing their improvement strategies in Instructional Time Increased (67%), Class-size Reductions (75%), Remediation, Retention, and Alternative Learning (100%) and Literacy Programs (100%). In the latter two areas, there was only one grantee with a low implementation level. In the areas of Services to At-Risk Youth and Vocational Education Programs, there were no grantees with low levels of implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

The original Oregon School Improvement Fund (SIF) resulted from the 2001 legislative session. At that time, funds were distributed to districts with few requirements for program accountability. Senate Bill 318 (2007) and the revised Oregon Administrative Rule 581-023-0112 (2008) amended the original 2001–2003 School Improvement Fund statute and rule for the 2007–2009 SIF distribution. The grant fund established in 2007 retained the same name as the fund established in 2001. The grant application outlined a set of ten allowable school improvement areas from which grantees could select. For each improvement area, grantees were required to link their proposed improvement activities to at least one of the 13 state-level Key Performance Measures (KPMs) and to provide quantifiable performance measures to verify progress. The increased accountability and focus on the Key Performance Measures (KPMs) in the 2007 version required ODE to differentiate the two projects and communicate the new focus and additional emphasis on accountability.

The new SIF Grant helped to initiate the use of the KPMs and increased districts' awareness of them. Prior to this grant, the KPMs were not familiar to districts or ESDs. However, in order to complete their grant applications, districts needed to link the KPMs to the improvement areas they had selected by determining which KPM or KPMs provided the closest match to the SIF areas. While the KPMs were not directly used to collect data, they were aligned to the specific areas districts selected, and grantees reported on the extent to which student achievement had improved in each of those areas using various assessment measures.

Grantees and ODE faced challenges in concisely reporting data about the SIF Grant. An area of difficulty for grantees was the extensive number of allowable areas from which to select, and the overlapping focus of some of those areas. These overlapping areas made it difficult for grantees to know how to clearly categorize program expenditures, avoid program funding overlap, and slot their improvement activities into definitive categories.

As an example, the following six allowable areas overlap: Literacy; Closing the Achievement Gap; Mentoring, Retention and Professional Development (teacher development); Remediation, Retention, and Alternative Learning (at-risk students); Services to At-risk Youth; and Increases in Instructional Time. Deciding under which of these six allowable areas, for example, the strategy of hiring literacy coaches most aptly belongs was problematic; it could be appropriate in each one.

Moreover, the presence of overlapping categories complicated the data analysis process. For example, professional development was part of the larger allowable area, Mentoring, Retention and Professional Development (teacher development), but grantees had also included professional development strategies and funds in the areas of Literacy, Closing the Achievement Gap, Services to At Risk Youth, and several others. Had grantees instead been able to place all their professional development strategies and funds under one area labeled Professional Development, better generalizations and observations could have been made from the data.

Finally having grantees identify their own assessments added a layer of complexity to the data collection and analysis that presented some significant challenges. As the number of diverse assessments reported increased, this complexity also increased on an exponential scale, and

identifying meaningful comparisons for analysis became methodologically cumbersome. Additionally, the more improvement areas selected by a grantee, the more data they were required to report, and for some grantees, this made the data collection effort an overwhelming task.

To provide some commonality in the measures reported by grantees, the data collection was inherently designed so that assessment results could only be reported in terms of percentages; this was problematic in some cases where the chosen assessment did not lend itself well to conversion to a percent. ODE staff members provided considerable assistance to grantees in doing the conversion and submitting their data correctly when this proved to be difficult for them.

Suggestions for Consideration

To address some of the issues that surfaced during the course of the project and discussed above, the following suggestions are offered for consideration for similar future projects.

1. ***Provide regional technical assistance.*** The grantees could have benefitted from some form of regional technical assistance during the grant-writing process. Not only does regional technical assistance provide greater outreach to districts than is possible with one-on-one technical assistance, it also results in a broader and deeper understanding of the purpose of a grant and, in the case of SIF, the unique characteristics of a grant.
2. ***Condense the list of improvement areas.*** Condensing the list of allowable areas into fewer areas that are distinctly different from one another would not only improve the likelihood of increased impact on student achievement, but would also result in a more focused and manageable data collection for both districts and ODE, optimizing the opportunity for clearer, more definitive conclusions from the analyses.
3. ***Re-design collection of student performance data.*** Allowing only OAKS for grades 3 through high school, and DIBELS plus one other choice of reading inventory for Kindergarten through second grade would not only simplify the data collection for grantees, it would also simplify the data analysis for ODE. However, this decision should be considered in light of the revisions made, if any, to the list of allowable areas. Not all areas currently on the list lend themselves to assessment through OAKS, and the use of local formative assessments, and other measures may be more appropriate in some cases for the efforts being implemented.

In conclusion, results from SIF are encouraging and provide evidence for cautious optimism for sustained efforts and student improvement in future years. While a five- to ten-year time frame is far more realistic period in which to expect sustained and consistent growth, the results suggest that the grant has played a catalytic role in school efforts to improve student academic performance and their future endeavors.

REFERENCES

Taylor, J. E. *Sustainability: Examining the survival of schools' comprehensive school reform efforts*. American Institutes for Research. A paper presented for the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, Montreal, Canada, April 11-12, 2005.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Screens of Online Data Collection Tool for 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Snapshot of 2007–2008 Screen

School Improvement Fund (SB318) - ODE District Site - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Oregon Department of Education

https://district.ode.state.or.us/apps/SIFApp/default.aspx Oregon Department of Education [US] Live Search

School Improvement Fund (SB318) - ODE District Site Contact: Julie Anderson 503.947.5613

School Improvement Fund (SB318) Actual Results 07-08

*** = Required Fields** Save Reset

School Year: 0708 Improvement Area: Achievement Gap.....7

Allocation Amount: \$8,173,111.00 Description: Programs to improve a student achievement gap among student groups identified by culture, poverty, language and race and other student groups.

