

## RiverBend Integrated Planning Application

### Needs Assessment Summary

RiverBend High School's Needs Assessment was informed via two inputs: community engagement (consisting of Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) staff, students, and community partners) and a review of available student data. Identifying authentic data for such a small school is a significant challenge. However, we looked to analyze trends related to student achievement within the challenges of learning in a correctional facility.

Our team looked at state graduation rates, OYA's Key Performance Measures, and individually tracked transition data, along with responses to both staff and student surveys regarding education at RiverBend. The goal of our Needs Assessment was to recognize areas of progress and celebrate successes while also identifying opportunities for growth. The following needs were elevated as a result of those efforts:

1. Improve graduation rates.
2. Enhance and expand school to career pathways.
3. Facilitate increased connection to post-secondary education opportunities.

### Plan Summary

RiverBend High School is housed within Camp Riverbend Youth Transitional Program (YTP), and is managed via the InterMountain Education Service District. Camp RiverBend is located about 15 miles west of La Grande in eastern Oregon.

All youth residing at RiverBend YTP who have not yet completed a GED or high school diploma are required to attend school. In addition, vocational training and work crews are available to youth on a part-time basis. The work-based learning opportunities are extensions of our CTE courses in Wildland Fire and Construction. While Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is our most involved community partner providing work and training opportunities for our students year round, we also partner with five other businesses and state agencies. Our VESoy coordinator has begun the process of expanding our ODF partnership, aiming to increase CTE opportunities for students as well as outlining a plan for authentic learning experiences while building local connections for student success upon graduation and termination from OYA.

Riverbend High School functions similar to an alternative school with one FTE certified teacher/administrator and one .3 FTE special education teacher. Although they are attending high school in a closed-custody facility, RiverBend students are held to the same academic requirements as their

counterparts in public high school. Upon graduation, students are able to take college courses online via community college or university.

After engaging our team in the Needs Assessment work, the following opportunities for growth were prioritized:

–RiverBend’s 2021-2022 five-year completion rate was 75% as compared to the statewide average of 88%, with a 2020-2021 rate of 83%. In addition, our most current dropout rate was 33.3% as compared to statewide Youth in Corrections Education Program’s (YCEP) rate of 8.4% and the state dropout rate of 4.1. Our needs assessment highlighted a deficiency in our transition data collection when youth leave our school and facility, which could provide explanation for our significant swings in our data numbers, especially considering our low student population.

–While statewide CTE data comparison is not applicable to our small school, the statewide focus of providing a well-rounded education connected to the community remains a top priority. All youth who attend RiverBend High School participate in at least one CTE course. We now have the opportunity to improve our systems for data collection and evaluation on our CTE programs in addition to building meaningful connections with our community college partners.

With these opportunities for growth in mind, we chose to focus our plan on the following high-priority needs:

1. Improve graduation rates.
2. Enhance and expand school to career pathways.
3. Facilitate increased connection to post-secondary education opportunities.

We expect to see the following outcomes:

1. Increased graduation rates for all students.
2. Expand the College and Career Center by increasing opportunities for career-related learning experiences and introducing postsecondary pathways related to wildland fire and construction.
3. Dual college credits earned by RiverBend students.

Processes that will be used to monitor the plan:

1. Review state and YCEP graduation data as compared to RiverBend’s individual data.
2. Review transition data yearly with OYA partners.
3. Review college attendance and achievements.

Strategies to support outcomes and address needs:

1. Develop and implement a system for collecting and analyzing transition data for youth exiting RiverBend and OYA custody.

2. Build and solidify partnerships with CBO's and community businesses to increase opportunities of work-based learning experiences.
3. Increase *credit recovery* options for identified students.
4. Partner with IMESD Virtual Learning Academy to provide opportunities for dual credit courses.
5. Provide professional learning opportunities for all staff focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (integrated with OYA training).
6. Enhance CTE programs to provide students industry-recognized certifications leading to high skill, high wage, and in-demand occupations upon exit from OYA.
7. Actively reduce financial barriers of entry for dual credit college-level courses by establishing funds available to students.
8. Update and expand library resources.

## Equity Advanced

**1. *What strengths do you see in your district or school in terms of equity and access?***

RiverBend High School is located within an OYA Transition Program. As such, equity and access have been a core focus in recent years. In 2019, OYA laid the groundwork for the agency-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiative and RiverBend staff have participated in that work. OYA has worked to embed their internal equity lens guide into all new and existing processes, programs, and policies. According to recent data, 90% of OYA staff (including school staff at RiverBend) have attended training about implicit bias and DEI.

