

Section 1: Summarize your district's plan

Berkshire Hills (0618) Public School District - FY 2024 - Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan Submission - Rev 0

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SECTION 1: SUMMARIZE YOUR DISTRICT'S PLAN

In this section, you will:

Write a brief executive summary of your three-year SOA plan. While this section is presented at the beginning of your plan, we recommend writing it after you have completed the other sections of your plan.

*** Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan.** Make sure the summary:

- Identifies the student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement.
- Describes the selected Evidence-Based Programs your district will use to address the disparities in learning experiences and outcomes for these student groups.
- Explains at a high level the investments you plan to make and what will change in your district because of this plan.

Berkshire Hills Regional School District has identified our English Language Learners, as well as our larger Hispanic/Latino students as the student groups for accelerated improvement through this plan. The programs that we are planning to implement are picked to provide the direct and targeted support needed within these student groups, based on a number of assessments and data points that have been reviewed. This review revealed that additional supports in the areas of literacy, specific ESL instruction, and social emotional learning are what we as a district should be investing in, at this time. Our goal as a district will be to improve the foundational skills of our ELL students beginning with literacy work in the elementary school and to provide increased in-class supports throughout their educational journey moving into middle and high school. As our elementary school looks to making changes in their literacy program and approach to instruction, we are using a lens to make sure that everything we are doing will work well for our ELL population specifically, so they have language based supports to aid in their wider academics. The data shows that this improved language foundation should lead to improved outcomes in upper grades, as well. To support these foundational skills, we are looking to improve and reinforce the use of WIDA based instructional strategies in all of our schools, as our growing ELL population need educators to have a firm grasp of these strategies and approaches if they are going to provide well designed learning opportunities.

In addition to the academic supports that need to be put in place, we are looking to improve upon our work on SEL with our Hispanic/Latino student population. Recent surveys have highlighted their feeling of disconnect with the larger school community and therefore increased feelings of isolation. Ensuring that our advisory, crew, and morning circle structures are culturally competent and focused on a whole child approach will allow these students to better

connect with their peers and to identify trusted adults in their schools. This SEL work will not only focus on improving the mental health of this student group, but will also ensure that they are more prepared to access their academic environments and learning opportunities. The overall goal is to foster a diverse and inclusive community that creates safe spaces and pro-social experiences.

Section 2: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support

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SECTION 2: ANALYZE YOUR DATA AND SELECT STUDENT GROUPS FOR FOCUSED SUPPORT

In this section, you will:

- **Analyze district data** to identify significant disparities in learning experiences and outcomes among student groups using the [Student Outcomes Comparison Tool](#) or other summary data sources. After conducting an initial analysis to identify disparities, use additional sources of data, including other state and local outcomes data; instructional data; student, family, and community perspectives data; and systems-level data, to go deeper in your analysis and uncover why these disparities exist.
- **Select student groups** who will receive focused support within your SOA plan as a result of your data analysis findings.

*** In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?**

Through our data analysis, which included a review of MCAS scores, ACCESS scores, Star benchmark assessments in literacy and math, Panorama SEL surveys, and internal academic reports, a few significant disparities became clear. The MCAS data, ACCESS scores, and benchmark assessments highlight the struggles that our English Language population are experiencing across grade levels, as compared to their non-EL peers. This is understandable, as we have had a large influx of newcomers arriving in district over the last few years, who come to us with a wide array of previous educational experiences. Building comprehensive systems and working to create consistent approaches to supporting these students' education will be a large factor in helping them to find success. Most noticeably, these students have lower scores on language based assessments and overall are underperforming their peers in their ELA classes across grade levels.

In addition to the academic disparities that have been identified, our Panorama surveys demonstrate a need to address the SEL needs and mental health for our English Learners and LatinX student populations. They report not feeling connected to the school culture and increased levels of isolation compared to their peers.

*** What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?**

The trends that are observed through these data sources highlight a few primary pathways of improvement necessary in the district. The first is increased use of High Quality Instructional Materials and Curriculums, especially in ELA, to support the language acquisition and learning of our students K-12. This will involve piloting and implementing new curriculum in the elementary grades and an review of curriculum at the upper levels. With this will also be the need for Professional Development, to support the use of new curriculum and related instructional practices focused on improved student achievement and outcomes. Some of this professional development will be geared towards increased understanding and implementation of WIDA practices, at all grade levels, to ensure that we are engaging student appropriately in their academic settings.

We will also need to address the significant SEL/Mental Health needs of our student groups in a way that will help them to feel fully a part of the school community. This will require a review of our current Advisory, Crew, and Morning Circle procedures at our three schools and the expansion of SEL curriculums to better meet the needs of these student groups.

*** Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years? Select all that apply.**

English learners, Hispanic or Latino

Clear

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

English learners

Students with disabilities

Low-income

African American/Black

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian

Hispanic or Latino

Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

White

Section 3: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement

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SECTION 3: SET AMBITIOUS THREE-YEAR TARGETS FOR IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In this section, you will:

- **Commit to adopting the three-year improvement target established by DESE with the option to develop additional three-year accelerated improvement targets.** DESE has established a three-year improvement target for each district to include in their SOA plans that focuses on rapidly improving the performance of the "Lowest Performing Students" group. This group, by definition, includes the students who currently have the lowest academic performance, and therefore need the most significant levels of support to reduce the disparities between their performance and that of their peers.
- This target will provide one streamlined measure to show districts' progress in improving performance across several priority student groups at the same time and will be tracked each year as part of districts' annual SOA progress updates. However, districts focusing on improving performance for a single student group may set an additional target for that student group aligned to DESE's accountability targets. *The composition of your district's "Lowest Performing Students" group can be accessed via the [security portal](#).*

*** Please confirm that your district will use DESE's three-year targets for increasing performance for the "Lowest Performing Students" group in ELA and math.**

If applicable, propose additional three-year targets for addressing persistent disparities in achievement for one or more student groups by subject matter and grade level.

Section 4: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders

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SECTION 4: ENGAGE FAMILIES/CAREGIVERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

In this section, you will:

- **Describe your district's ongoing efforts** to engage families/caregivers, particularly those representing the student groups you have identified for targeted support, about how to best address their students' needs.
- **Describe the ways in which your district has engaged families/caregivers and other stakeholder groups** in the development of your SOA plan.
- **Confirm your district has engaged with specific stakeholders** in developing the plan as required by law.

*** Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented. A brief narrative and/or a bulleted list are acceptable.**

Berkshire Hills uses a number of strategies to regularly engage with families, caregivers, and stakeholders to create and reinforce a partnership based approach to student support planning. These include:

- Regular communication from building administration to their school communities in the form of newsletters and surveys, including multi-lingual communications
- Monthly meetings of school councils
- Increased use of translation services, to ensure all important information and advertisement for engagement opportunities are in the home language of our school community
- Quarterly meetings of our ELPAC
- Increased home visits at our middle school, which is where we are seeing the lowest reflective responses on our Panorama surveys
- Community partnerships focused around supporting family/caregiver engagement

*** How do you plan to measure increased family engagement with parents/caregivers of students in targeted groups in your district over the next three years? A brief narrative and/or a bulleted list are acceptable.**

Increased family engagement will be measured through surveys and attendance reports at district meetings/events.

*** Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan? A brief narrative and/or a bulleted list are acceptable.**

- We utilized focused questions on surveys given to families and community stakeholders through the schools and through our partnership with the Barr Foundation, which has provided grant funding and support to our efforts at the high school
- We held community forums on educational visioning where we were able to gather stakeholder perspective on important areas of growth for our student population
- We held facilitated ELPAC meetings where members of our ESL department engaged with these families to better understand their concerns and ideas for how to make improvements

*** By checking this box, I affirm that my district engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan as required by law: parents/caregivers, special education and English learner parent advisory councils, school improvement councils, and educators in the school district.**

*** By checking this box, I confirm that my district's school committee voted to approve the Student Opportunity Act Plan.**

*** Date of school committee vote:**

06/06/2024 

Section 5: Select Evidence Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes

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SECTION 5: SELECT EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS DISPARITIES IN OUTCOMES

In this section, you will:

- **Review the Strategic Objectives table** (Please see Pages 10-13 of [SOA Plan Guidance Materials](#)).
- **Select one to three Focus Areas** your district will prioritize to improve student learning experiences and outcomes for student groups identified in your data analysis.
- **For each Focus Area, select one or more Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs)** from the DESE-provided EBPs list.
- **Answer additional questions about each EBP you select**, including questions about resource allocation and the metrics you will use to monitor implementation (these metrics will serve as leading indicators; districts will also measure progress each year through the lowest-performing student group target).

Select one or more EBPs from up to three of the ten Focus Areas.

- To select an EBP and reveal the associated questions, check the box alongside it.
- Complete the questions related to each of your selected EBPs (* indicates a required question).
- The Commissioner's "priority EBP's" are noted with a plus sign (+).
- Be sure to allow this page to fully load before selecting EBPs.

FOCUS AREA 1.1 Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces

- EBP 1.1A Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing
- EBP 1.1B Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health

*** Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).**

- **Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.**

- **Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 2. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.**

Currently, the district has a group of teacher leads focused on SEL at all three schools. These SEL Leads will work to enhance and refine our advisory, crew, and morning circle curriculum/procedures the better meet the needs of all students. This will include expanded training in Restorative Practices, the RULER curriculum, and involvement of our DEIB coordinator to assist in coordination.

*** Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?**

District-wide

\$ * **What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total included should be cumulative.**

*** Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.**

SEL Leads - \$225,000
 RJ Coordinator - \$209,907
 RJ Consultancy - \$75,000
 DEIB Coordinator - \$261,000
 PD - \$110,000

*** Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?**

Administration, Instruction Leadership, Professional Development (+1 other)

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

- Administration**
- Instruction Leadership**
- Classroom & Specialist Teachers
- Other Teaching Services
- Professional Development**
- Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.**
- Guidance and Psychological
- Pupil Services

- Operations and Maintenance
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges
- SPED Tuition
- Other

*** What metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this EBP?**

Improved reflective reports through our SEL screener and Panorama survey.