Budget Amount: \$3,736,351.50 * Actual Amount: \$777,591.00

Improvement Strategy:

* **Expected Impact:** Researchers and reformers have identified a number of ideas about how to allocate funding at the school level in order to provide resources to improve student achievement in high needs schools. The option employed by BSD is to "adopt a "weighted" student-

* **Actual Impact:** Poverty and Mobility Allocations - Motivation & attendance of the impacted students has improved. Discipline referrals are down considerably. Targeted staff needs an opportunity to participate in PLCs to use data to inform instruction.

* **Next Steps:** Continuing for 08-09. For 09-10, we are considering: 1) concentrating funding on most needy schools, 2) exploring ways to factor in student achievement, 3) requiring schools to develop written plans with specific uses of funds.

* **Students Impacted:** 17321

Linked KPMs:

KPM Name	Description
Student Achievement	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding statewide academic performance standards in 3rd and 8th grade reading and math.

Strategy Measure	Base	Target	Actual	Narrative
Other Assessment #1 Percent students meeting state performance standards.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	Grades 6-10, RL, MA, WR
Other Assessment #2 Percent of economically disadvantaged students meeting state performance standards.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	Grades 6-10, RL, MA, WR
Other Assessment #3 Percent students passing core area classes.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	NA

Save Reset

NEED HELP?

1. The information submitted on your original School Improvement Fund (SIF) application may not have been entered yet by ODE. If you do not see your information, please check back after it will be completed later than November 2nd, 2008.

Internet 100%

Snapshot of 2008–2009 Screen

School Improvement Application - ODE District Site - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Oregon Department of Education

https://district.ode.state.or.us/apps/SIFApp/default.aspx

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION **district**

Home > School Improvement Application

School Improvement Fund (SB318) Actual Results 08-09

Due Date: 11/30/2009 Contact: [Julie Anderson](#) 503.947.5613

* = Required Fields

Save Reset

School Year: 0809 Improvement Area: Early Childhood.....1

Allocation Amount: \$400,864.38 Description: Early childhood support including establishing, maintaining or expanding quality pre-kindergarten programs and full-day kindergarten programs.

* Budget Amount: \$0.00 * Actual Amount: \$0.00

Improvement Strategy: development of preschool program

Expected Impact: Attending pre-school is linked with higher emerging literacy scores. It provides social, emotional and academic readiness skills to pre-k students in order to be successful in their transitions to kindergarten.

Actual Impact: Kindergarten screening indicated that 100% of enrolled pre-schoolers demonstrated proficient kindergarten readiness. Additionally 100% of 2007-2008 pre-schoolers at Haines met or exceeded the fall DIBELS benchmark for kindergarten level.

Next Steps: Eliminated for the 2008-2009 year. This was due to increased enrollment at the kindergarten level and schedule changes.

* Final Biennium Overview: Not Applicable to 2008 and 2009 school year

* Students Impacted: 0

Linked KPMs:	KPM Name	Description
	Access to Pre-Kindergarten	Number of children eligible for and accessing Head Start/Oregon Pre-Kindergarten.
	Kindergarten Readiness	Percentage of kindergarten children demonstrating readiness criteria.

Strategy Measure	Base	Target	Actual	Meet/Exceed
Local Formative #1 Number of pre-school students demonstrating kindergarten readiness...	0 %	0 %	* 0 %	* <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Same

Save Reset

Internet 100%

APPENDIX B

Instructions for Entering Information into the Online Data Collection Tool for 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

**Instructions for Submitting Data
into the
School Improvement Fund (SB318) Actual Results 07-08 Web Form**

*For assistance contact Julie Anderson at julie.anderson@state.or.us (503-947-5613),
or Mike Wiltfong at michael.wiltfong@state.or.us (503-947-5914)*

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

ODE has populated the web form with the information that was included in your original SIF application form. Your responsibility is to complete the information requested in the web form regarding the interim results (for school year 07-08) of your School Improvement efforts.

This is an overview of the steps you will take to complete this data submission:

1. Check with your District Security Administrator to ensure you have rights to the form.
2. Sign in to the District Website. In the Applications list you will find the School Improvement Fund application (the term “Application” here does not refer to your grant application).
3. When you open it you will find a form with certain fields you will have to fill out. These fields are explained in detail below.
4. Choose the first improvement area in the drop down menu under **Improvement Area**.
5. If any of the information provided for an area is incorrect, stop, and call Julie Anderson, or Mike Wiltfong. Their contact information is at the bottom of the web page.
6. If everything looks right, fill in the requested information and click “Save.” If any of the fields are filled out incorrectly, you will get an error message in red letters at the top of the page. You will need to correct the fields that are wrong and click “Save” again.
7. Once your first page of information has been accepted, you will need to go through the process again for each of the improvement areas your district has selected in the drop down menu under **Improvement Area** until you have entered data for all the improvement areas in your list.
8. You may be contacted if there is more information that is needed to complete your required submission.

EXPLANATION OF FIELDS

Due Date: This is the date this web form will no longer be available. All data must be entered before midnight on this date.

Contact: Julie Anderson is the data owner for the School Improvement Fund project. Please contact her or Mike Wiltfong for questions and help in providing accurate data.

* = **Required Fields**: Fields marked with the red asterisk must be filled in. The system will not accept your submission if any of the fields marked this way are left blank.

Save and **Reset** buttons: The save button will save all the information you have entered. You will need to save your data after entering it for each of the improvement areas listed for you. The reset button will clear the form of any entries you have made.

School Year: For this year, the default is 0708. You do not need to make a selection. The data you are entering pertains to activities implemented during the 07-08 school year.

Improvement Area: Contained in the drop down menu here are all the specific areas you requested in your application. You will need to choose an improvement area and fill out the remainder of the form for *each of the improvement areas listed in the drop down menu*.