In addition to the inclusive culture shift of OYA as a whole, administrative staff at RiverBend have begun the process of addressing equity and access concerns within the IMESD, starting by serving on our committee for equity and inclusion and currently working with the admin team addressing equity concerns illuminated from staff surveys.

**2. *What needs were identified in your district or school in terms of equity and access?***

- Financial barrier to community college for dual credit courses.

**3. *Upload the equity lens or tool you used to inform and/or clarify your plan & budget.***

Administrative staff at RiverBend have begun the process of addressing equity and access concerns within the IMESD, starting by serving on our committee for equity and inclusion and currently working with the admin team addressing equity concerns illuminated from staff surveys. We utilize the IMESD-created Decision-Making Tool when making decisions about our

students' access to programming and, truly, in assessing how our students' daily schedules are designed. It is our practice to begin every meeting with OYA staff and teachers by sharing this tool and reminding stakeholders of its purpose.

· **Describe the potential academic impact for all students AND focal student groups based on your use of funds in your plan.**

All RiverBend students will benefit academically from use of funds spent to increase access to programming, increase credit recovery options, provide access to college-credit opportunities, and expansion of CTE courses and elective offerings. Additionally, all students within our program will benefit from our staff's engagement in DEI-specific professional development.

Specific plans for expenditures are as follows:

–Build and solidify partnerships with CBO's and community businesses to increase opportunities of work-based learning experiences.

–Increase *credit recovery* options for identified students.

–Provide professional learning opportunities for all staff focused upon diversity, equity, and inclusion (integrated with OYA training)

–Enhance CTE programs to provide students industry-recognized certificates that will lead to high skill, high wage, and in-demand occupations upon exit from OYA.

–Actively reduce financial barriers of entry for dual credit college-level courses by establishing funds available to students.

· **What policies and procedures do you implement to ensure activities carried out by the district do not isolate or stigmatize children and youth navigating homelessness?**

This is a correctional facility where residents are housed full time, so students navigating homelessness is not an applicable concern.

### CTE Focus

· **What strengths do you see in your CTE Programs of Study in terms of equity and access?**

N/A-correctional facility where participation in CTE courses are a requirement.

· **What needs were identified in your CTE Programs of Study in terms of equity and access?**

N/A-see previous question

· **What is your recruitment strategy, and how does it ensure equitable access and participation in CTE Programs of Study?**

N/A-correctional facility, recruitment is not recommended.

- **How will you ensure equal access and participation in your CTE Programs of Study among focal student groups? How will you ensure there is no discrimination for focal student groups?**

We are a small school located within a correctional facility. With a student population that varies between 4-10, we do not run into equity and access challenges. CTE is our strongest asset at RiverBend and ALL students participate in at least one branch of the program.

## Well-Rounded Education

*(250 words or less per question)*

- Describe your approach to providing students a well-rounded education. What instructional practices, course topics, curriculum design, and student skills development are part of this approach?

At RiverBend High School, we believe that education is essential to ensuring long-term re-entry success for our adjudicated youth. Providing youth with well-rounded educational services while in custody is essential to keeping them engaged in their education and focused on their future. RiverBend is well suited to focusing on personalized learning in order to improve student engagement as well as academic outcomes. That personalized learning allows us the freedom to utilize our CTE program to offer authentic learning opportunities with our community partners and local employers. Outside the fence, students learn to meet real-world expectations on the job site. While inside the fence, we strive to provide an education that addresses all facets of learning, including mental and personal health.

RBHS offers most of its core curriculum through online courses with Edmentum. Our CTE courses are taught both on and off-site, with concepts first taught in the classroom and then applied in the field. Paid positions on the construction and/or fire crew are awarded to students who excel in both areas.

- **Which disciplines (theater, visual arts, music, dance, media arts) of the arts are provided, either through an integration of content or as a separate class?**

Students have the opportunity to take the following classes as separate classes through Edmentum:

1. Creative Writing
2. Fashion Design
3. Art History and Appreciation
4. Art in World Cultures
5. Music Appreciation

- **How do you ensure students have access to strong library programs?**

We maintain an extensive library on-site of both fiction and non-fiction with new titles added yearly. Student input and requests are collected throughout the school year with purchases made prior to the following school year, dependent on funds. In addition, all students have access to the public library via the SAGE library system, as well as SORA, the online K-12 library system.