Improved attendance rates for targeted student groups.

- EBP 1.1C Positive School Environments

FOCUS AREA 1.2 Implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development

- EBP 1.2A Effective Student Support System
- EBP 1.2B Comprehensive Tiered Supports

FOCUS AREA 1.3 Develop authentic partnerships with students and families that elevate their voices and leadership in decision-making and connect them to their communities

- EBP 1.3A Diverse Approaches to Meaningful Communication
- EBP 1.3B Students and Families as Valued Partners

FOCUS AREA 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

- EBP 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process
- EBP 2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation
- EBP 2.1C Comprehensive Approach to Early Literacy+

*** Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.

- **Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 2. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.**

A literacy team currently exists at the elementary school, who have been working to review the current structures related to supporting early literacy. This group is going to lead efforts over the next few years to pilot and implement high quality literacy curriculum with the goal of improved outcomes for all students that will have lasting impacts as the students progress through upper grades as well. The district is looking at options to bring in specific literacy coaching to the elementary school to support this effort. Professional development aligned to the Science of Reading will also be used to help enhance instructional practices and improve our approach to early literacy support.

*** Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?**

Elementary school focused, with district wide impacts.

\$ * **What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total included should be cumulative.**

*** Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.**

Literacy Curriculum - \$110,000
 Literacy Coaching - \$233,922
 Interventionists - \$456,165
 Instructional Leads - \$225,000
 PD - \$50,000

*** Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?**

Instruction Leadership, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development (+1 other)

Search...

Select All/ Deselect All

Administration

Instruction Leadership

Classroom & Specialist Teachers

Other Teaching Services

Professional Development

Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.

Guidance and Psychological

Clear

- Pupil Services
- Operations and Maintenance
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges
- SPED Tuition
- Other

*** What metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this EBP?**

Star benchmark assessments
 Improved utilization of instructional practices and tiered supports as measured by classroom observation narratives/tools.

- EBP 2.1D Early Literacy Screening and Support+

FOCUS AREA 2.2 Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning

- EBP 2.2A Effective Use of WIDA Framework

*** Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.
- Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 2. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.

The district currently employs five ESL teachers across our three schools. They do a mix of scheduled support in student's days, as well as pull out services in collaboration with gen ed teachers based on student needs. Our goal is to expand the work and supports being done through this department to allow them more time to participate in collaborative planning sessions with gen ed teachers and to run/coordinate a diverse set of professional development opportunities for their colleagues to improve student outcomes/supports for our ML student population.

*** Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?**

District Wide

\$ 1,740,366.00 * What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total included should be cumulative.

*** Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.**

ESL Teachers - \$1,404,366
ESL Coordinator - \$15,000
Professional Development - \$45,000
DEIB Coordinator - \$261,000
Instructional Lead - \$15,000

*** Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?**

Instruction Leadership, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development (+1 other)

Clear

Search...

Select All/ Deselect All

Administration

Instruction Leadership

Classroom & Specialist Teachers

Other Teaching Services

Professional Development

Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.

Guidance and Psychological

Pupil Services

Operations and Maintenance

Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges

SPED Tuition

Other

*** What metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this EBP?**

Star benchmark assessments

Improved utilization of instructional practices and tiered supports as measured by classroom observation narratives/tools.

EBP 2.2B High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

EBP 2.2C Collaborative Teaching Models

EBP 2.2D Targeted Academic Support and Acceleration +

FOCUS AREA 2.3 Reimagine the high school experience so that all students are engaged and prepared for post-secondary success

EBP 2.3A Authentic Postsecondary Planning

EBP 2.3B High-Quality Pathways and Programs +

FOCUS AREA 2.4 Develop a coherent and holistic range of programming that is responsive to the needs and interests of diverse learners

EBP 2.4A Expanded Access to Pre-Kindergarten +

EBP 2.4B Extended Learning Time

EBP 2.4C Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners

EBP 2.4D Diverse Enrichment Opportunities

FOCUS AREA 3.1 Develop an increased and robust pipeline of diverse and well-prepared educators and leaders

EBP 3.1A Intentional Hiring Systems

EBP 3.1B Enhanced Pathways to Increase Diversity +

EBP 3.1C Educator Preparation Partnerships

FOCUS AREA 3.2 Create the conditions to sustain and retain diverse and effective staff, particularly those who entered the field through alternative pathways

EBP 3.2A Inclusive School Communities

EBP 3.2B Retention Support Programs

EBP 3.2C Pathways for Professional Growth and Leadership

FOCUS AREA 3.3 Implement opportunities for all staff to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, utilizing effective teaming structures

EBP 3.3A Resource Allocation Aligned to Student Success

EBP 3.3B Support for Effective Team Practices

EBP 3.3C Collaborative Labor-Management Partnerships