Description: This is a short description for the improvement area selected from the drop down menu.

Allocation Amount: Your total allocation amount has been pre-populated by ODE. This is the total amount of the first year (07-08) payment you received to implement activities during the 07-08 school year, across all the areas you chose.

Budget Amount: This is the amount of money you requested on the budget page of your original application for the area chosen in the drop down menu. If you only indicated one improvement area on your application, and the amount on your budget sheet was more than your allocation amount, the **Budget Amount** was changed to equal the allocation. If you chose more than one area in your original application, and the total request of your application exceeded your allocation amount, the budget amounts for each improvement area were determined by taking the percentage of the total requested budget each area request represented, and multiplying that percentage by your allocation amount. The results were entered as your **Budget Amount** (s) for each area respectively.

Actual Amount: This is the amount you actually spent on activities in the improvement area selected from the drop down menu. You must fill this field in with your dollar figure.

Improvement Strategy: These are the activities (or activity) you indicated in your original application that you were going to engage in to achieve the specified results in the improvement area chosen from the drop down menu. If these activities are not correct, please call Julie or Mike.

Expected Impact: In this field you must tell us in 255 characters or less, what the results are that you expect to see (based on research) from implementing the specified activities in the improvement area selected from the drop down menu. (See example on page 4)

Actual Impact: This is a qualitative summary of year one implementation of this strategy. In this field, in 255 characters or less, you must provide a qualitative summary of your

identified successes and/or challenges in the implementation of this strategy. (See example on page 4)

Next Steps: This is a qualitative summary of year one implementation of this strategy. In 255 characters or less, you must tell us what, if anything, you plan to do differently in the second year of implementation of this same improvement strategy to improve implementation, based on the actual impact of the first year of implementation. If you will not change anything about your implementation, please indicate that. (See example on page 4)

Students Impacted: In this field please indicate the number of students who were affected by the activities implemented for the improvement area selected from the drop down menu. For example, if you extended kindergarten to full day, indicate how many actual kindergarten students this impacted, not the number of students expected. Another example: if you provided professional development for all your teachers, and expect to report the OAKS scores for all your students, indicate the number of students taught by those teachers.

Linked KPMs: Under *KPM Name* and *Description* are listed the Key Performance Measures you indicated in your original application your improvement areas and activities would impact, and the description of those KPMs.

Strategy Measure: Listed under this heading are the measures that were listed in your original application that you would be using to determine if the impact of your indicated activities is meeting your expectations. If you indicated a *Local Formative Assessment* and gave the name of a particular assessment, you will see that name under the Local Formative heading. If you did not indicate a name, it will say “percent meeting.” [See *Narrative* below for a description of the narrative information required for *Local Performance Assessment* and *Other*.]

You were asked to establish your baseline level of the measures (what the level is at the beginning of the implementation period), and what your target is (the desired gain on the measure). You will report those figures under the appropriate headings. You will also report your actual performance on the measure indicated. This may be higher or lower than either your base or target figures. All measures are to be reported as percentages. If you cannot report it as a percentage, call Julie or Mike.

Base: For each strategy measure you must indicate what your baseline level was before beginning implementation. You can enter a number from 1 to 100, with two decimal points, if applicable.

Target: This is the desired result of your first year of implementation. This number cannot be less than the base number. You can enter a number between 1 and 100, with two decimal points, if applicable.

Actual: This is the actual level of performance indicated by your measure. This number is not constrained by the base or target, and can be a number between 1 and 100, with two decimal points, if applicable.

Narrative: This field is for clarifying comments needed for ODE to understand the results you've entered. **This field is required for *Local Formative Assessments* and measures listed as *Other*.** You must describe the assessment, including its name and the grade (or grades) and the subject assessed. Even though the field is not marked with the red asterisk, we are requiring it for those two measure types. **We will not accept your submission as complete until this field is filled in for those measure types.**

Example of narratives:

*** = Required Fields**

Save Reset

School Year: 0708 Improvement Area: Achievement Gap.....7

Allocation Amount: \$8,173,111.00 Description: Programs to improve a student achievement gap among student groups identified by culture, poverty, language and race and other student groups.

Budget Amount: \$3,736,351.50 * Actual Amount: \$777,591.00

Improvement Strategy:

* Expected Impact: Researchers and reformers have identified a number of ideas about how to allocate funding at the school level in order to provide resources to improve student achievement in high needs schools. The option employed by BSD is to "adopt a "weighted" student-

* Actual Impact: Poverty and Mobility Allocations - Motivation & attendance of the impacted students has improved. Discipline referrals are down considerably. Targeted staff needs an opportunity to participate in PLCs to use data to inform instruction.

* Next Steps: Continuing for 08-09. For 09-10, we are considering: 1) concentrating funding on most needy schools, 2) exploring ways to factor in student achievement, 3) requiring schools to develop written plans with specific uses of funds.

* Students Impacted: 17321

Linked KPMs:

KPM Name	Description
Student Achievement	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding statewide academic performance standards in 3rd and 8th grade reading and math.

Strategy Measure	Base	Target	Actual	Narrative
Other Assessment #1 Percent students meeting state performance standards.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	Grades 6-10, RL, MA, WR
Other Assessment #2 Percent of economically disadvantaged students meeting state performance standards.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	Grades 6-10, RL, MA, WR
Other Assessment #3 Percent students passing core area classes.	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	* <input type="text"/> % Required	NA

Save Reset

NEED HELP?

1. The information submitted on your original School Improvement Fund (SIF) application may not have been entered yet by ODE. If you do not see

Updated (10-29-09)
School Improvement Fund (SIF) Data Collection
INSTRUCTIONS for
Submitting End-of-Grant (2007-2009) Data into Actual Results Web
Form

Data Collection OPENS: October 29, 2009

Data Collection CLOSES: November 30, 2009

FINAL DUE DATE. All data must be submitted by midnight on **November 30, 2009**.

