Table of Contents

Summer Learning Series .................................................. 3

Issue 1: Why do summer learning and wellness programs matter? ............... 3

Issue 2: What constitutes an effective summer program? ........................... 19

Issue 3: How can boards provide leadership and funding for summer programs? ................................................................. 35

Issue 4: Effective summer learning programs: Case studies ...................... 55

Timeline for planning and implementing summer programs ............ 77

Policy briefs ................................................................. 79

School’s Out, Now What? How Summer Programs are Improving Student Learning and Wellness ................................................................. 79

Providing Access to Nutritious Meals During Summer ........................... 85

Sample board policies and administrative regulations ...................... 88

BP 6177 – Summer Learning Programs ........................................ 88

BP/AR 3552 – Summer Meal Program ........................................... 94

Summer Matters workshop guide ............................................. 105

Annotated literature review ................................................... 117

*This guide is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation*
Why do summer learning and wellness programs matter?

SUMMER LEARNING SERIES
Issue 1  |  April 22, 2013

csba
This is the first in a series of articles focusing on strategies to promote student learning and wellness during the summer break from school. This installment presents an overview of the topic and the importance of effective summer programs in helping to close the achievement gap.

This special series is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.
Why do summer learning and wellness programs matter?

The ideal of the summertime idyll, of children spending warm days engaged in wholesome fun—cue images of tire swings over a lazy river—has always been mostly a myth.

Two hundred years ago, summertime was school time. Most American children attended class primarily during the summer and winter, leaving spring and fall open to assist families and communities with planting and harvesting.

Urbanization and universal education eventually expanded school calendars, and summer education largely disappeared by the late 1800s, replaced in part by the notion that summers should be “designated as a time for family vacations and a break from the mental taxation of school,” wrote Brenda McLaughlin and Jeffrey Smink of the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) in a 2009 report for the Education Commission of the States.

That concept of summer still holds true for many American children. It’s a time designated for something other than traditional education. The question—and the problem—lies in how that “something” is defined.

For middle and upper class Americans, “summer vacation” frequently entails family vacations, camps and local enrichment programs (sports/arts/music) provided privately or by community-based organizations. While these aren’t exactly the “mental taxation of school,” participating children largely continue to learn, in measurable and positive ways, through the hot middle months of the year.
For low-income families and children, however, it’s typically a different story. They often lack the resources to participate in activities that are comparable to those available to higher income families. For children in low-income communities, summer is more likely an educational drought, a period when not only are they not learning anything new, they are actually slipping backward and leaving behind knowledge they gained during the school year.

The effects of summer learning loss

When students return to traditional classrooms in the fall worse off than when they left in the spring, the phenomenon is called “summer learning loss.” Over the last several decades, the deleterious effects of summer learning loss have been repeatedly documented, from Barbara Heyns’ landmark 1978 study through the ongoing work of Karl Alexander and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University to the Rand Corp.’s 2011 study *Making Summer Count*.

Heyns, a New York University sociologist, spent two years following nearly 3,000 sixth- and seventh-grade students in Atlanta’s public schools. She found that children who read at least six books during the summer maintained or improved their reading skills, while children who did not read at all during the summer saw their literacy skills slip by as much as an entire grade level.
Alexander and research partners Doris Entwisle and Linda Olson were curious to learn more about this devastating effect and consequently launched a series of studies in 1982 which solidified and expanded evidence showing low-income youth suffer significant learning loss, both during the summer and long term.

In 2007, Alexander and his colleagues found that two-thirds of the ninth-grade achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their economically better-off peers could be explained by what happened over the summer during the elementary years. During the school year, children at all income levels tended to progress academically at about the same rate. But “over the summer, it’s a dramatically different story,” stated Alexander in an NSLA research brief. “During the summer months, disadvantaged children tread water at best or even fall behind [while] better-off children build their skills steadily…. The pattern was definite and dramatic. It was quite a revelation.”

Moreover, the academic degradation is cumulative. In the Rand study, the estimated average learning loss in math and reading for students not mentally engaged during the summer was one month per year. For low-income students, it was two months. Jennifer Peck, executive director of the Partnership for Children and Youth, says, “While middle-income children retain knowledge or, in many cases, make gains over the summer, low-income children fall behind. This learning loss is cumulative so when it occurs consistently over time, children fall so far behind that it becomes impossible to catch up.” In fact, by the time disadvantaged students enter high school, they are often years behind their peers, which subsequently plays a role in determining whether they will earn a high school diploma or pursue a college education.
Other ill effects

Children who do not participate in organized summer activities tend to suffer other adverse effects in addition to their ability to learn. In the 2010 *Time* magazine essay “The Case Against Summer Vacation,” writer David Von Drehle said summers spent like Tom Sawyer—glorious days of “mud, mild rebellion, chaste romance and rampant imagination electrified by a dash of gander and a blaze of heroism”—were largely fiction.

For many children, but especially children of low-income families, Von Drehle observed, “summer is a season of boredom, inactivity and isolation. Kids can’t go exploring if their neighborhoods aren’t safe. It’s hard to play without toys or playgrounds or open spaces. And Tom Sawyer wasn’t expected to care for his siblings while Aunt Polly worked for minimum wage.”

In such cases, summer is ironically bad for children’s health. A 2007 Ohio State University study measured the body mass index of several thousand kindergarteners and first-graders at different points over a two-year period. The study found that children gained weight two or three times faster during summer months compared to during school years. Children who were already overweight and who belonged to particular minority groups experienced the most significant weight change. The authors speculated that even the limited opportunities of structured, regular physical activity during the school year (e.g., organized sports, physical education classes, recess) were influential in moderating children’s weight. These activities also reduced children’s chances to excessively eat or snack.
“Children would weigh a lot more if it weren’t for the time that they spend in school,” said Paul von Hippel, statistician and principal investigator of the study.

“The data don’t provide much detail on kids’ home lives, but if you have some Tom Sawyer idea that kids are climbing trees all summer and only eat when called to dinner, that doesn’t square with the fact that they’re gaining weight so quickly. The other stereotype—that kids are watching TV, playing video games, and eating chips out of a bag—may be closer to the truth, at least for kids who are overweight.”

Eating poorly or not enough is a significant, well-known impediment to effective learning. Studies have shown diet can impair neural development in young children, resulting in lower IQs and decreased chance of success in school.

For many low-income students, summer breaks are also a break from healthy nutrition. Many children depend upon subsidized school meal programs to supplement substandard diets at home; when summer arrives, that aid frequently goes away. The Food Research and Action Center reported in 2010 that, nationally, only one in seven low-income students who relied upon the National School Lunch Program during the regular school year had access to summer meals.

The percentage of unserved children is comparable in California, but is particularly acute because of the large numbers of students involved. In a study last year by California Food Policy Advocates (School’s Out … Who Ate?), only 16 percent of the students who were receiving free or reduced-price lunches during the school year were also participating in a subsidized summer lunch program.
“And knowing that not all eligible kids are participating in the National School Lunch Program during the school year means the problem [during summer] could be even bigger,” said Patrice Chamberlain, director of the California Summer Meal Coalition. “We have nothing to suggest that the need somehow disappears or lessens during the summer. In fact, most community food banks report summer as the busiest time, suggesting that it is a time of real struggle for families.

“If kids living in low-income neighborhoods don’t have access to healthy food and safe places to play, what are we setting them up for? . . . It seems almost an unreasonable expectation for many of these lower-income students to be ready for school in the fall when they have gone part or all of the summer break without adequate nourishment for their bodies or minds.”
Summer solution

The answer, according to a rising chorus of educators, academicians and others, is to expand and deepen summer enrichment opportunities for children, focusing first on those in low-income or disadvantaged families.

“Summer learning loss translates into achievement gaps and educational inequities,” said Jennifer Sloan McCombs, a Rand senior policy researcher and co-author of the Making Summer Count study, at a recent national conference of school administrators. “Students, especially low-performing students, need more learning time—and summer is a time to do that.”

But how? Years of an uncertain economy, combined with declining government monies and subsequent budget cuts, have left most school districts in California and around the nation struggling simply to get through a painful period of consolidation and contraction.

Summer programs tend to be among the first things cut. A recent California School Boards Association survey of 167 districts found that 32 percent had closed their programs within the past five years. The reason for the closures was almost universal: No money. With their basic educational mission confronted by ongoing funding threats, that have forced them to trim the traditional school year to save money, few school administrators and governing boards feel they can justifiably boost summer spending.

Instead, they often go the opposite way. There is no more dramatic example of that trend, according to the California education research organization EdSource,
than in the Los Angeles Unified School District, the state’s largest with 667,000 students. In 2008, the district spent $51.4 million providing summer academic classes. In 2011, it spent $3 million and limited enrollment to one class per student. Not surprisingly, that translated into far fewer participating students: from 188,500 students in elementary through high school in 2008 to just 22,000 high school students in the summer of 2011. Last year the district reluctantly offered its smallest summer program ever, a $1 million bare-bones operation serving only 5,000 high school students.