**How do you ensure students have adequate time to eat, coupled with adequate time for movement and play?**

The daily school schedule is set up around OYA's structured meal times. Youth are given recreation opportunities three times daily; before school, at 1PM, and from 4 PM-6 PM.

- **Describe how you incorporate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) instructional practices, including project-based learning, critical thinking, inquiry, and cross-disciplinary content.**

STEAM is embedded in our CTE Program of Study offered at RBHS. Our Wildland Fire Academy and Construction courses feature hands-on learning, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork while working in the field. RiverBend High School has formed strong ties with state organizations and community businesses (Oregon Department of Forestry, local construction companies) and is continuing the work to build and expand our community partnerships

- **Describe your process for ensuring the adopted curriculum (basal and supplemental) consists of a clearly stated scope and sequence of K-12 learning objectives and is aligned to all state and national standards.**

For courses offered outside of our online learning platform, RiverBend High School relies heavily on InterMountain ESD and their curriculum review and adoption process.

- **Describe your process for ensuring classroom instruction is intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students.**

RBHS has one classroom teacher/administrator who is supervised and evaluated by IMESD's Director of Equity and Student Success. Both licensed and classified staff are observed formally and informally and go through an annual professional goal setting process monitored through the IMESD. IMESD provides RiverBend staff access to three full-time instructional coaches.

- **How will you support, coordinate, and integrate early childhood education programs?**

Given our status as an educational program located within an OYA correctional facility serving grades 9-12, we do not integrate early childhood education programming.

- **What strategies do you employ to help facilitate effective transitions from middle grades to high school and from high school to postsecondary education?**

All of our students receive education in Career Exploration and Life Skills, including personal finance. Students who choose to remain in Eastern Oregon upon release establish contacts with local employers and community colleges through the “Fundamental Practices” curriculum aimed at *Safe Community Skill Development*. Transition services is an area where we have chosen to focus our school improvement, including data tracking and utilizing *transition specialists* to remove barriers for our students transitioning back into public school, community college, and/or the workforce.

- **How do you identify and support the academic and technical needs of students who are not meeting or exceeding state and national standards, and Perkins Performance targets, particularly for focal student groups?**

Individualized learning has long been a core component of RiverBend High School. Upon entry, every student has an initial conference with the teacher. During that conference, educational history and progress is reviewed and educational goals are created for their time at the facility. If students are significantly behind, a plan for credit recovery is created, complete with an anticipated timeline for check-ins and modifications. If applicable, the IEP is reviewed during that time with identified supports communicated to staff at the facility.

- **How do you provide career exploration opportunities, including career information and employment opportunities, and career guidance and academic counseling before and during CTE Program of Study enrollment?**

All youth housed in RiverBend are enrolled in our introductory CTE course. Both career exploration and work-based learning (on construction and wildland fire crews) are provided for students through our CTE program, with one course offering dual credit.

- **How are you providing equitable work-based learning experiences for students?**

Work-based learning is an integrated part of successfully completing the RiverBend Transition Program. Since we are a correctional facility, opportunities are very structured but *ALL* students are required to participate.

- **Describe how students’ academic and technical skills will be improved through integrated, coherent, rigorous, challenging and relevant learning in subjects that constitute a well-rounded education, including opportunities to earn postsecondary credit while in high school.**

Our CTE program of study includes a sequence of courses from introductory to advanced. The longer a student is at RiverBend and involved in the program, the more opportunities they have to perform

specialized job duties associated with various career tracks. Increasing dual credit opportunities for our students is an identified focus area for the next school year.

- **What activities will you offer to students that will lead to self-sufficiency in identified careers?**

Work-based learning is the only tool we have in our arsenal that allows students to experience real-world career opportunities. For example, our students are able to work alongside other fire crews throughout eastern Oregon, giving them the skills to become self-sufficient with direct experience in the field of Wildland Firefighting.

#### *CTE Focus*

- **How will students from focal groups and their families learn about CTE course offerings and Programs of Study that are available?**

All youth at RiverBend are required to participate in at least one of our CTE course offerings. That expectation is communicated to the student during their initial screening (before transfer to RiverBend). Families are invited to participate both in the initial screening and during the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings, however parent participation is a recognized area needing improvement.