ASSISTANCE. For assistance contact Julie Anderson at julie.anderson@state.or.us (503-947-5613) or Mike Wiltfong at michael.wiltfong@state.or.us (503-947-5914)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS—Be sure to read all of the instructions and review the sample response provided below BEFORE ENTERING DATA.

For this final year of your SIF grant, your responsibility is to complete the information requested in the School Improvement Fund (SIF) Actual Results Web Form using the following directions. **Please note: These directions are not included on the SIF Web form; filling out the Web form without following these directions will result in incomplete data.**

Section I: Data Submission Overview

This is an overview of the steps you will take to complete this data submission.

1. Check with your District Security Administrator to ensure you have rights to the SIF Actual Results Web Form.
2. Sign in to the District Website. In the Applications list, you will find the School Improvement Fund application (Please note: the term “Application” here does not refer to your grant application but rather to the specific collection--SIF).
3. When you open the SIF application, you will find a form containing different fields of information. Some fields are filled in, while others are blank. You must fill in the fields that have an asterisk *. The various fields are explained in greater detail in Section II. Before proceeding to enter data, please read this section.
4. Choose the first improvement area in the drop down menu under ***Improvement Area***.
5. If something is not correct, please contact Julie Anderson at (503-947-5613) or julie.anderson@state.or.us
6. Fill in the requested information and click “Save.” If any of the fields are filled out incorrectly, you will get an error message in red letters at the top of the page. You will need to correct the fields that are wrong and click “Save” again. See *****Warning***** below
7. Once your first page of information has been “Saved” and accepted, you will repeat the same process for each improvement area listed under ***Improvement Area***. When you have entered your information for all improvement areas, you are finished.

WARNING

Please note that when you click the “save” button, your information is submitted and cannot be edited unless you click the “reset” button. HOWEVER, the “reset” button will DELETE everything you entered on that Web page. We suggest that you enter your information into a Word document first so you can cut and paste it into the Web form; if you need to change anything, you will have your information already available to edit and then cut and paste again. Save the Word doc of your entry so you will have a copy of your data entry; after the collection closes, you will no longer be able to access your information from the Web form.

Section II: Description of Buttons and Fields

* = **Required Fields**: Fields marked with the red asterisk must be filled in. The system will not accept your submission if any of the fields marked with an asterisk is left blank.

Save button. At the bottom of your screen is the save button. You will need to click the “Save” button after you have entered your data for each of your improvement areas. In other words, you need to save each web screen as you proceed or you will lose your data. If you do not see the Save button, you will need to scroll down on the screen by using the side bar.

Reset button. Also at the bottom of the screen is a reset button. The reset button will clear the form of any entries you have made. Again, if you do not see the “Reset” button, you will need to scroll down.

School Year: For this year, the default is 08-09. You do not need to make a selection. The data you are entering are your final results for the two years of your grant. If you want to see last year’s entries, you can toggle this field. You can see last year’s information, but you can not make any changes to it.

Improvement Area. In the drop down menu are the specific improvement areas that you identified in your grant application. For each improvement area, you will click the area, fill out the web form for that one improvement area, and click the “Save” button. After saving it, you will click on the next improvement area and repeat the same process. You will continue this process for each of the improvement areas listed in the drop down menu

Description. This is a short description for the improvement area that you selected from the drop down menu.

COMPLETE SIX FIELDS ONLY

There are six fields that you will need to complete for each improvement area that you identified in your grant application. Because the other fields are LOCKED, you do not need to provide any information for them. However, the information is visible for your review.

The fields you need to complete are:

*

***Actual Amount (budget)**

***Students Impacted (number of students in 2008-09)**

***Actual (student performance)**

***Met/Exceeded Target**

***Final Biennium Overview**

***Before entering any data:** In order to understand the information we are requiring you to provide, please read the following descriptions of these fields and the Sample Response below. Thank you.*

***Budget amount:** You must complete this field with a dollar figure. This is the amount you budgeted for activities for you selected improvement area for school year 08-09.

*** Actual Amount:** You must complete this field with a dollar figure. This is the amount you *actually* spent on activities for your selected improvement area during the school year 08-09.

***Students Impacted.** In this field please indicate the number of students in **2008-09** who were affected by the activities implemented for the improvement area selected from the drop down menu. For example, if you extended kindergarten to full day, indicate how many actual kindergarten students this impacted, not the number of students expected. Another example: if you provided professional development for all your teachers, and expect to report the OAKS scores for all your students, indicate the number of students taught by those teachers.

***Actual (student performance on each measure).** Fill in the actual level of student performance on your measure at the end of the second year. This number represents a percentage and is not constrained by the baseline or target percentages. It can be a number between 1 and 100, with two decimal points, if applicable. In some cases, the actual percentage might be lower than the baseline. Do not worry. Just report the actual number.

*** Met/Exceeded Target (New field).** At the end of each row of strategy measures are three “radio” buttons. Before clicking a button, compare your actual result with your stated target. Did you exceed your target? If YES, click the “Yes” button; if NO, click “No”; and if your actual result is the SAME as your stated target, click ”Same.” Please note: If your target was to reduce the percentage of high risk students on a measure of the DIBELS, for example, and you did that, then you met/exceeded your target.

***Final Biennium Overview.** First, for each improvement area, please review your stated improvement strategies before answering the following questions. Note that there is only one text box in which to record your responses, and you have 255 characters to use to answer the questions. **Please look at the Sample Response at the end of this section to see how to answer Part 1 and Part 2 questions in this one text box before you enter your answers.**

Part 1: Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is “did not implement the strategies at all” and 10 is “implemented them completely,” to what extent were you able to implement your improvement strategies as planned? Why did you give this rating?