It’s not all grim news, though. A number of districts around the country, including in California, have not only maintained summer programs, they have improved them both in scope and quality. The CSBA survey found that 68 percent of districts surveyed offered summer programs or summer school by pulling together general fund, Title I, after-school supplemental and private funding despite hard times.

In California, the Summer Matters campaign brings together a coalition of education leaders, policy advocates, funders, researchers and program providers to strategize about making high-quality summer learning part of a year-round set of opportunities for all students. This work has seeded a growing number of school-based programs around the state and continues to grow.

The Summer Matters campaign has generated 13 model summer learning programs across the state, with documented impact on children’s learning. Other districts and local organizations are taking note and beginning to pull together resources to make summer learning happen in their communities.

Their approaches are varied and creative, and are often tied to the particular attributes and resources of their communities. Their stories may offer lessons for everyone else.
For more information

Look for the second article in CSBA’s summer learning series, “What constitutes an effective summer program?,” coming soon.

Also see CSBA’s new policy brief, School’s Out, Now What? How Summer Programs Are Improving Student Learning and Wellness, available on CSBA’s website at www.csba.org. This policy brief focuses on the role of the governing board in encouraging and facilitating summer learning and wellness opportunities.

CSBA sample board policy BP 6177 – Summer Learning Programs was retitled and updated in April to address summer learning opportunities in addition to summer school. BP/AR 3552 – Summer Meal Program describes requirements for districts participating in federally funded summer meal programs and encourages the provision of summer meal programs in conjunction with educational enrichment or recreational activities.

For information and resources from the statewide Summer Matters campaign, see http://summermatters2you.net.
What constitutes an effective summer program?
This is the second in a series of articles focusing on strategies to promote student learning and wellness during summer break from school. This issue examines the characteristics of effective summer programs.

This special series is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.
What constitutes an effective summer program?

When summer school conjures up images of sullen students compelled to attend because they failed that same class during the school year or because they require course credits to graduate, it is arguably a picture of failure.

“If summer school is focused only on the remedial and lacks engagement,” said Gary Huggins, chief executive officer of the National Summer Learning Association, “it won’t likely work very well to address summer learning loss because kids won’t want to attend.”

And if children don’t attend, continued Huggins, the community doesn’t invest itself in the program and the summer program, scorned or ignored, becomes an easy target for elimination.

That’s bad news. Summer learning loss—the loss of knowledge that occurs when children’s minds aren’t actively engaged between school years—has a profound, cumulative impact upon their educational careers. Experts say it measurably contributes to the widening achievement gap between students who enjoy summers filled with educational or enrichment activities and those who do not. It is a problem growing in depth and complexity, but one that has largely been overlooked in the chaos of other educational crises.

There are, to be sure, excellent remedial summer school programs—well-designed and run by dedicated public school teachers, administrators and staff. These programs serve a necessary purpose and, in these days of reduced budgets, often
constitute a district’s entire summer effort. A recent California School Boards Association survey found that, among responding districts that offer summer programs, 70 percent said their summer curriculum concentrates on remediation.

But increasingly, experts say remedial summer school is not enough because these programs only benefit students mandated to be there. Instead, advocates like Huggins espouse summer learning programs that involve a diversity of recreational and enrichment activities intended to attract and engage students and improve not just academic skills, but personal skills as well. California’s Summer Matters campaign—the first statewide effort to expand and improve summer learning—promotes the integration of academic and enrichment programming to make sure children are engaged and excited about learning.

Different approaches

There are several types of summer learning programs:

- Educational/cognitive programs strive to increase academic motivation, improve skills and achievement in areas like math, reading and science, and promote high school completion and college preparation.

- Enrichment and recreation programs emphasize new experiences, positive relationships with staff and peers, and a sense of belonging. They often focus on fostering personal, social, emotional, physical and career-related abilities, such as interpersonal skills, character development, communication, conflict resolution and leadership.
• Career development programs—often for older youth—narrow in on career decision-making skills, interviewing and other job-related abilities. They boost employability and reduce the likelihood of requiring social assistance.

• Multi-element programs combine aspects of all of the above.

Regardless of the program focus, successful programs share common characteristics. The Summer Matters campaign has piloted summer learning programs in 13 districts across the state and, based on the National Summer Learning Association’s quality standards, has identified some core elements of a high-quality program:

• Children are engaged in learning activities that are active and meaningful, promote collaboration, expand their horizons and build mastery in a safe environment.

• Skilled staff have strong, positive relationships with students and are intentionally working to deliver engaging learning experiences that meet students’ emotional, social and academic needs and goals.

• The program is managed by visionary, knowledgeable leaders, including school board members and superintendents, committed to continuously improving program quality and securing the resources needed to deliver the learning experiences students need.

• The program is anchored in its community, with tangible support from families, community-based organizations and civic leaders partnering with schools to maximize resources and provide the best overall experience for youth.
Five to six weeks of full-day programming address the needs of children and their families.

These elements are consistent with what researchers from the Rand Corp. found in their much-cited report, “Making Summer Count.”

Case studies

Here's how four California districts with notable summer programs have met the challenge to provide high-quality summer programs, according to a 2012 report sponsored by the Learning in Afterschool & Summer Project:

- Three K-5 schools in the Alameda Unified School District offer a summer program that provides science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) project-based learning six hours a day for eight weeks. The program adds enrichment activities, such as dance, visits to museums, and a chance to make marble roller coasters and solar ovens for creating s'mores. The program is operated by Bay Area Community Resources, a regional nonprofit.

- Central Elementary School in San Bernardino County's Banning Unified School District runs a weekly themed summer program. For example, during Wild West Week, students make sheriff badges, learn the history of “wanted” posters and visit a replica 1880s working homestead. Other weeks include Iron Chef Week, Ocean Commotion and Olympic Week. The program is run in conjunction with the local Boys & Girls Club.
• Elementary students at the Apple Valley Unified School District in the high desert of Southern California spend the summer in space. “Galactic Games” uses NASA resources to teach about the solar system, constellations and human space exploration. The summer program for middle school students is more “grounded”: They participate in community improvement projects of their choice, such as building school gardens or providing toiletry kits to the homeless.

• The Summer Bridge program at Valley High School in the Santa Ana Unified School District targets incoming freshmen, who spend five hours each day learning skills—lesson planning, relationship building, and time management—that will help them negotiate and succeed in their first year of high school. Participants often become teacher’s aides or mentors to other freshmen. The program is operated by Think Together, a nationwide education advocacy group.

Let’s take a deeper look at how one district has managed to successfully grow its summer programs. According to 2010 U.S. Census figures, Fresno is the poorest metropolitan area in California and the second poorest in the nation. Additionally, more than 40 percent of its residents do not speak English at home. These are just two of the challenges the 72,000-student Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) has to confront, which like most districts in California has also endured years of budget shortfalls and subsequent cuts.

And yet FUSD has consciously invested substantial resources to develop and grow its Expanded Learning Program, which includes programs for after school, summer, credit recovery and college preparation.
Perhaps the most novel aspect of Fresno’s summer program is that it is automatic: Targeted students and their families have to consciously opt out.

“We used to be like most places. Students chose whether to attend summer school,” said Glenn Starkweather, FUSD’s director of the Expanded Learning Program. “But the reality of summer learning loss and the nature of the students we serve forced us to rethink how we do things. So we shifted the paradigm. We took all of the transcript data about our students, identified deficiencies and then automatically registered students for expanded learning programs. Students are expected to attend unless a parent opts them out.”

As a result, the summer program has grown from 5,000 students to 17,000 in grades kindergarten through 12. Most of the classes focus on specific areas of concern, such as lagging language or math skills. High school programs emphasize college preparation and fulfilling the A-G course requirements of the California State University and University of California systems.

The goal of the program, to which the FUSD board has committed $4 million, is to “make sure we are providing all of the appropriate interventions and opportunities so that every student is on track to graduate, regardless of their circumstances,” said Jorge Aguilar, associate director for equity and access.

So how’s it going? Starkweather and Aguilar say the district’s full commitment has earned community attention and support. Collaborations with local groups have increased. The graduation rate is up. School officials are even considering creating a Saturday school program.
Reinforcing FUSD’s positive experience, the Summer Matters campaign recently received evaluation results from three of its pilot summer learning programs. The programs, run by Sacramento City Unified School District, LA’s BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow—a longstanding civic-school-business partnership) and the Fresno County Office of Education (at Central Unified School District), incorporated the best practices of quality programming including strong community partnerships, integrated academics and enrichment, and well-trained summer staff.

Highlights of the evaluation, which looked at academic as well as social/emotional impact, include:

- Students had statistically significant improvements in vocabulary, as measured by pre- and post-tests on the San Diego Quick Assessment. They ended the summer with vocabulary skills much closer to their grade level, increasing their instructional grade level by over one-third of a grade.

