

# **East Syracuse Minoa Central School District**

**FINAL**

## **2023-24 Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan**

**June 30, 2023**



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## OVERVIEW

### Background

The 2021-22 enacted state budget included language stating that, for the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, each school district receiving a foundation aid increase of more than ten percent or \$10,000,000 must post to the district website prior to July 1 of each school year a plan by school year of how the funds will be used to address student performance and need, including but not limited to: (i) increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap; (ii) reducing class sizes; (iii) providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas; (iv) addressing student social-emotional health; and (v) providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities; and students experiencing homelessness. The budget language states that, prior to posting such a plan, each school district must seek public comment from parents, teachers and other stakeholders on the plan and take such comments into account in the development of the plan.

In response, a districtwide survey was conducted in April and May 2023 with teachers, students, parents and guardians, administrators and instructional staff to provide an opportunity for input and feedback into the ESM Strategic Plan and to provide further data in the analysis of needs for the District's Foundation Aid Investment Plan. The District's Foundation Aid Investment Plan was reviewed by the ESM's Strategic Action Leadership Team (SALT), which is comprised of administrators and teachers from all district buildings and departments; the Education Program Communication Committee (EPCC), a group of teacher leaders from each school in the district; and the Parent-Administrator Leadership Team which is comprised of school administrators and parent leaders from each building. A Public Hearing was conducted on May 8, 2023 for feedback on the District's proposed budget and a presentation on the Draft Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan was given at the Board of Education meeting held on June 12, 2023.

### Guiding Principles

The District Strategic Plan and Vision, Mission, Beliefs and the District Goals guide the recommendations of the **Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan**. In this context, the following principles will provide the framework for the Strategic Action Leadership Team (SALT), the Board of Education and District Administration in planning for the **Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan**.

- The Health and Safety of students and staff will remain the priority consideration for the reopening of School
- Excellence and equity of educational opportunity will be provided for all students
- Essential social-emotional and trauma Informed supports for students, staff and families will be provided as a key component of the plan for reopening of school
- The delivery of instruction and support services will be flexible and responsive to evolving public health, budgetary and environmental conditions
- Communications with students, staff and families will be frequent, consistent and transparent

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **ESM Strategic Plan**

*The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District Strategic Plan is our blueprint for achieving our vision of being “an exemplary 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning community whose graduates are prepared to excel in a complex, interconnected, changing world”. The priorities identified in our Strategic Plan guide our work at the district, building, department and individual level, including the alignment of our time, resources and energy to support the identified priorities. It translates our intentions into action steps for continuous improvement.*

*From Pre-kindergarten through high school graduation, we strive for academic excellence and rigor through engaging student minds. We value 21<sup>st</sup> Century knowledge and skills that include critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation. These skills are interwoven throughout our curriculum and are essential for success in college, career and citizenship. We continue to prioritize standards that are necessary for building future knowledge, have the greatest applicability to a variety of content areas, and are most essential for the next level of learning.*

*Our leadership teams and professional learning communities play a key role in developing, monitoring and assessing to verify that all students are learning, how we know that all students are learning, how we respond when they are not, and how we respond if they already know the identified learning standards. We continually focus on collaboratively building our professional skills with the most effective teaching strategies and building our students’ skills with the most effective learning strategies. Our Strategic Plan focuses on coherence and alignment, while looking to the future of continued academic achievement in a global rapidly changing world, while consistently focusing on developing the whole child to prepare all students for lifelong success.*

### **Vision, Mission, Belief Statement, District Goals**

#### ***Our Vision***

*The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District will be an exemplary 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning community whose graduates are prepared to excel in a complex, interconnected, changing world.*

#### ***Our Mission***

*The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District will prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by engaging all learners in meaningful learning experiences that meet the highest educational and*

*ethical standards in a caring, collaborative learning community supported through partnerships with parents and families, businesses, civic organizations, and higher education.*

### **Our Beliefs**

*At the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District, we believe that:*

- *Each individual has dignity and worth*
- *The capacity to learn for each individual is boundless*
- *Curiosity and exploration stimulate innovation and learning*
- *High expectations and challenging curriculum lead to greater achievement*
- *Effort and perseverance are essential to achieve one's personal best*
- *Positive relationships are fundamental to success and growth*
- *Collaboration within and among school, families and community partners is essential to meet the needs of each student*
- *Acceptance and mutual respect encourages students to take the risks necessary for academic and personal growth*
- *Education prepares students to become productive and responsible citizens who contribute to their communities*
- *Students need to develop their strengths, confidence and resilience to meet the challenges they will face throughout life.*

## **Foundation Aid Investment Plan Development Process**

### **Connection to District-Level Strategic Plans**

#### **Alignment with Strategic Plan 2018-2023**

The District's Foundation Aid Investment Plan development process was guided by the five (5) focus areas of the District's Strategic Plan 2018-2023.