- **How will you prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields?**

N/A-correctional facility

- **Describe any new CTE Programs of Study to be developed.**

RiverBend is not planning to develop any new CTE POS for 23-25

### **Engaged Community**

- **If the goal is meaningful, authentic, and ongoing community engagement, where are you in that process? What barriers, if any, were experienced and how might you anticipate and resolve those issues in future engagement efforts?**

Community engagement is one RiverBend's pillars, both for the high school and for the facility. The primary goals of RiverBend are to give youth an opportunity to earn work skills and practice pro-social skills in the community that will help them successfully transition out of corrections. Our VESQY Coordinator currently works hand in hand with 10 community partners to provide work-based learning opportunities for our students.

Barriers to participation include time constraints of stakeholders as students, staff, families and community members lead busy lives with many obligations at school, work and in the home. For this reason, we want to create a variety of platforms for stakeholders to provide input, including online and in-person opportunities. We will continue to collect feedback from our students, families, staff, and community members to better understand the ways we are effectively engaging and gather ideas to improve our practices.

- **What relationships and/or partnerships will you cultivate to improve future engagement?**

Our VESOY Coordinator will continue work to solidify our partnership with ODF for both work-based learning opportunities and continuing education for our students and staff. We plan to partner with Clackamas Community College to enhance dual credit opportunities within our Wildland Fire program.

- **What resources would enhance your engagement efforts? How can ODE support your continuous improvement process?**

The IMESD was an integral part of completing this guidance application. ODE can support our continuous improvement process by continuing to develop and offer templates and best-practice guides, as well as maintaining active lines of communication with our ESD's for technical assistance and additional resources.

- **How do you ensure community members and partners experience a safe and welcoming educational environment?**

As a correctional school, all security issues are overseen by OYA. School staff attend all safety training required by OYA and visitor policy is dictated by OYA.

- **If you sponsor a public charter school, describe their participation in the planning and development of your plan.**

N/A

- **Who was engaged in any aspect of your planning processes under this guidance?**  
*(Check all that apply)*

- Students of color
- Students with disabilities
- Students who are emerging bilinguals
- Students who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+
- Students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care

- Families of students of color
- Families of students with disabilities
- Families of students who are emerging bilinguals
- Families of students who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+
- Families of students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care
- Licensed staff (administrators, teachers, counselors, etc.)
- Classified staff (paraprofessionals, bus drivers, office support, etc.)
- Community Based Organizations (non-profit organizations, civil rights organizations, community service groups, culturally specific organizations, etc.)
- Tribal members (adults and youth)
- School volunteers (school board members, budget committee members, PTA/PTO members, booster club members, parent advisory group members, classroom volunteers, etc.)
- Business community
- Regional Educator Networks (RENs)
- Local Community College Deans and Instructors; Local university deans and instructors
- Migrant Education and McKinney-Vento Coordinators
- Local Workforce Development and / or Chambers of Commerce
- CTE Regional Coordinators
- Regional STEM / Early learning Hubs
- Vocational Rehabilitation and pre-Employment Service Staff
- Justice Involved Youth
- Community leaders
- Other:

- How were they engaged?

*(Check all that apply)*

Survey(s) or other engagement applications (i.e., Thought Exchange)

In-person forum(s)

Focus group(s)

Roundtable discussion

Community group meeting

Collaborative design or strategy session(s)

Community-driven planning or initiative(s)

Website

CTE Consortia meeting

Email messages

Newsletters

Social media

School board meeting

Partnering with unions

Partnering with community-based partners

Partnering with faith-based organizations

Partnering with business

Other:

### ***Evidence of Engagement***

You will be asked to upload your **top five artifacts** of engagement. Smaller districts, as outlined above, are required to submit their top two artifacts.

1. Heavy Equipment course evaluation

2. Addition of parental input questions (when applicable) to MDT process *and* intake forms.
3. Student exit interview

- **Why did you select these particular artifacts to upload with your application? How do they show evidence of engaging focal student populations, their families, and the community?**

These artifacts were selected to showcase two of the most underserved populations in corrections. Historically both students and their parents have been “at the whim” of the system with very little input on decisions affecting the student’s future. OYA has chosen to invest in creating a family-focused culture with multiple resources being extended to families in order to encourage involvement, including gas and hotel vouchers for visits and increasing the number of interpreters. It is a natural extension for the school to use this opportunity to engage parents of our students who, historically, have not been involved for various reasons.