- English language learners across communities demonstrated statistically significant increases in their grade-level vocabulary skills, a gateway to English language fluency.
• In focus groups, parents reported the programs helped their children prepare for the challenge of transitioning from elementary to middle school, a period when many students begin to disengage from school.

• Nine out of 10 parents reported that the summer programs helped their children make new friends and get along better with other students. These social skills will help youth be more successful in school and beyond.

The report concludes that “high-quality summer learning programs are helping to sustain and improve academic skills, build strong connections to peers and adults, and reinforce positive work habits and attitudes.”

These positive results didn’t come out of thin air. All three pilot programs have worked to intentionally build programs that match the quality standards of the National Summer Learning Association. This work includes external assessments of program quality that have documented the programs’ steady improvements year after year.

Repeating these results requires people to act. Information about what constitutes a successful summer program and strategies for developing and implementing programs are becoming increasingly available to help school districts and county offices of education initiate or strengthen their summer programs.
For further information

Issue 1 of CSBA’s summer learning series, *Why do summer learning and wellness programs matter?*, is available on CSBA’s website at [www.csba.org/pnb](http://www.csba.org/pnb). Look for the third article in the series, “How can boards provide leadership and funding for summer programs?,” coming soon.

Also see CSBA’s policy brief, *School’s Out, Now What? How Summer Programs Are Improving Student Learning and Wellness*, available on CSBA’s website at [www.csba.org/pnb](http://www.csba.org/pnb). This policy brief focuses on the role of the governing board in encouraging and facilitating summer learning and wellness opportunities.

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For information and resources from the statewide Summer Matters campaign, see [http://summematters2you.net](http://summematters2you.net).
How can boards provide leadership and funding for summer programs?

SUMMER LEARNING SERIES

Issue 3 | May 24, 2013
by Scott LaFee and Diane Greene

This is the third in a series of articles focusing on strategies to promote student learning and wellness during summer break from school. Recognizing that lack of resources is the most common barrier to providing summer programs, this issue looks at available funding opportunities.

This special series is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.
How can boards provide leadership and funding for summer programs?

Since summer is typically treated as time away from school, summer learning hasn’t historically been regarded as one of education’s more pressing problems. Thus, when school districts and county offices of education are faced with painful funding shortfalls and the possibility of cutting programs to save money, summer programs may be on the chopping block. In fact, in a recent survey by the California School Boards Association, over 90 percent of the districts that reported they do not offer summer programs stated that it was due to the lack of funds.

“We recognize that district leaders have extremely hard decisions to make in our under-resourced environment, and summer has been the victim of that prioritization in a big way,” said Jennifer Peck, executive director of the California-based nonprofit organization Partnership for Children and Youth (PCY), which oversees the statewide Summer Matters campaign. “I think in large part that’s been due to a pretty broad lack of awareness about the very real and dramatic consequences of a lack of summer learning opportunities, particularly for our most disadvantaged students.”

However, there is a growing recognition that a lack of summer programs hurts the basic educational mission of schools. Experts say summer learning loss—when students lose knowledge between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next—is a major factor in children’s academic careers, especially for children from low-income backgrounds. In addition, many children unable to participate in
summer learning programs have less access to physical fitness programs and healthy nutrition. (See Issue 1 of this series for a discussion of the evidence supporting the link between the availability of summer programs and student achievement and wellness.)

In response to concerns about summer learning loss, a statewide coalition of educators, policymakers, advocates, school district leaders and foundations joined together in the Summer Matters campaign with a singular mission: to promote and create access to summer learning opportunities for all children.

The Summer Matters campaign has been engaged in developing and advocating for legislation to make public funding more flexible and easier to use for summer programming, piloting innovative summer programs throughout the state, implementing a communications strategy to garner greater public support and building a network of trainers to strengthen program quality.
Getting started

Successful summer programs cannot happen without enlightened interest, effective leadership and active support from school boards and superintendents. Not only does the school board set the vision and goals for the district, it adopts the district budget, as well as written policies that provide direction and structure, and it monitors program effectiveness.

Through all these areas of responsibility, the school board can set an expectation that summer programs are part of a district’s overall educational effort, not just a seasonal offshoot. To achieve this, planning should happen year-round and be treated equally with traditional school year programs.

“Strong summer programs absolutely should be brought to the table to help extend a school district’s resources—and in communities where that is happening, we see stronger results for kids,” said Gary Huggins, chief executive officer of the National Summer Learning Association.

“A great role for a school board is to support a superintendent who is trying to create a high-quality summer learning experience for his or her students,” added Huggins. “And if your district administration isn’t there yet, you can help by asking what the district is doing about summer learning and by helping, where appropriate, to make connections with partners in the community to help create more summer learning opportunities.”
“Even school districts that can’t afford to run a summer learning program can serve their students by equipping teachers and parents with information on summer learning loss and pointing students toward available, affordable resources in the community.”

In its 2011 report “Making Summer Count,” researchers at the Rand Corp. offered six recommendations to school boards for building better summer learning programs:

1. Move summer programs from the periphery to the core of school reform strategies through better planning, infrastructure, data collection and accountability.

2. Strengthen and expand partnerships with community-based organizations and public agencies to align and exploit existing resources, identify gaps and improve programs.

3. Provide budget and logistic information to participating school sites and potential program partners by March to allow sufficient time for planning and recruitment.

4. Be creative with funding. Use multiple sources.

5. Create a summer learning task force consisting of local stakeholders to identify areas of collaboration and planning.

6. Change the summer focus from remediation and test preparation to a blended approach of academic and enrichment activities.
Show me the money

In this era of diminished resources, funding for summer programs requires planning, persistence and creativity. There is no singular go-to source for funding. Typically, most successful programs “braid” together multiple, diverse revenue sources.

In the recent CSBA survey, more than half of the responding districts reported relying upon multiple funding sources for their summer programs. Sixty percent used general funds; 36 percent used special education funds; 32 percent used Title I grants; 23 percent used migrant education funds; 21 percent used After School Education and Safety (ASES) and 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) supplemental funds; and 23 percent turned to other sources, such as private grants, School Improvement Grants or regional occupational program funding.

A PCY guide, Funding to Support Summer Programs, provides a list of funding sources that can support summer programs and examples from California districts that successfully use these funds.

21st CCLC funds are federal grants used to establish or increase expanded learning activities for K-12 students. They focus on three primary areas: improved academic achievement; enrichment services that complement academic programs; and family literacy. While the majority of 21st CCLC funds are for after-school programs, a small portion of the funding—called “supplemental”—can be used for summer learning programs.
21st CCLC grants are available through a competitive proposal process managed by the California Department of Education (CDE). Eligible applicants include districts and county offices of education, cities, counties, community-based organizations, public and private agencies or a consortium of two or more entities collaborating with a local district or county office.

Applicants must be serving students from schools that are eligible for Title I schoolwide programs, which in most cases means at least 40 percent of the school’s population is enrolled in the free and reduced-price lunch program. (CDE sometimes reduces the 40 percent requirement when considering other mitigating factors.)

Some districts also have “supplemental” **ASES funds** from the state for after-school programs. While there are no new dollars for summer through ASES, many districts were allowed to “grandfather” existing supplemental ASES funds when Proposition 49 was implemented in 2006. A first step in exploring these funds is to check with the district’s after-school or student services department.

Recent legislation (SB 429, 2011) created greater flexibility in the way grantees use 21st CCLC or ASES supplemental funding. Specifically, the law allows grantees to run a longer program, serving a broader variety of students at alternate sites from the funded school sites.

**Hourly intervention funds** come from CDE and provide support to instructional programs like remedial reading and summer school, particularly for students at risk of not succeeding in school. However, this program is one for which categorical program flexibility was granted under SBX3 4 (2009), ABX4 2 (2009) and SB 70 (2011). Through the 2014-15 fiscal year (unless extended), districts may temporarily suspend program requirements and use the funds for “any educational purpose.”
Therefore, the extent to which these funds are available for summer programs is dependent upon whether or not the board accepted this flexibility and explicitly identified how the funds will be used.

**Title I funds** exist to assist schools with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. These funds can be used to promote student achievement, staff development and parent and community involvement. In recent years, funding restrictions have been loosened to allow greater use in summer learning programs. Decisions about the use of Title I funds are made at both the school site and district level.

Like 21st CCLC funds, at least 40 percent of the students in eligible schools or districts must qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. Almost all districts in California receive some degree of Title I funding.

Districts that receive **Title I, Part C, migrant education funding** are required to conduct summer school programs for eligible migrant students.