Did Not Implement									Implemented Completely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please select a number from 1 – 10, record it in the text box, and explain WHY (but first see Sample Response on next page).

Part 2: Are you continuing your stated improvement strategies **beyond the SIF grant funding** (select from 1-6 below)? And why?

- 1=Yes—we are continuing but at an increased level of effort
- 2=Yes—we are continuing at about the same level as stated in the grant
- 3=Somewhat—we are doing fewer strategies, doing the same and modified strategies and/or doing strategies with a smaller group
- 4=No—we have modified/replaced most of our improvement strategies with others
- 5=No—we are doing almost none/none of the stated improvement strategies
- 6=Not applicable—we are still implementing our strategies with SIF carry over money

Please select a number from 1-6, record it in the text box, and explain WHY (but first see Sample Response on next page). If you are using SIF carry over money, you would select “6” as your response and report what your plans are for continuing your efforts after your SIF funding is gone.

Final Biennium Overview Text Box Explanation and Sample Response

This is an example of what the District XYZ grant manager may be thinking—but cannot enter into the data collection due to space constraints—when answering the two questions for the Final Biennium Overview text box:

District XYZ—“To improve early childhood education, District XYZ decided to implement full-day kindergarten classes in each of its 8 schools and to hire kindergarten teachers for these classes. Over the grant period, the district was only able to implement full-day kindergarten classes in 5 of its 8 schools and hired teachers for these classrooms. Not all schools were able to implement full day kindergarten because of an unexpected increase in kindergarten enrollment in the district. However, in the 2009-10 school year and after the SIF grant funding, the district has continued its efforts and has been able to implement full-day kindergarten in all schools due to district leadership’s strong focus on improving early childhood education.”

Part 1: To answer the questions for this section, District XYZ rated the extent to which it was able to implement planned improvement strategies as a “7” because it did implement full-day kindergarten in over half of its schools and hired teachers for these classes (see **scale of 1-10 in Part 1 instructions above**) and reported the reason for this rating in very few words as “because of an unexpected increase kindergarten enrollment, we were not able to implement in all schools.”

Part 2: Next, District XYZ selected the second response, a “2” (see **list of 1- 5 possible responses in Part 2 instructions above**) —“Yes—we are continuing at about the same level as in the grant” and reported the reason for selecting this response in very few words as “continuing due to strong district leadership.”

This is a sample response of what the District XYZ grant manager might actually enter into the Final Biennium Overview text box based on the scenario described in the shaded area above and the space constraints of the text box:

Remember, you have a total of 255 characters to use in your response!

7—because of an unexpected increase kindergarten enrollment, we were not able to implement in all schools.

2—continuing due to strong district leadership.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT IN COMPLETING THIS FORM!

APPENDIX C

Districts and ESDs Not Completing their Data Entry in YEAR 2

Since the time of the final data analysis and this report, three more districts responded. The following districts and ESDs are the final non-respondents:

1. Annex SD
2. Blachly SD
3. Coos Bay SD
4. Mitchell SD
5. North Central ESD.
6. Pilot Rock SD
7. Region 18 ESD
8. Union Baker ESD

APPENDIX D

Numbered List of Key Performance Measures

Key Performance Measures (KPMs)*

KPMs about students:

- KPM 1: Access to kindergarten—Percentage of children receiving Head Start/Oregon pre-kindergarten services.
- KPM 2: Kindergarten readiness—Percentage of kindergarten children demonstrating readiness criteria.
- KPM 3: Student achievement—Percentage of students meeting or exceeding statewide academic performance standards in 3rd and 8th grade reading and math. (KPM #3 is intended to include all grades)
- KPM 5: High school graduation—Percentage of secondary students who graduate, drop out or otherwise finish PK-12 education.
- KPM 6: College readiness—Participation rate, success rate, and second year persistence rate of Oregon PK-12 students into the Oregon university system, or community college system.

KPMs about Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

- KPM 7: Schools and districts meeting AYP—Number and percentage of schools and districts that meet AYP criteria.
- KPM 8: Low performing school improvement—Number and percentage of low-performing schools and districts that improve over time based on AYP guidelines.
- KPM 9: School closing the achievement gap—Number and percentage of schools closing the academic achievement gap.

KPMs about schools:

- KPM 10: Schools offering advanced courses—Number and percentage of schools offering advanced courses.
- KPM 12: Safe schools—Number of schools identified as persistently dangerous or on the “watched list.”
- KPM14: Highly qualified teachers—Percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers.
- KPM 15—Minority staff—Number and percentage of schools increasing or maintaining a high percentage of minority staff.

KPM about incidents:

- KPM 11: Suspensions, expulsions, and truancy—Number of suspension, expulsion, and truancy incidents, disaggregated by incident type

*This list has been revised and shortened to 10 Key performance Measures. This is the list that was used in the application process in the SIF Grant Program.

APPENDIX E

School Improvement Strategies Used by Districts, By Improvement Area

School Improvement Area 1: Early Childhood Support

Early Childhood Support includes establishing, maintaining, or expanding quality pre-kindergarten programs, and full-day kindergarten programs.

Districts that selected Early Childhood Support mentioned 81 overlapping strategies for improvement. The most common are summarized below.

Extension of the kindergarten program. The most common strategy, mentioned by 66% of the 74 school districts, was the extension of the kindergarten day. For example one district said, *“Pilot a full-day kindergarten at four Title I schools to help better prepare for 1st grade...,”* while another suggested, *“...extend kindergarten day 1 hour. . .”*

Several districts specifically mentioned making full-day kindergarten available to high risk students. As stated by one district: *“Provide full-day kindergarten for at-risk kindergarten students in all elementary schools in the district.”*

Staffing level increases. The strategy of increasing staffing levels (e.g., increasing FTE, hiring specialists) was cited by 28% of the districts and was seen as a way to reduce class size, improve student achievement, provide for the needs of special populations such as English Language Learners, and increase identification of at-risk students, as evidenced by these comments:

“Fund 1 FTE kindergarten teacher (and provide professional development) to reduce first grade class size from 26 to 17.”