Focus Area 1 - Teaching and Learning

Focus Area 2 - Technology for Teaching and Learning

Focus Area 3 - Communication and Community Engagement

Focus Area 4 - Employee Engagement and Professional Learning

Focus Area 5 - Learning Environment Systems and Structures

The Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is available for review on the district website at:  
<https://www.esmschools.org/tfiles/folder1509/Strategic%20Plan%202020-21%20FINAL.pdf>

#### **Alignment with Technology Plan**

The ESM Technology Integration Investment Plan was developed in alignment with the ESM Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission, Beliefs, individual School Improvement Plans, the District Plan for Children with Disabilities, consultation with the English as a New Language program as well as research and best practices in the instructional technology field.

The goal of the Technology Integration Investment Plan is to transform the learning process through seamless technology integration, and to continue to support all learners by providing the necessary resources and guidance.

The plan is organized into five major focus areas with identified outcomes, expectations for students and staff, action steps and results. The five focus areas are interdependent:

Technology Learning Competencies--A set of grade by grade competencies that each student will achieve

Professional Learning--A plan for providing learning opportunities for staff so that they can implement the plan

Technology Infrastructure to Support Student Learning--Providing devices, a network, wireless connectivity and high speed internet access to support student learning

IT Support--A plan for supporting the technology rich environment at ESM Schools

Emerging Technologies--A structure to stay focused on “what’s next” so that we continue to stay on the cutting edge

The Technology Plan is available on the district website at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yHDgL0lIBo8V6d6QxJdygeQEMz-UeHGxqiCvb-LANnl/edit#>

## **Public Comment and Stakeholder Feedback**

A districtwide survey was conducted in April and May 2023 with teachers, students, parents and guardians, administrators and instructional staff to provide an opportunity for input and feedback into the ESM Strategic Plan and to provide further data in the analysis of needs for the District’s Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan.

Survey feedback included responses in the following topic areas:

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Educating All Students
- Family Engagement
- Professional Learning
- School Resources
- School Climate
- School Learning Strategies and Behaviors
- School Safety
- School Belonging
- Social-Emotional Well-Being
- Staff-Family Relationships, Teacher-Student Relationships, and Family Engagement
- Teaching Efficacy
- Employee Feedback and Coaching
- School Rigorous Expectations

The survey data was reviewed by the ESM’s Strategic Action Leadership Team (SALT), which is comprised of administrators and teachers from all district buildings and departments. SALT used the survey data to inform priorities for 2023-24 including the priorities contained within the Foundation Aid Investment Plan.

The draft Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan was reviewed by PreK-12 administrators; the Education Program Communication Committee (EPCC), a group of teacher leaders from each school in the district; and the Parent-Administrator Leadership Team which is comprised of parent leaders from each building. A Public Hearing was conducted on May 8, 2023 for feedback on the District’s proposed budget, and a presentation on the Draft Foundation Aid Increase



Investment Plan was held at a Board of Education Meeting on June 12, 2023 for districtwide stakeholder input and feedback.

## **FOUNDATION AID INCREASE INVESTMENT PLAN FOR 2023-24**

### **Increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap**

Funding will support a range of strategies to focus and accelerate learning, while addressing potential gaps in learning. We will continue to document and prioritize essential learning standards to drive our curriculum, instruction and assessment through the use of the Atlas platform. Teacher teams will provide feedback to identify Essential Standards through the use of a Flashback - Flash Forward protocol and vertical team conversations. We will utilize Summer Grade Level professional Learning Plan Days to communicate the priorities. Updated pacing will be reflected in curriculum maps and prioritized standards will be flagged as well. Teachers are expected to follow the documented scope and sequence of each course/class, while prioritizing essential learning standards.

Expectations:

- Teachers are expected to follow the documented scope and sequence of each course/class
- Teacher will identify essential standards based on specific identification criteria
- Teachers will collaboratively determine the scope and sequence of curriculum delivery to ensure cohesiveness
- Teachers will develop student friendly learning targets for each standards within departments

Feedback/Grades:

The focus will be on formative feedback over grades. When giving grades, after feedback, they should reflect mastery or evidence of learning toward standards on standards-aligned assignments. Feedback will be provided on standards-aligned assignments (digitally or in-person). Students will have opportunities to improve their grade on assignments, based on the feedback provided.

### **Reducing class sizes**

Funding will support a focus on a lower student-teacher ratio for students at the kindergarten, first and second grade levels. The funding will also support learning at targeted grade levels in grades 3-5 and in specific courses of ELA and Math in grades 6-12 to provide a lower student-teacher ratio.

### **Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas**

Funding will support summer learning programs for students at the elementary level, grades 6-8 and grades 9-12 to address learner needs at risk of not meeting state learning standards in core academic subjects based on assessments. During the school year, instructional coaches and itinerant learning associates will provide support in strengthening best practices for learning in Tier 1 at the elementary level and after school programs will provide additional support for students in grades 6-12.