**Community Development Block Grants** (CDBG) are offered through local government entities to support community services, including summer learning programs, to low- and moderate-income residents. Eligibility criteria vary by locality, and most CDBG funds are awarded to nonprofit and public organizations that support low- or moderate-income individuals. The overarching mission of CDBG funds is to promote viable, successful, thriving communities. In many communities, support for summer programs is seen as part of that effort.
City or county funds vary widely, both in how they are dispensed and in amount. These are local taxpayer funds and typically represent local sensibilities. Often this money is used to run parks and recreation department programs that provide recreation, enrichment, and sometimes career and job preparedness activities. School districts interested in broadening a summer school program to include recreation and enrichment can partner with their community’s recreation department.

Some cities (e.g., Oakland, San Francisco) designate funds for summer youth programming, then contract with local schools or nonprofits to operate the programs.

Foundations have frequently played an important role in sparking innovation, like summer learning programs. Numerous foundation and private organizations, large and small, support or advocate educational goals, which may include summer learning.

Eligibility criteria and degree of financial support range widely. Most foundations have specific funding guidelines, which may include geographic, population or programmatic considerations. The length of support may be months, years or ongoing.

Fees for summer programs are increasingly common, often implemented to cover gaps between other funding and total program costs. They can be one-time up-front fees, weekly or daily. They can include sliding scales to help low-income families.

Summer programs can charge fees if their funding sources do not prohibit them, and if participating families are willing to pay. Under state law, entities that receive 21st CCLC and ASES supplemental grants for summer programs can charge fees, but no student can be turned away because he or she can’t pay.
The PCY offered two specific examples of districts that have created and expanded strong summer learning programs over the past five years:

- In the Sacramento City Unified School District, the district uses a combination of after-school supplemental funds, Title I and targeted public grant funds whose goals overlap with summer learning program aspirations (e.g. Tobacco Use and Prevention Education, Safe and Supportive Schools, Career Tech Preparation). The district has also attracted private funding.

  Over the past four years, Sacramento City Unified has expanded its program dramatically, from serving only high school students in 2009 to serving elementary through high school students. The district superintendent is an enthusiastic proponent of the program, specifically because students are so engaged by the program’s focus on service learning and because the program serves as a training ground for teachers and community staff.

- At the Oakland Unified School District, educators have grown their summer school program despite significant economic challenges by providing strong data about summer learning loss to school principals who have chosen to contribute a portion of their site-level Title I money to summer school.

  The district matches this school-site investment with district Title I funds. In 2012, Oakland Unified had 55 school sites serving over 6,500 students. With this commitment, the district has been able to attract private funding from the Packard Foundation, the Bechtel Foundation, the Noyce Foundation and the Walmart Foundation, and has built other public/private partnerships that have extended summer school into the afternoon with engaging science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programming.
To support summer wellness, districts may obtain summer meal reimbursement funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) when approved by CDE to serve as a program sponsor under the Seamless Summer Feeding Option or Summer Food Service Program. Both programs are designed to provide meals to children in low-income communities during summer vacation. However, Seamless Summer Feeding Option funding is available only to districts that also participate in the National School Lunch Program.

In addition to financial resources, districts should be thinking about untapped opportunities that can extend the district’s limited funding.

Patrice Chamberlain, director of the California Summer Meal Coalition, said, “We have underestimated the value of the human resources available to our school districts. We have an incredibly capable and dedicated work force of child nutrition directors in California who are already experienced in operating USDA child nutrition programs that can pull together a pretty amazing summer nutrition ‘safety net’ with enough support.”

Chamberlain said superintendents and school board members can be instrumental in supporting child nutrition directors’ summer efforts by doing three things:
• Bringing child nutrition directors to the planning table early and finding out what kind of support they need to start or expand a summer meal program.

• Facilitating community partnerships. Whether summer school is happening or not, there are many ways districts can support summer meal programs in the community (either as a vendor or sponsor) … and many ways the community can support school district summer meal programs (e.g., promotion, activities, prizes, books).

• Engaging teachers, principals, and parents/caregivers to ensure that families know about summer meal programs. Lack of awareness is an issue that results in underutilization, which then makes it a less financially viable proposition.

To provide physical activity programs during summer, districts might consider sharing program costs, facilities maintenance and operations with another governmental agency or community-based organization. Entering into a joint use agreement for access to gymnasiums, pools, playgrounds, school yards, playing fields, tracks or multipurpose rooms can be a more economical way to expand the availability of physical activity opportunities and other programs.
An optimistic approach

Despite the ongoing fiscal challenges of public education, districts and county offices have shown that, with creativity, effective partnerships, and enough motivation, summer programs can become an important component of school and community services for children and youth. Certainly, the proven benefits of summer programs make it imperative that boards give serious consideration to developing strategies to curtail summer learning loss and health decline. As the PCY’s Peck says, “We believe that as more local education leaders and policy makers across the board learn about the consequences of summer learning loss, they will respond with action.”
For further information

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For information and resources from the statewide Summer Matters campaign, including the Partnership for Children and Youth’s guide Funding to Support Summer Programs, see http://summermatters2you.net.
Effective Summer Learning Programs: Case Studies

SUMMER LEARNING SERIES
Issue 4 | August 6, 2013

csba
by Scott LaFee

This is the fourth in a series of articles focusing on strategies to promote student learning and wellness during summer break from school. This issue presents case studies illustrating how three communities have succeeded in providing and expanding summer learning programs.

This special series is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.
There’s no doubt that budget cuts have had a tremendous impact on the availability of summer learning programs throughout California. But with a little creativity and a lot of dedication, some communities have managed to overcome the obstacles and create effective programs that are engaging students, expanding in size and scope, and demonstrating positive outcomes.

Glenn County

Glenn County sits halfway between the cities of Sacramento and Redding in Northern California, roughly 1,300 square miles of mostly rich farmland—rice, almonds, prunes, livestock—bounded by coastal range mountains to the west and the Sacramento River on the east.

Summers here tend to be pastoral and bucolic, a scene that can easily hide some harder truths from the casual eye. In relative terms, this is a poor county. There are more than 1,000 farms in the region, but little industry. Unemployment hovers at around 16 percent. The median income—$43,074—is less than half of the richest counties in the state. In some local schools, all of the students are on subsidized meal programs.

Resources are limited, and so too are summertime options for the county’s students, making them more vulnerable to “summer learning loss” (decline in academic skills between school years) than their higher income peers elsewhere.
But local educators and activists are fighting back. Last year, Glenn County was chosen as one of 10 programs in the state – and the only rural program – to receive funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. With hands-on support from the Partnership for Children and Youth, they are creating a working model of a high-quality summer learning program that might be emulated by other communities.

The program is called Expect Success, a four-week partnership of the Willows Unified School District, Orland Unified School District, Butte County Office of Education, and Glenn County’s Supporting Participation in Academics and Recreation for Kids (SPARK) after-school program. It is open to low-income students, kindergarten through eighth grade, at two elementary campus sites.

Expect Success was designed by Mary Davis, SPARK coordinator, based on data about the effects of summer learning loss, particularly for disadvantaged students. Researchers have found that the academic degradation of summer learning loss is cumulative, often putting low-income students years behind their peers by the time they enter high school.

“I think a lot of parents would send their children to summer school, but there’s not a real understanding of its significance, especially with low-income students,” said Davis. “I’m really working hard to educate the community, writing articles for the Office of Education’s newspaper, going to community meetings, and giving presentations to local groups.

“When I talk to people about summer learning loss, the general reaction is surprise. I often start by walking out the progress students make during the school year, taking a step back for every summer when they aren’t learning. People see the gap. I get a lot of ‘wows.’ They never realized.”
Davis said the situation has been exacerbated by years of budget cutbacks.

“Like all schools in the state,” she said, “we’ve suffered significant funding cuts, with tremendous effect. Athletics, art, music have all been scaled way back. Class sizes have grown. It’s been a struggle.”

Summer programs were among the programs hardest hit. When funding was available, she said, local districts provided as much as six hours a day of summer programs: academic classes in the mornings, crafts and recreation in the afternoons. When state money disappeared, the districts could no longer afford the academic element “and it didn’t really make sense to just do crafts in the afternoons.”

The pinch was felt elsewhere as well. The regional 4H operation had run an extensive summer camp, said Davis, but has trimmed it back substantially. Community parks and recreation departments oversee some activities, but they have been reduced as well.

“Really it’s a funding issue,” said Davis. “Unless it’s a pay-to-attend program, there aren’t a lot of choices.”

Expect Success is modeled after the traditional notion of away-from-home summer camp. Each day begins at the elementary school site’s flagpole with the Pledge of Allegiance, the camp song and announcements.

Then the “campers” hike off to their respective “cabins,” classrooms that have been converted into woodsy scenes where students may spend time reading around a campfire composed of cardboard logs and tissue paper flames, play math games, or conduct hands-on science experiments. Each Friday, there is a field trip to a local museum, park, nature center, or site of interest.
The inaugural programs in 2012 attracted 300 students and provided 36 summer jobs for program staff and certified teachers. Davis was aiming for a slightly larger program in 2013.