“This additional FTE focuses on reading and mathematics skill development.”

“The district will add 0.5 FTE elementary school counselor for K-6. This will increase the district’s ability to be able to identify at-risk youth earlier leading to better outcomes in later grades.”

Preschool or pre-kindergarten. Sixteen percent of the 74 districts reported the expansion of, or implementation of, preschool programs. One district intended to supplement the migrant preschool program.

Other strategies. Districts saw the need to use multiple *“other”* strategies to spur improvement. For example, one district chose to provide *“research based professional development,”* and *“data-driven decision-making to assist and monitor early childhood development.”* Another district implemented *“professional learning communities.”* Some districts referenced the need to buy instructional materials and supplies, while others suggested the need to provide mental and/or physical health services to their children. For example, one district reported its intent to *“help provide outreach services in early childhood education, providing health screening of entering students and making referrals for medical /dental services.”*

Initiating after school programs was also mentioned as well as tutoring and summer classes. Some districts advocated the purchase of technology to help teachers provide instruction, while others wanted to provide individual and small group services by Child Development Specialists. In sum,

many strategies were employed. The data indicated that while some strategies were common to multiple districts, districts also had their own unique needs and methods to address improvement within the area of Early Childhood Support.

School Improvement Area 2: Class Size Reduction

Class Size Reduction with an emphasis on the reduction of kindergarten through grade three class sizes.

Class Size Reduction was the most highly targeted SIF area and the most narrowly defined. The majority of districts that selected Class Size Reduction chose to increase staff FTE or hours. This most often translated into the hiring of additional licensed teachers. However, districts also mentioned hiring instructional assistants.

Other strategies supported class size reduction without a focus on increasing FTE: *“remodel a modular classroom to accommodate an elementary class,”* and *“secure appropriate grade 3-4 materials and K-5 intervention materials.”*

School Improvement Area 3: Increase in Instructional Time

Increases in instructional time including summer programs and before- and after-school programs.

Seventy-two overlapping strategies were mentioned by the 57 districts that selected Increase in Instructional Time. The following section summarizes the most common strategies.

Summer programs. Seventy percent of the 57 districts intended to use the funds to begin or continue summer programs. In some instances the program was specifically funded in order that students would have the opportunity for credit retrieval (high school) or to reach previously unattained benchmarks. Also seen as necessary (by at least two school districts) was exposure *“to PE and health education.”*

Twenty-one percent of districts specifically mentioned targeting their summer programs to elementary grades; 21% targeted middle school and 18% focused on high school. One district proposed that they would, *“work with the University of Oregon to better identify students in need of summer school.”*

Another district noted that although they had provided a summer program in previous years: *“in the past it was offered at a fee to parents, which made summer school unattainable to many targeted students.”*

After school programs. The percentage of districts proposing to implement or extend after school programs was 44%. One innovative district announced that *“We are implementing several extra opportunities for success including study labs and Saturday School.”*

Staff FTE increase. As might be expected, a number of districts (16%) chose to increase staffing in order to support the increase in instructional time.

Other strategies. Four districts referenced their need to “add courses.” One wished to “reinststate both physical education and music programs into elementary schools,” while another aspired to “provide students . . . in secondary school with on-line learning opportunities.” The need to purchase instructional materials was mentioned by several districts. Lastly, transportation was identified as a necessary support by one school district.

School Improvement Area 4: Mentoring, Retention, & Professional Development (Teacher Development)

Teacher development includes mentoring, teacher retention, and professional development

Mentoring

Professional development was selected by 85% of the 76 districts as a strategy for improvement. Particular emphasis was placed on mentor training for those individuals who would be placed in the mentoring role. For example, “the ESD will participate in training key personnel in a Leadership Institute.” Additionally, six districts proposed forming Professional Learning Communities. Districts chose to use these funds in a variety of ways. For example:

“Funds will be used to partially support a teacher mentoring program that will include staff development in effective teaching strategies (writing instruction), teaching standards-based curriculum, and using effective classroom management techniques.”

“An integrated program of master teacher mentoring for instructional excellence for newer teachers, leadership training for administration and targeted professional development in areas of: Language Arts, Math for special needs and struggling students, planning and class management.”

“Instructional coaches will provide professional development to teachers in the areas of literacy, mathematics and strategies to address the needs of 2nd language learners in the classroom.”

One district intended using the money to fund a technology coach.

Other strategies. Additional strategies mentioned by districts included buying instructional materials and paying for testing fees and travel costs.

Teacher Retention

Five districts chose to focus on teacher retention. One district provided tuition reimbursement for training. This strategy significantly reduced the number of teachers who left the district, and due to this success, the program was expected to be continued. Others proposed a new staff academy, ongoing mentoring, and staff development. Those teachers receiving mentoring expressed high

levels of support. In all cases, districts said that there would be ongoing support for teacher retention; programs will continue to be monitored and adjusted as necessary.

Professional Development

Districts chose 26 overlapping strategies to implement Professional Development.