## Addressing student social-emotional health

- The district's school counseling plan addresses that universal, secondary and tertiary interventions are in place. Universal interventions are designed to support the social emotional well being of all students and adults. Use of the district wide PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) framework allows us to create a behavior matrix that teaches expectations for an array of learning models. At all levels, an evidenced based best practice curriculum focuses on the core SEL competencies of self awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making.
- Implementation of the plan addresses that these practices are culturally and linguistically responsive to our student and family population.
- At the elementary level we will continue to use the Second Step Curriculum and Responsive Classroom, at the middle school level we will continue to use Project Wisdom and Responsive Classroom and at the high school level we will continue to use Sources of Strength.
- Special attention will be paid to the social-emotional and mental health needs of students returning to school in-person for the first time. Counselors will collaborate with teaching and school staff to ensure students are provided necessary additional support services for a successful transition to in-person learning.
- We will regularly review and make adjustments to our comprehensive developmental school counseling plan with particular focus on social emotional learning and mental health and wellness.
- The school counselors in each of our buildings will continue to collaborate with the school psychologist, building principal, school nurse and other support staff to ensure that the needs of students and adults are being met.
- Through collaboration and partnership with community based agencies and our local government we will continue and expand services available to students, families, faculty and staff.
- We will strengthen our school based mental health clinics, provide referrals to community based mental and behavioral health clinics and we will utilize our Employee Assistance Program to support the mental health needs of our faculty and staff.
- Using a multi-tiered system of support, we will identify and support children and families who have experienced trauma and are struggling.
- We will continue to collaborate with our county government to provide case management and wrap-around services to our children and their families.
- We will continue to collaborate with Onondaga County and Contact Family Services to provide social emotional learning support through Primary Project at Elementary Schools.
- We will collaborate with Onondaga County for social emotional learning support provided by Student Engagement Specialists.
- We will collaborate with Onondaga County to provide mental health services for students and families through ARISE.
- We will collaborate with Onondaga County for support from ACCESS for Child Protective Services.

## **Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities; and students experiencing homelessness**

### English Language Learners

The well-being of our ELLs and their families is of utmost importance for our ENL teachers and they partner with families to serve as a source of continuity. Our ENL teachers personally reach out to families regularly to ensure that appropriate supports are accessible, including but not limited to food, technology, internet access, translation of information, community resources.

ENL Teachers will review/determine preferred mode of communication and the language in which families prefer. Important reopening documents will be summarized and translated and/or interpreted for families based on language of preference as identified on Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ).

ENL teachers will ensure that parents receive messaging regarding reopening using a combination of translated materials and interpretation services for families. They will be informed of expectations and teachers will utilize translation services as needed to rephrase and interpret important district information to keep families informed. ENL teachers will plan regular communication with families.

### Students with Disabilities

The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District will continue to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all special education students.

All accommodations, modifications, supplementary aides, services and technology needs included in a student's IEP will be reviewed and discussed by the case manager, general education teacher(s) and parent to determine the appropriate accommodations, modifications, supplementary aides, services and technology for the student will need based on their unique needs.

### Students Experiencing Homelessness

School district staff work with school-based supervisors from Onondaga County called ACCESS Team supervisors. An ACCESS Case Worker, who is already assigned to the school for the purpose of needs assessment and 1:1 assistance, i.e. referrals to county services and supports, provides support for homeless youth. The assigned ACCESS Case Worker is able to connect with the school counselors or social workers and school-based support teams to gather information, to identify needs, make home visits, and to provide a three-tiered assessment to determine the level of need. Tier 1 supports include foundational support for all students, Tier II supports students' immediate needs and Tier III targets students with the greatest needs and targets follow-up care to address the needs.

## **Goals and Ratios for Pupil Support**

The district has established the following goals and ratios for Pupil Support. Foundation Aid funds have enabled the district to continue to meet these goals for 2023-24.

School Counselors: One per building K-5. Based on enrollment at High School and Middle School (approximately 170:1 student to counselor ratio at HS and 190:1 at MS).

Psychologists: One per building K-5 based on IEP needs. Two per building at HS and MS based on enrollment and IEP student needs

### Summary of Investments

<b>2023-24 Priority Area</b>	<b>Amount*</b>
Increasing Graduation Rates and Student Achievement	\$723,436
Reducing Class Sizes	\$2,312,164
Academic Support	\$803,261
Student Social-Emotional Health	\$541,832
ELL, Students with Disabilities, Homeless Students	\$1,491,207
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,871,900</b>

*\*23-24 budgeted Foundation Aid increase, not entire Foundation Aid amount*

## **APPENDIX A**

Foundation Aid Increase Investment Plan June 12, 2023 Public Presentation