It’s too early to know whether Expect Success is making a measurable dent in summer learning loss among Glenn County students, but Davis said a couple of measures suggest a positive effect.

First, an English language fluency test given on the second and last days of the 2012 camp found that of 145 students tested, the vast majority either remained at the same level of fluency or improved. Only three or four students, she said, performed more poorly on the second test.

“That’s a positive. No slide.”

Second, a youth development survey assessed 40 “development assets” among camp participants, such as how they valued education. The more assets a student had, the greater the chance he or she would be successful in school and life. The survey was conducted twice, before summer camp and after.

“What we saw was that post-camp, there were measurable improvements in perspective. The kids felt better about themselves and their futures.”

Response from the participating school districts, parents, and students after the first year was good, according to Davis. Now, she’s trying to improve and strengthen the program, asking teachers what sorts of things the summer program should emphasize. “We want them to give us some targets. Let us know what skills the students need to work on.”
Not surprisingly, the biggest issue is funding. The Packard Foundation has promised financial support for five years, but the level of funding ($110,000 per year) will begin to decrease after the third year, which means Davis will need to find other means of support.

That will be a challenge, she said. Glenn County doesn’t enjoy easy access to large corporations or other entities with the resources and inclination to donate substantial sums to worthy causes. Instead, she says she’ll have to build a more grassroots kind of campaign, tapping local franchises and businesses, community groups, and ordinary folks.

“We’ll truly need community support, lots of small donors,” she said.

Oakland Unified School District

Not so long ago, the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) was in crisis. Student enrollment was declining; educational quality under serious scrutiny and doubt. The district was deep in the red with a budget deficit estimated by some to exceed $100 million, prompting the state to take over operations in 2004.

Things are better now. Local control was returned in 2010. Enrollment appears to have stabilized at approximately 36,200 students, prekindergarten through high school. Test scores are up in some areas and in at least one notable way, OUSD has become a kind of educational exemplar for the rest of the state.
While many California school districts have responded to the ailing economy and years of financial/political crises in Sacramento by slashing programs like summer school, OUSD has been among a handful that have actually expanded their summertime offerings. In 2012, the district provided 17 summer programs at 50 sites serving 6,500 students, prekindergarten to young adult, at a total cost of $2.7 million. (Total district budget in 2011-12: $641 million.) The turning point came in 2008, said Julie McCalmont, OUSD’s coordinator of summer learning programs, when district leaders identified summer learning as a high priority program worthy of targeted, specific funding. OUSD officials knew the statistics about summer learning loss and wanted to make a difference.

“From the highest level, from the superintendent on down, a decision was made that expanding summer learning was important,” McCalmont said. “That was a big moment.”

The key, according to McCalmont, was a change in how summer education was funded. The district decided it would use some of its federal Title I funding to pay for the infrastructure costs of summer education, such as administration and custodial services, if participating school sites agreed to use some of their individual Title I funds for summer staffing and program costs.

OUSD employs a “results-based” budgeting system. Funding is largely decentralized with each school site able to allocate monies to its identified needs and particular ambitions. If the administration of an elementary school, for example, thinks summer education would be especially helpful for its student population, it can designate some of its overall budget to that end.
“By setting aside a certain amount of money to cover basic infrastructure, the district has tried to encourage schools to create summer programs,” McCalmont said. “If you just asked school principals to run summer programs, they’d say, ‘No way, we can’t afford it.’ But we’ve incentivized things. We’ve said we’ll cover this if you’ll pay for the costs of teaching 100 children. It’s a kind of matching program that’s really hard to resist.”

That said, McCalmont noted that the system requires a lot of maintenance and forethought. School sites must make a firm, early commitment to running a summer program and plan accordingly.

“It’s pretty complicated. Every site has to run through a bunch of approvals. There is lots of paperwork. And they have to make hard decisions. Different schools use their Title I funds for different reasons – for salaries, specific intervention programs, professional development. The focus tends to be on how to achieve the highest quality programs during the regular school year. Spending on summer means pulling some of those funds away.”

But the result, so far, has been heartening and diverse. Some elementary schools operate prekindergarten camps for students with no preschool experience. There are middle school programs offering academic support, enrichment and performing arts programs. There are transition programs for rising sixth- and ninth-graders. And academic recovery programs for high school students, particularly ninth- and tenth-graders “so that they’ll stay on track to stay in school and graduate,” said McCalmont.
All of these programs are half-day sessions for four weeks, which McCalmont says isn’t ideal. “The research says best practice is six weeks long, all day long.”

To achieve that kind of expansion, McCalmont hopes the district’s current efforts will serve as fundamental first steps, something to build on with new collaborators and additional funding. For example, the district has launched the Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK) program, sponsored by the National Society of Black Engineers. Also, the WalMart Foundation has provided new monies to fund full-day summer programs for roughly 800 middle school students for two years.

“They saw what we were doing and invited us to apply for a grant,” she said.

Other summer programs have involved partners like the East Bay Asian Youth Center and the Elev8 Oakland Initiative, a five-year program funded by Atlantic Philanthropies to assist students transitioning into middle and high school.

Such successes aside, McCalmont foresees no lazy days of summer ahead. OUSD hasn’t been alone in pursuing outside grants and support. There’s plenty of competition. Moreover, Title I funding is down, which means participating OUSD schools will be even harder pressed to decide how best to spend diminished dollars.

“I think you always try to look forward,” said McCalmont. “We’ve built a good foundation of programs that makes it easier to attract new partners and funding. They can see what we’ve achieved already. We’ve got momentum.”
Whittier City School District

In 2009, the Whittier City School District, an urban 6,500-student K-8 district located about 12 miles southeast of Los Angeles, launched a new summer learning program called Jumpstart.

Jumpstart was a pilot project intended to revive summer schooling, which years before had fallen victim to budget cuts. It wasn’t meant to be traditional, said Becky Shultz, director of the district’s extended learning programs. It would be “disguised education,” she said. “You wouldn’t know there was so much learning going on because there would be so much fun.”

The inaugural summer program, using 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal funding, was relatively modest: 400 students attending for half a day at a couple of elementary school sites.

Then summers really got hot.

The catalyst was a five-year grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to develop, operate and promote summer learning, with $110,000 in funding in the early years, declining gradually. It was a major jumpstart for Jumpstart.

“It hasn’t been difficult to persuade school leaders here that summer learning programs are important,” said Shultz. “They understand the idea and the realities. And while there hasn’t been any district money in recent years for a traditional summer school program, all of our leaders—the board, the superintendent—have been very supportive of a program with alternative funding.”
The Packard money has allowed Shultz and colleagues to expand and deepen their concept of summer learning, particularly the popular summer camp sensibility, which more readily attracts students looking for a “non-educational experience.” In recent years, Jumpstart themes have been based on popular memes like “A Night at the Museum” and “The Hunger Games.”

“We’ve always been hands-on, with lots of activities, but we’ve added more outdoor experiences,” said Shultz, including abundant day trips to local attractions and overnight camps in the nearby desert and mountains.

The program targets students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in these activities. “Each year, beginning in January, we ask principals and teachers to recommend students,” said Shultz. “The basic criteria are kids would benefit most from summer learning. We’re looking for students who don’t have access to enrichment experiences, who wouldn’t likely go to the library, museums, cultural events, or a private summer camp.”

Shultz has no problem filling slots for the 20-day, five hours a day, Monday through Thursday summer program. Attendance in 2012 easily hit maximum enrollment, now doubled to 800 students in all nine elementary and two middle school campuses. Attendance in 2013 is expected to be the same. Shultz said she doesn’t have to actively recruit attendees. “Word is getting around. We hold an annual summer learning day where speakers talk about summer learning loss. We invite parents, local community members, and politicians. We have parents whose children have been in the program share stories.”
The district partners with community groups and organizations to boost its offerings. The local YMCA, for example, provides staffing. Other groups supply coaches and dance instructors.

Shultz said that while everyone broadly concurs that the program benefits continued learning and fends off the cognitive lag effects of summer, the district is also making an effort to take quantitative measurements. Students are given pre- and post-reading tests, with the goal of improving their fluency by at least 10 words per minute. There are pre- and post-tests on cooking and nutrition knowledge based upon what they’ve learned about healthy eating during the summer. And they are surveyed about their outdoor experiences to assess how these might be improved. It all culminates with a kind of public display in which students show off their summer-acquired skills, from burnished math abilities to dance steps.

These testing efforts, said Shultz, initially began as a way to assess the program and tweak it for the better. Now, she said, the findings are being collected to present a more formal sustainability plan to the school board. With Packard funding scheduled to expire in another year, and with no certainty about the fate of other grants, Shultz is reaching out to local businesses, booster clubs, agencies, and organizations to find new advocates, supporters and benefactors.

