

Vernonia SD 47J - 1947 - Annual Questions

Question	Response
1 There are clear impacts from the reduction in SIA funding and from the direct efforts to respond to COVID-19. While you can't fully set those aside, what is important for your community, including focal student groups, families, and educators, to understand about your SIA implementation efforts during the 2020-21 school year and the positive impacts that have occurred? How were you able to make progress towards the goals and outcomes you were aiming at with SIA funding and processes? (500 words or less)	The VSD was able to use SIA funding to significantly impact and improve several areas of focus within the district. Three extra days of school were added to the calendar, increasing seat time for all K-12 students. This funding also had a significant impact on our Social/Emotional Learning programs. This funding supported the hiring of an SEL Director who worked closely with staff to implement effective SEL education through home room Elementary teachers, and Advisory periods at the MS and HS level. The Director position also produced a successful grant request that has brought in over \$300,000 in funding to help reengage HS students, and decrease dropout rates. New textbooks were purchased for MS and HS Health through these funds, updating our outdated curriculum. The impacts of larger class sizes and staff/student ratios were decreased with the addition of 2.0 FTE of Instructional Assistants within our schools.
2 What barriers, impediments, or challenges to your SIA implementation have you faced or identified that are helpful for your community and/or state leaders to be aware of? (500 words or less)	Some of the biggest challenges we faced were in hiring new employees for open positions designated to be created by SIA funding. A math teacher was not able to be hired last year, although it was posted through the first semester. The hiring of IAs was a positive impact, but the candidate pool continues to shrink, and each time hiring does occur, the pool of substitute IAs dwindles. Also, CCMH and the District have parted ways, so the funding for extra mental health support was put on hold.
3 SIA implementation includes ongoing engagement with focal students, the families of focal students, and educators. What successes and challenges, if any, have you experienced in maintaining engagement? (500 words or less)	The pandemic has created several challenges in maintaining on-going engagement with our parents and community. In person meetings have not been possible, due to meeting and quarantine restrictions. The start of school was delayed by two weeks due to Covid issues, postponing our initial meetings to reengage the community. A lack of involvement from those not employed at school has also been an issue that impedes full participation in the engagement process.
4 Please share your professional assessment of what guided your choices and prioritization efforts in the first year of SIA implementation? What stands out? Anything important or surprising to report back or reflect on? How were key decisions on scaled down implementation made? What impacts, if any, are helpful to name in how you navigated through the last year, specifically as it relates to SIA implementation? (500 words or less)	The biggest factors in choosing which areas were priorities for utilizing SIA funds were the need to increase the time spent on instruction by staff and students, as well as providing extra human resources into programs where there is known need. These were priorities of the District, and also rose to the top when engaging parents and community. It was extremely helpful to have a list of needs that was longer than the amount of resource available, so that when one initiative ended up not being possible, there were still a clear path to where strong impact could still be realized.
5 URL of webpage where your annual report is posted:	www.vernoniak12.org
6 Please attach a copy of the Board Minutes to this line using the paperclip icon to the left.	This annual report will be shared with the VSD Board of Directors at their October 14 Board Meeting. Minutes will be provided as soon as they are available.