Professional development courses and classes. Districts had a variety of innovative proposals for increasing and improving Professional Development. These included *“partnering with Portland State University to provide access to university coursework leading to a Read Oregon Literacy Endorsement. This led to 25 people within the school district taking advantage of the 3 times this has been offered to date. The district intends to continue their partnership into the future.”* Other sites chose to reimburse tuition which in the case of one district led to at least one very positive outcome: *“We nearly doubled our ability to train teachers in Sheltered Instruction which in turn impacted the classroom with high quality instruction.”*

Other strategies mentioned included implementing courses in technology, workshops, summer courses, weekly check-ins, and basing development on *“Guskey’s (2000) recommendations i.e., systematic, ongoing, job embedded and collaboratively designed.”* The district using Guskey’s method noted that the districts had to build capacity to continue with this methodology, and not only were teachers very positive in the evaluation of the method, but *“students results showed improvement in some areas and will likely produce results on the statewide assessment.”*

Increase FTE strategies. Strategies chosen under this theme included hiring additional ESD staff to provide ongoing training and hiring instructional coaches to provide teachers with embedded classroom-based coaching. As a result, five *“coaches worked in 29 schools in the District. While writing scores slightly declined, reading results increased by almost 2% and math results increased by nearly 6%.”* For the next funding period this district plans to add an additional 18 instructional coaches and a classified professional development coordinator.

School Improvement Area 5: Remediation, Retention, & Alternative Learning (At-risk Students)

Remediation

Three overarching themes characterize the strategies districts selected for remediation.

Increase staff FTE. Fifty percent of districts hired additional staff, both teachers and instructional assistants. In one case it was for the *“qualified person to set students up for access to the SD online alternative curriculum.”* In another case, the increased staffing levels were necessary for alternative school expansion: *“District will expand alternative high school. (Funds will be used) to purchase licensed instructional staff. The school will be operating for the first time at an independent campus.”*

Program change, course addition. Sixty percent of districts that selected Remediation chose a program related change such as the addition of courses, classes, or an increase in instructional time.

Mention was made of “*extra curricula supports,*” online courses, tutoring, and specialist instruction to help math development, reading development, and credit recovery. For example, “*the SD has initiated for the 07-08 school year tutoring for at-risk students for 3 periods a day that is designed to increase student retention and decrease the drop-out rate; providing additional alternatives for remediation and instruction.*”

Instructional materials and supplies. Districts (12%) also purchased new computers and software. In some cases, this was for the use by remediation teachers and in other cases, for the support of online courses.

Alternative Learning

Three dominate themes characterize the strategies districts selected to implement Alternative Learning.

Increase staff FTE. Forty-two percent reported instructional strategies that included increasing staff FTE, both licensed teachers and instructional assistants. One district chose to hire a ‘Youth Transition Specialist,’ while another chose to hire “*5 intervention specialists to assist data teams in high schools.*”

Program related change. Thirty-eight percent of districts proposed a program related change or extension such as, “*increases in Instruction and Services to At-Risk (students). Fund personnel for Headwaters extended day program (grades 9-12, on the greater Campus). Headwaters allows SD to directly serve Alt Ed. students in a program that is flexible, rigorous and relevant.*” One district specifically targeted students in rural areas to “*create an alternative learning center for flexibility of the instruction of rural students.*”

Other strategies. Other strategies mentioned to support Alternative Learning include the acquisition of materials and supplies and providing “*training and programs (Waldorf instruction, Peace Builders, music integration) to reduce disruptive behavior and increase math and reading achievement.*”

Student Retention

Districts chose 11 overlapping strategies for improving Student Retention that fell into three general categories.

Program related change. Eighty-five percent of districts reported strategies related to program change. Implementations included a counseling advocacy project, a Learning Climate project, an “*after school tutoring program for secondary students who are falling behind in academic performance,*” monitoring students at the middle school and high school who did not reach the “meets” performance level on OAKS, and initiating a credit recovery program.

Increase staff FTE. One district “*added 5.2 teachers to do academic interventions to assist with remediation and student retention,*” while another used the funds to “*pay (a) music teacher across the district,*” and a third hired tutors.

Other strategies. Districts reported using funds to provide additional materials to students, to provide training to reduce disruptive behavior, and to enhance professional development.

School Improvement Area 6: Services to At-Risk Youth

The 58 districts providing Services to At-Risk Youth mentioned 70 overlapping strategies that organize into the following categories:

Increasing staff FTE. Sixty-six percent of the reporting districts mentioned increasing staff FTE. While some districts hired new teachers, many districts chose to fund specialist staff. See next section.

Specialist staff. A variety of specialist staffing positions were funded within this area to provide outreach to at-risk students, including an “alternative education teacher for (the) Drug and Alcohol Youth Treatment Center,” a “Drug and Alcohol Student and Family Counselor,” “an attendance officer to do home visits and coordinate with law enforcement,” and a “homeless coordinator.”

Specialized programs and program change. Specialized programs and program change were mentioned by 35% of districts within this area and included such innovations as the “Middle school program ‘Families and Student Together (FAST),’ a structured program that opens communication between parents and their children (and school).” One grantee wanted to “Increase socio-emotional services to increasing numbers of at-risk students,” while another wanted to make use of “Self Enhancement, Inc. focused advocacy and support for African American freshman.”

Professional development. Twelve percent of the grantees proposed plans related to some form of professional development. One grantee established “Training and implementation support for mentoring of 9th graders by adults and/or junior/senior students.” Other districts planned to provide Positive Behavior Support (PBS).

Other strategies. Other strategies included but were not limited to “extended learning time staffed by educators (e.g., after school library, Saturday school),” after school programs, and even supplies for (student) reinforcement.

School Improvement Area 7: Closing the Achievement Gap

Closing the achievement gap includes programs to improve the student achievement gap among student groups identified by culture, poverty, language, and race and other student groups

Eighty-six overlapping strategies were mentioned by the 62 districts that selected Close the Achievement Gap. These fell within the following themes:

Increasing staff FTE. Sixty-two percent of the reporting grantees mentioned increasing staff FTE. The hiring of math specialists was mentioned by multiple grantees. Another grantee said the district would “implement a Response to Intervention model (K-6), additional ESL teachers, additional Special Education teachers, a bilingual teacher, and an additional administrator position.”