The need is there, she said. “I would love to expand to a few thousand students each summer. We can grow.”
For further information

To find out more about the programs highlighted in this article, click the links for Glenn County, Oakland USD and Whittier City SD. For more on Whittier City SD, contact Becky Shultz at 562-789-3000 or bshultz@whittiercity.net.

See earlier articles in this series (“Why Do Summer Learning and Wellness Programs Matter?“ “What Constitutes an Effective Summer Program?” and “How Can Boards Provide Leadership and Funding for Summer Programs?”) on CSBA’s website at www.csba.org/PNB.

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Summer learning: As easy as 1, 2, 3

The summer learning timeline offers a comprehensive, month-by-month guide for school governance teams and their staffs to plan, budget, prepare for and operate a successful summer learning program. View the detailed timeline at www.csba.org/summerlearningtimeline.

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“Summer vacation” often conjures up images of family vacations, camps and sports, arts or music programs. However, for many students, particularly students from low-income families, summer vacation does not offer activities that challenge their minds or build their bodies. When students come back to school in the fall, they have lost ground both academically and physically.

Availability of organized summer programs for students varies widely across school districts and communities. The length and quality of programs are also inconsistent. While most school board members, administrators and educators would agree that summer programs are a good thing, there may not be a sense of urgency to develop and implement such programs, especially when districts are searching for ways to save money.

This policy brief focuses on the role of the governing board in promoting and facilitating the provision of summer programs. To help inform board decision-making, this brief also presents research findings on the negative impacts of summer break on student learning and wellness, examines the extent to which summer programs are currently being offered throughout California, and describes characteristics of effective programs and possible sources of program funding.

**Impact of summer break on student learning**

“Summer learning loss” is what happens when students not only fail to learn anything new during the summer but actually slip backward and lose knowledge and skills gained during the previous school year. In 2011, the Rand Corp. published a comprehensive review of research conducted over several decades which repeatedly documents that learning can decay over summer and that summer learning loss disproportionately affects students from low-income families. Furthermore, the effects of summer learning loss are cumulative, putting disadvantaged students further and further behind. Studies have found that:

- By the end of the summer, students’ academic knowledge is, on average, one month behind where they left off in the spring. For low-income students, it is two months behind.²
- The differential in achievement rates in reading skills between students from high-income and low-income families widens over the summer.³⁻⁴ Students from low-income families lose ground in reading skills over the summer while middle-income students maintain reading achievement levels and high-income students show improvement.⁵ Specifically, students from lower-income families lose more learning in reading comprehension and word recognition than students from higher-income families.⁶
- Over the summer students are more likely to forget what they have learned in mathematics than they are to lose literacy skills.⁷ This may be because families are less likely to practice mathematics skills at home and/or because mathematics skills are more likely to decay over time if not practiced.⁸⁻⁹
- Summer learning loss varies by grade level, with more detrimental effects occurring at higher grade levels. One study found some gains (though nonsignificant) over the summer among first- and second-graders, but significant summer losses in fourth grade and beyond.¹⁰
- Repeated episodes of summer learning loss result in low-income students falling further behind their higher-income peers each year, contributing substantially to the achievement gap.¹¹

The good news is that summer learning can be enhanced through effective summer programs. Research provides evidence that summer learning programs have the potential to help students maintain or improve their skills and
achievement relative to the average loss associated with summer. A recent evaluation of three summer programs in Fresno, Sacramento and Los Angeles found that students improved their grade-level vocabulary skills, confidence and interest in reading (reading efficacy), school attendance, transition from elementary to middle school, academic work habits and social skills.

**Summer programs currently offered in California**

To determine the extent to which summer programming is supported by school districts across the state, CSBA and the Partnership for Children and Youth conducted a survey of board members in 2012. Out of 167 respondents, 68 percent of districts said they offered district-supported summer programs or summer school. Among those that did not offer summer programs, 93 percent stated that it was due to the lack of funds.

**Highlights of the survey findings include:**

- While the majority of programs have more than one content focus, the strongest focus is on remediation (70 percent of programs). About half of the programs focus on literacy while over a quarter focus on credit recovery or Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) activities. Only 5 percent address health and wellness.

- Programs are focused on low-achieving or special needs students in 56 percent of the districts. Grade levels served include elementary (71 percent), middle school (69 percent) and high school (43 percent), with over half of the districts serving more than one age group.

- Most summer programs run for two to four weeks, although 42 percent provide programming for a substantial portion of the summer (more than four weeks). Of the programs that run more than four weeks, 60 percent serve high school students.

**Characteristics of effective summer learning programs**

Summer programs vary in purpose, length and structure and should be designed to meet the needs of district students. Districts might offer educational/cognitive programs that promote academic achievement, high school completion or college preparation; enrichment and recreation programs; and/or career development programs.

Traditional summer school programs tend to focus on remediation and test preparation. They are often half-day sessions targeted on serving low-performing students or high school students who have failed or are at risk of failing the high school exit exam, and may be mandatory for those students. Although such programs serve an important function, it is difficult for students to be engaged in programs that they view as punitive.

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) promotes a new vision for summer school that is a blended approach of both academic learning and enrichment activities. Such programs provide hands-on, engaging programming that fosters critical 21st Century skills, including collaboration, innovation, creativity, communication and data analysis.

Instead of or in addition to summer school, many districts and communities organize other learning opportunities to engage students during the summer. Examples include summer reading programs (offered in conjunction with public libraries or through reading lists sent home to parents), sports programs, job training, community service and occasional “fun days” related to art, music, science, technology or other subjects.

Regardless of the program focus, successful programs share common characteristics. The most effective programs, according to the Rand Corp. report, are those that have small class sizes, individualized and high-quality instruction, alignment of summer and school-year curriculum, curriculum that goes beyond remediation to include engaging enrichment opportunities, incentives that maximize participation and attendance, parent involvement, regular evaluations of program effectiveness and sufficient duration to achieve desired outcomes.

Consistent with the research, the NSLA has developed “quality standards” to help guide program development. These standards address program infrastructure (i.e., mission and goals, finance and sustainability, planning, staff recruitment and retention, professional development, community partnerships) and points of service (i.e., standards for an individualized, intentional, integrated program with a unique “summer culture”).

To increase the number and quality of programs in California, a statewide coalition of educators, policymakers, advocates, school district leaders and foundations joined together in a statewide Summer Matters campaign. Overseen by the Partnership for Children and Youth, the campaign has been building a network of trainers to strengthen program quality and piloting innovative summer programs in 12 communities across the state. Based on this work, Summer Matters has identified core elements of a high-quality program that are consistent with research and the NSLA standards. This work reinforces the importance of engaging, meaningful programming; skilled staff; management by visionary, knowledgeable leaders; and tangible support from families, community-based organizations and civic leaders partnering with schools.
When planning summer learning programs, districts are encouraged to consult these resources and to involve students, parents/guardians, city and county agencies, community organizations, child care providers, and/or other interested persons.

Funding sources

Guides from the Partnership for Children and Youth (Funding to Support Summer Programs) and NSLA (Moving Summer Learning Forward: A Strategic Roadmap for Funding in Tough Times) provide a list of funding sources that can support summer programs and case studies of districts that successfully use these funds. Available funds may include, but are not limited to:

- **District general or special education funds.** General funds of the district are unrestricted and may be used for any purpose which the superintendent or designee recommends and the board approves. Special education funds may be used to support summer programs that are targeted to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

- **21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) funds.** These federal funds are used to establish or increase expanded learning activities for K-12 students and focus on three primary areas: improved academic achievement, enrichment services that complement academic programs and family literacy. While the majority of 21st CCLC funds are for after-school programs, a small portion of the funding—called “supplemental”—can be used for summer learning programs.15

21st CCLC grants are available through a competitive proposal process, managed by the California Department of Education (CDE). Applicant agencies must be serving students from schools that are eligible for Title I schoolwide programs, which in most cases means at least 40 percent of the school’s population is enrolled in the free and reduced-price lunch program.

- **After School Education and Safety (ASES) funds.** Some districts have “supplemental” ASES funds from the state for after-school programs. While there are no new dollars for summer through ASES, many districts were allowed to “grandfather” existing supplemental ASES funds when Proposition 49 was implemented in 2006.

- **Hourly intervention funds.** These state funds provide support to instructional programs like remedial reading and summer school, particularly for students at risk of not succeeding in school. However, this program is one for which categorical program flexibility was granted under SBX3 4 (2009), ABX4 2 (2009) and SB 70 (2011). Through the 2014-15 fiscal year (unless extended), districts may temporarily suspend program requirements and use the funds for “any educational purpose.” Therefore, the extent to which these funds are available for summer programs is dependent upon whether or not the board accepted this flexibility and explicitly identified how the funds will be used.

- **Title I, Part A funds.** For schools with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, federal Title I can be used to promote student achievement, staff development and parent and community involvement. In recent years, funding restrictions have been loosened to allow greater use in summer learning programs.