- **Describe at least two strategies you executed to engage each of the focal student groups and their families present within your district and community. Explain why those strategies were used and what level of the Community Engagement spectrum these fell on.**

*Enhance Family Engagement within existing meeting opportunities-Add community engagement questions to regular meeting processes.*

The MDT process is a quarterly meeting of all parties involved with individual students. Each student has an initial MDT upon entry to the facility and subsequent meetings every three months. Participants include education, mental health, probation officers, OYA staff, students, and parents. Parental involvement has become an area of focus for OYA and are beginning to see the results of those efforts. All parents were sent the intake forms with an informal follow-up planned at the initial MDT.

*Intentionally include YCEP (Youth Corrections Education Program) youth in Community Engagement.*

Youth residing in OYA facilities have limited choice and input regarding their education program. The limited choices are a natural effect of the situation, however student voice has not been encouraged in the past. Evidence shows that including student choice and voice in the classroom offers students a chance to take ownership of their education. The vision of RiverBend High School is for teachers and students to work collaboratively to co-create a learning plan that best suits the needs of each individual student.

- **Describe at least two strategies you executed to engage staff. Explain why those strategies were used. Explain why those strategies were used and what level of the Community Engagement spectrum these fell on.**

N/A-only needed 2 artifacts

- **Describe and distill what you learned from your community and staff. How did you apply that input to inform your planning?**

The school team relied heavily on student feedback to inform planning for future initiatives and to prioritize spending. The shared theme that emerged from the MDT's and student feedback is a need for more opportunities of career preparation. Students expressed interest in learning skills directly applicable to success upon release; i.e. work-based learning opportunities, dual credit courses to facilitate transition to post-secondary education.

### *CTE Focus*

#### **How will you intentionally develop partnerships with employers to expand work-based learning opportunities for students?**

Our VESoy Coordinator will continue work to solidify our partnership with ODF for work-based learning opportunities. Existing partnerships related to work-based learning opportunities for students are dependent upon stated needs from employers in our area. We will continue to nurture these partnerships in collaboration with our VESoy Coordinator.

### **Strengthened Systems and Capacity**

#### *(250 words or less per question)*

- How do you recruit, onboard, and develop quality educators and leaders? How are you recruiting and retaining educators and leaders representative of student focal groups?

RiverBend High School relies on the IMESD for our recruitment and onboarding procedures. In addition, professional development plans are created, maintained, and evaluated through IMESD human resources.

- What processes are in place to identify and address any disparities that result in students of color, students experiencing poverty, students learning English and students with disabilities being taught more often than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers?

N/A-We have one teacher onsite. Additional student support provided through IMESD services.

- How do you support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, **particularly for focal student groups**?

N/A-YCEP students are only removed from the classroom for safety concerns. Disciplinary decisions fall on OYA and the school provides education individually on a case-by-case basis as deemed necessary. If a

student's behavior warrants removal from school, they will then be transported back to a closed-custody facility.

- How do you align professional growth and development to the strengths and needs of the **school, the teachers, and district leaders?**

This is an ongoing challenge at RiverBend High School, as it is with many *special purpose* schools. Administrator participates in the YCEP Principal's quarterly PLC meetings and monthly administrative meetings with the IMESD administrative team. Both classified and licensed staff work with their supervisors to develop a professional growth and development plan directly related to their personal/professional and overarching IMESD goals.

- How do you provide feedback and coaching to guide instructional staff in research-based improvement to teaching and learning?

N/A-Only one teacher/administrator on-site.

- What systems are in place to monitor student outcomes and identify students who may be at risk of academic failure? How do you respond and support the student(s) when those identifications and observations are made?

Teacher meets weekly with each student to monitor progress towards educational goals set during initial consultation. Depending on student performance or concerns we may reach out to probation officers and parents in order to facilitate open communication lines and involve the team in educational decisions.

- How do you facilitate effective transitions between early childhood education programs and local elementary school programs; from elementary to middle grades; from middle grades to high school; and from high school to postsecondary education?

This has been identified as a high-priority area for us. Our typical school population plans to enter the workforce directly following graduation and release from custody. However, it is our goal to provide assistance to all students in the creation of a pathway to postsecondary education focused on enhancing the career goals of each individual student. While we are still exploring options, our initial goal is to create a defined pathway from our Wildland Fire Program into the 1-year Fire Science certificate program at Clackamas Community College. Once that has been implemented, we hope to expand our agreement to encompass an Associates Degree in Fire Science. We envision the ability to offer multiple classes in that pathway as dual credit courses here at RiverBend.