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or English Language Learners (ELL) students. Thirty-two percent of grantees indicated support for LEP and/or ELL students. There was some overlap

between the most common theme of increasing staff FTE and the second most common theme in which districts mentioned targeting ELL students in their effort to close the achievement gap. As well as hiring specialist instructional staff, one district used SIF funds to hire a Spanish speaking home/school liaison. They stated that this liaison, *“who is well respected in the community and has a strong commitment to the importance of education will help in closing the achievement gap more than anything else.”*

Professional development. Thirty-one percent of districts allocated some funds to professional development such as *“training teachers in new strategies for teaching students whose first language is not English.”*

Instructional materials and supplies. Thirty percent of grantees described funds being allocated to some kind of instructional materials and/or supplies. For example, one school district proposed to *“purchase new math curriculum and possibly provide professional development on that curriculum.”* Another enthusiastically described that, *“a new system (Edusoft) was purchased and 12 schools piloted a math assessment. Teachers were trained in using the system and are hot to use data to inform instruction. Teachers now have real time data to design targeted instruction and intervention.”*

Other strategies. Other strategies mentioned included adding courses, classes, and increasing instructional time. Three grantees referenced some kind of program related change. One used funds to purchase Edline in order to stay in closer communication with parents.

School Improvement Area 8: Vocational Education Programs

Forty-two overlapping strategies were mentioned by the 38 districts to improve Vocational Education. Three themes emerged:

Increase in instructional time and the addition of classes. Forty percent of grantees used funds to increase instructional time or to supplement vocational courses or classes. For example one district wrote that the *“District will use funds to provide additional sections of manufacturing technology, woods, home economics, and information technology.”* Another provided the addition of *“Programming with VB, programming with Java, web design/HTML, AP computer science, metals lab, and construction technology,”* while another added power mechanics technology and agricultural science. One high school was funded to *“build viable vocational programs in the areas of Video Production and Construction Technology.”* In another example, a district was *“developing a work place safety program and a school to work program with community partnership.”*

Increase in staff FTE. The second most commonly reported theme in the Vocational Education Program instructional area (34% of districts), was to increase staff FTE. One district chose to use funds to hire a vocational education teacher: *“Retain the services of a Wood Shop/Computer Teacher (who is also HQ in Math). This teacher has a goal of having all wood, metal and computer courses qualify for “College Now” credit through Lane Community College.”*

Acquisition of instructional materials or supplies. A smaller number of districts (16%) reported purchasing instructional materials or supplies for Vocational Educational purposes (e.g., new

welding ventilations systems, a CAD/CAM lab complete with software, a CNC machine used for metal fabrication, and new welders).

Other districts were less specific and merely said they would *“Purchase technology to improve course offerings...”* or *“Purchase equipment.”*

School Improvement Area 9: Literacy Programs

Ninety-two overlapping strategies were mentioned by the 68 districts to improve literacy. These fell within the following themes:

Increase in staff FTE. Increasing staff FTE was the most common strategy (54% of districts). Districts hired literacy coaches, language arts instructors, and reading teachers at all levels. Some districts also hired instructional assistants.

Acquisition of instructional materials or supplies. The second most frequent theme (28% of districts) included purchasing class instructional materials or supplies. Multiple districts reported purchasing new literacy programs or curriculum. Other districts chose to specifically purchase new books or texts, such as English language development texts and *“books for our Accelerated Reader collection.”*

Professional development. Fourteen districts (21%) chose to use funds to provide some form of literacy support training for their staff. For example, one district chose to use funds to increase the number of teachers who had reading endorsements. Another reported, *“Seven teachers (all district literacy coaches and literacy leaders) will be trained in Writing Across The Curriculum and share techniques and strategies with building staff.”*

Program related change. Eighteen percent of districts whose improvement strategies fell within the theme of program related change chose to implement a new program, *“Implementing Response to Intervention in grades K-3,”* modify an existing program, *“Reorganize literacy programs such as Reading Recovery, Accelerated Reader, strategic reading, intensive writing, and development of a laptop program,”* or use funds to support an existing Literacy program, *“Funds will support the Literacy Infusion Project that enables each school to implement research-based best practices in literacy instruction according to student needs.”*

Other strategies. Seventeen percent of districts also mentioned other strategies such as adding courses and student instruction time. One district specifically referred to LEP and ELL students, stating that the district would buy supplemental components for the district ELL literacy adoption. Several districts mentioned summer school. One district said they would *“Screen all K-12 students and place lowest performing 20% in the appropriate reading interventions.”*

School Improvement Area 10: Other Research-Based Strategies

Other research-based improvement strategies are approved by the State Board of Education

Thirty-five overlapping strategies were mentioned by the 29 districts that selected this open-ended area. Many of the Other Research Based strategies echo those used to promote the nine previously described areas for improvement.

Increase in staff FTE. The most commonly reported theme (38% of districts), involved increasing staff FTE. This was mentioned generally: To *“hire more licensed teachers,”* and also in specific terms: To *“hire an advanced math teacher to eliminate or reduce remote distance learning or independent study;”* and to *“fund a highly qualified trainer to work with educational staff on a weekly basis on effective teaching methodology.”*

Professional development. Twenty-four percent of the districts chose to use funds to provide some form of professional development for staff including certification in a Teaching and Learning Connection Program, integration of the use of technology into the classroom, and professional development to *“use and apply warehoused data into important decisions regarding their districts.”* Additionally, two districts reported that they would focus funds on developing a Professional Learning Community, attending conferences, and providing for attendance and training at workshops.

Acquisition of instructional materials or supplies. Acquisition of computer based instructional materials, student monitoring software, and classroom hardware was mentioned by 20% of districts.

Program related change. Two grantees proposed support for the development of a music and intramural gym program and the implementation of programs such as Response to Intervention.

Other strategies. Two districts intended to use funds to align curriculum to standards. Funds were also used to support travel for professional development.