- **Title I, Part C, migrant education funds.** Districts that receive this funding are required, as part of their program to support migrant education programs, to conduct summer school programs for eligible migrant children. Education Code 54444.3 requires that such districts use the federal funds for this purpose, to the extent funds are available, and specifies required program components.

- **School Improvement Grants.** School Improvement Grants are earmarked for implementation of four specified school intervention models. Both the “transformation model” and the “turnaround model” require the use of extended learning time, which may include summer programs.

- **Community Development Block Grants.** Local government entities may offer these grants to support community services, including summer learning programs, to low- and moderate-income residents. Eligibility criteria vary by locality, and most funds are awarded to nonprofit and public organizations that support low- or moderate-income individuals.

- **City or county funds.** Districts may be able to partner with the city or county recreation department or other local agency to add recreation, career and job preparedness or other enrichment activities. Some cities designate funds for summer youth programming and then contract with local schools or nonprofits to operate the programs.

- **Foundation funds.** Numerous foundation and private organizations, large and small, support or advocate educational goals, which may include summer learning. Eligibility criteria and degree of financial support range widely. Most foundations have specific funding guidelines, which may include geographic, population or programmatic considerations. The length of support may be months, years or ongoing.

- **Fees.** When not prohibited by the funding source, summer programs can charge a fee to participating families to help cover gaps between other funding and total program costs. They can include sliding scales to help low-income families. Under state law, entities that receive 21st CCLC and ASES supplemental grants for
summer programs can charge fees, but no student can be turned away because of an inability to pay.

In the CSBA survey cited above, the majority of respondent districts reported that they rely upon multiple funding sources: 60 percent of the districts use general funds, 36 percent use special education funds, 32 percent use Title I grants, 23 percent use migrant education funds, 21 percent use ASES and 21st CCLC supplemental funds, and 23 percent turn to other sources, such as private grants, School Improvement Grants or regional occupational program funding.

**Summer wellness**

In addition to the learning loss experienced by many students over summer break, research shows that summer break often impacts student wellness in a negative way. Increased consumption of non-nutritious foods and beverages, coupled with limited opportunities for structured, regular physical activity for some students, contributes to increased rates of weight gain over the summer. A 2007 Ohio State University study found that children gained weight two to three times faster during summer months than during school years. Children who were already overweight and who belonged to particular minority groups experienced the most significant weight change.

Similarly, a study of overweight middle school students found that gains made during the school year in cardiovascular fitness, insulin levels and body composition due to participation in a lifestyle-focused physical education class were essentially undone during the summer break. Some children have the benefit of receiving nutritious meals through subsidized meal programs over the summer. According to the CDE, 444 districts in California participated in either the federally funded Seamless Summer Feeding Option or the Summer Food Service Program in 2010-11. However, this number is much lower than the number of districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (1,029) or National School Breakfast Program (893) in the same year. Furthermore, only 16 percent of the students receiving free or reduced-price lunches during the school year also participate in a subsidized summer lunch program, indicating that for many low-income students, summer breaks may also be a break from healthy nutrition.

Since poor student health is a significant, well-known impediment to student learning, it is imperative that efforts be made to address student wellness over summer. Summer meal programs, recreation programs and other summer programs that include a nutrition and/or physical activity component may help overcome the poor eating habits, food insecurity (i.e., the limited or uncertain availability to acquire foods) and sedentary behavior that characterize the summer vacation for many students.

**Role of the board**

Through each of the governing board’s major responsibilities, there are opportunities to address the need for summer learning and wellness programs.

**Setting direction**

The board should set direction for summer programs in the district by establishing clear goals and priorities based on an assessment of student needs. Development of these goals provides an opportunity to raise the profile of summer programs as a key reform strategy rather than an add-on program. The board should express its expectation that planning for summer programs will be integrated into other educational planning processes.

**Establishing an effective and efficient structure for the district**

In fulfilling its responsibility to establish an effective structure for the district, the board should make policy, curriculum, budget and facilities decisions that are aligned with its goals for student learning and wellness.

Adoption of policies is one of the primary ways that the board establishes structure in the district. The governance team is encouraged to review CSBA’s sample policies BP 6177 – Summer Learning Programs, BP/AR 3552 – Summer Meal Program, BP 5030 – Student Wellness and other policies relevant to the district’s program and tailor them to meet district needs and goals.

Developing or selecting the curriculum for summer school programs is largely a staff responsibility, but the board must ensure that there are effective processes in place and will adopt the curriculum and instructional materials that will be used. In this way, the board can ensure that the final product reflects the district’s expectations and priorities for student learning.

The board is also responsible for adopting a district budget that is fiscally responsible and aligned with the district’s vision and goals. Therefore, any proposed use of district resources to provide summer programming must be approved by the board within the budget-setting process. The board should encourage the superintendent and staff to be creative in exploring and combining alternative funding sources.

Opening district facilities and grounds for use during the summer has implications related to costs, facilities maintenance, safety and accessibility. When it is not feasible to offer summer programs at each school site, the district
should consider the accessibility of proposed sites, especially for students from low-income families, since state funding is not available for transportation to summer school and families will need to provide their own transportation. Some districts rotate the school sites at which summer sessions are offered.

When district facilities will be used by other agencies or groups during the summer, or when the district will use nonschool facilities for its summer programs, the board should ensure that a joint use agreement, contract or memorandum of understanding is in place which clearly identifies the responsibilities and liabilities of the district and the other entity.

Providing support to the superintendent and staff

The board has responsibility—through its behavior and actions—to support the superintendent and staff as they carry out the direction of the board. The board can provide support by continually demonstrating its commitment to student learning, upholding policies that have been adopted by the board, providing professional development as needed to ensure that staff in summer programs have the tools and knowledge they need to be successful, and publicly recognizing program accomplishments.

Ensuring accountability for program effectiveness

The board should regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its policies and programs. Toward this end, the board should work with the superintendent to determine the indicators that will be used to measure the effectiveness of summer school, summer meals and other summer programs.

For instance, the district might look at summer school enrollment figures for the current year and previous year, as a whole and disaggregated by grade level, school and student population (e.g., students from low-income families, students with disabilities, English learners). The district might also evaluate the extent to which students successfully achieved the academic outcomes established for the program (e.g., rate at which program participants recovered credits or subsequently passed the high school exit exam).

Reports on summer meal programs could include the number of meals served at each site and the extent to which the meals complied with applicable nutrition standards.

When possible, it is useful to obtain feedback from students, parents and staff about program quality.

Engaging in community leadership

In their role as community leaders, board members can help initiate, strengthen and expand partnerships with community-based organizations and public agencies to identify the needs of children and youth, align and leverage existing resources, and plan, implement and evaluate summer programs. The board’s community leadership role also involves informing and educating the community about the district’s programs.

Resources

CSBA
www.csba.org

CSBA is producing a special Summer Learning Series focused on issues related to summer learning and wellness. CSBA also provides related sample board policies and administrative regulations, including BP 6177 – Summer Learning Programs, BP/AR 3552 – Summer Meal Program and BP 5030 – Student Wellness. For further information about summer meal programs, see CSBA’s policy brief Providing Access to Nutritious Meals During Summer (2010).

California Department of Education
www.cde.ca.gov

CDE’s website provides information about state and federally funded after-school programs and summer meal programs.

California Food Policy Advocates
http://cfpa.net

CFPA provides resources and data on summer nutrition, including School’s Out, Who Ate? A Report on Summer Nutrition in California.

California Summer Meal Coalition
www.summermealcoalition.org

A program of the Public Health Institute, this statewide network is dedicated to combating hunger and obesity by helping California’s children access meals through the federally funded summer nutrition programs. The coalition provides webinars, newsletters, case studies and other resources on summer meal programs.

Food Research and Action Center
www.frac.org

Hunger Doesn’t Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report 2012 presents national data on participation in summer meal programs.

**Partnership for Children and Youth**
http://partnerforchildren.org

This California-based nonprofit organization provides technical assistance and advocacy support for summer learning and after-school programs. Publications include *Funding to Support Summer Programs: Lessons from the Field* and *Senate Bill 429: Expanding Access to Summer Programs for Low-Income Students*.

**Rand Corp.**
www.rand.org

*Making Summer Count: How Summer Programs Can Boost Children’s Learning* (2011) reviews the research literature on summer learning loss and the effectiveness of summer learning programs and presents information about the costs of summer programming and lessons from the field.

**Summer Matters**
www.summermatters2you.net

Overseen by the Partnership for Children and Youth, this statewide collaboration works to increase access to quality summer learning and enrichment programs for low-income children and youth. Resources include examples of program designs, budgets and a summer learning planning timeline.

**End Notes**


This policy brief was supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.
Providing Access to Nutritious Meals During Summer

Background

Without access to healthy meals that combat hunger, children are not attentive and ready to learn. Socioeconomically disadvantaged children in California are eligible to receive at least one nutritious meal a day during the school year. But when school is not in session during the summer, many of these children will not have access to these meals.

In 2008–09, more than half of the student population in California public schools was enrolled in the state's free and reduced-priced meal programs. Even more children are expected to enroll as California's economic crisis continues, meaning that even more children will be in need of healthy, free meals. The number of families applying for assistance to afford food is increasing and lines at food banks are growing longer. In fact, 17 percent of low-income families with children experience "very low food security," which is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as occurring when the food intake of household members is reduced and their normal eating patterns are disrupted because the household lacks money and other resources for food.

While state law requires summer schools to offer meals, budget cutbacks at the state level have limited the number of districts offering summer school. In July 2008, more than 500,000 low-income children ate lunch at free summer nutrition programs. Eighty-five percent of those children got meals from summer school programs that will not be open this summer. With the decrease in school-based summer food sites, there is additional impetus for new community sites to serve the summer nutrition needs of children. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Feeding Option (SSFO) helps children get the nutrition they need to learn, play and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school. As a result, summer food programs that operate through partnerships and outside school grounds have been increasing. Local school districts and county offices of education can help to promote these summer food programs that fill the gap for healthy, free summer meals for children. School districts and county offices of education (COEs) can partner with community advocates and organizations, food banks, and other government agencies to provide access to summer meal programs that prevent hunger while promoting nutrition and obesity prevention.

Program Overview

The USDA's SFSP helps children get the nutrition they need to learn, play and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school. Children who are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are not always aware of the SFSP. While millions of children depend on nutritious free and reduced-price meals and snacks during the school year, only a small percentage receive the free meals provided by the SFSP during the summer months.

The SFSP operates when school is not in session for 15 days or more. The SFSP allows a local sponsor to combine a feeding program with a summer activity program. The program sponsor can be a school district, a public agency or a nonprofit organization in the community. Summer meals can be served not just at summer schools, but also at municipal parks and recreation centers, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, day camps, residential summer camps, housing projects, migrant centers or on Indian reservations. To determine a site's eligibility, 50 percent of the children enrolled in the nearest school must qualify for free and reduced-price meals. Census tract information must show that 50 percent of the children living in the area are low-income. SFSP sponsors receive payment from the federal government for serving healthy meals to children and youth over the summer months.
meals and snacks to children and teenagers, 18 years and younger, at approved sites in low-income areas.

The summer meal sites must serve meals that include milk, fruits, vegetables or juice; grain products; and meat or meat alternate. The program allows sites to serve each day: two meals, a meal and a snack, or if at a camp, three meals a day. A sponsor may prepare its own meals, purchase meals through an agreement with an area school, or contract for meals with another vendor.

The SSFO is a program that encourages more districts and COEs to provide meals in low income areas during summer and certain other school vacation periods. The SSFO reduces paperwork and administrative burdens by continuing the same meal service rules and claiming procedures used during the regular school year. This option makes it easier for sponsors to feed children in low-income areas during traditional summer vacation periods and during school vacation periods of longer than 10 days for year-round schools.

Case Study

San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD)

In 2004, SDUSD became a sponsor of the Summer Food Service Program with 16 park locations and served 11,000 meals. By 2009, the district had 67 SFSP sites, including 44 schools and 23 recreation centers, serving 250,000 meals and snacks. Key components to the successful growth of this program include advance planning and collaboration. The summer lunch program planning process starts early in the year, with meetings of the SDUSD Food Services department. The district also works with the City of San Diego Park & Recreation department to estimate participation levels, project staffing requirements, and anticipate summer school locations. During this planning phase, menus are also developed for the summer food program, with slightly different offerings served at school locations than at park locations, even though all menus follow USDA guidelines. It is anticipated that hot food will be added to the menu offerings in 2010.

Marketing of the SDUSD Summer Food Service Program has also been critical to its growth. Program publicity occurs through multiple mediums, including banner signs at all participating locations, fliers, posters, announcements on school marquees and newsletters, and through dissemination by partner organizations. These organizations include the City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department, Hunger Coalition, Network for a Healthy California, The Food Bank, SAY San Diego, County of San Diego Department of Health and Human Services - Nutrition Services Division, the Mexican Consulate, and San Diego Gas & Electric. Fliers are sent to local libraries; participating recreation centers; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offices; and local daycare centers. The information is also shared with various councils of churches, community health clinics, news media and to other groups that request it. Additionally, the superintendent of the SDUSD sends an automated telephone message to families inviting their participation in the SFSP. The impact of this comprehensive marketing effort involving community partnerships has been significant to the success of the program.

The SFSP in the SDUSD would not exist without community involvement. Program volunteers help oversee sites, serve prepared food, deliver meals, and organize and implement activities. Volunteers include the parents of district students, service clubs, faith-based organizations and community groups, corporations and businesses, youth groups, students from high schools and colleges, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4-H, teachers on summer break, government and municipal agencies and AmeriCorps.

Each year, the goal of the program has been to spread information about the SFSP to as many groups, community members, and organizations as possible through presentations, fliers and the media in hopes of encouraging additional participation. Educating all stakeholders, including staff, management, site leaders, and volunteers about the importance of this program to children, families and the community as a whole has also contributed to its success.

Board Considerations

School districts and COEs can be active partners with other stakeholders in the community to ensure that children who depend upon these federally funded meals will have access to food in the summer. Whether a school district or COE becomes the sponsor of a summer food site, acts as a vendor supplying the food to another sponsor, or works to publicize and support a summer food program being provided by another sponsor, it can help to ensure that children obtain federally funded summer meals. Districts and COEs are uniquely positioned to communicate with children and their families about where to find these lunch sites.

Key Questions

• Have the summer food needs of children within the community been identified and discussed? How can the district or COE, even when constrained by budget cutbacks that limit summer school offerings, partner with local community organizations and food banks to ensure that adequate summer food programs are being offered to all children in the community?

• Do board decisions about summer school offerings, site selection and budgeting include a discussion of food service needs?
If summer food programs are in place, is the district or COE helping to build participation in these programs by providing information about summer food sites and increasing outreach to parents and children?

Has the district or COE convened food service staff, city parks and recreation staff, food banks, community health advocates, and other stakeholders to identify gaps in summer food site availability and marketing?

Has the district or COE weighed the costs and benefits associated with acting as a sponsor of federally reimbursed SFSP meals for children?

**The Board’s Role**

- **Set direction**: Develop an understanding among the board, district/COE staff and the community regarding the link between healthy eating and student achievement, at all times of the year, including summer.

- **Establish structure**: Adopt and align policies to address the needs of the Summer Food Service Program.

- **Provide support**: Ensure the district/COE explores cost-effective methods and collaborations to ensure that children in the community have adequate access to summer food programs.

- **Ensure accountability**: Monitor implementation of summer food policies and ensure that reports are provided to the board by district/COE food service personnel or summer food program sponsors who serve the children within the district.

- **Engage the community**: Cultivate strong partnerships among the district/COE and city parks and recreation staff, food banks, community health advocates, and other stakeholders to ensure that parents and children are aware of summer food sites and utilize the resources being provided.

**Resources**

*California School Boards Association*: Provides sample board policies, policy briefs, publications and other resources on a variety of topics related to nutrition and student wellness, including sample board policy and administrative regulation 3552 – Summer Meal Program. See [www.csba.org](http://www.csba.org)

*California Department of Education Nutrition Division*: Provides resources and information related to child nutrition, nutrition education, food distribution programs, and the Child Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Council. See [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sf/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sf/)

*The Network for a Healthy California*: Represents a statewide movement of local, state and national partners collectively working toward improving the health status of low-income Californians through increased fruit and vegetable consumption and daily physical activity. See [www.healthylausd.net/Teachers/Summer_Food_Service_Program.aspx](http://www.healthylausd.net/Teachers/Summer_Food_Service_Program.aspx)

*California Center for Research on Women and Families*: Publishes policy primers to educate policymakers, program providers, and the general public about policy issues in California. CCRWF is a program of the Public Health Institute and led the creation of the Summer Meals Program Coalition. See [www.ccrwf.org/tag/summer-meals/](http://www.ccrwf.org/tag/summer-meals/)

*US Department of Agriculture*: Is responsible for developing and executing federal policy on farming, agriculture, and food. Its mission includes assuring food safety, protecting natural resources, fostering rural communities and ending hunger in the United States and abroad. See [www.summerfood.usda.gov/states/meal_service.html](http://www.summerfood.usda.gov/states/meal_service.html)

*Food Research Action Center*: Is a national nonprofit organization working to improve public policies and public-private partnerships to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the United States. See [www.frac.org/CA_Guide/summer_funding.html#](http://www.frac.org/CA_Guide/summer_funding.html#)


*California Obesity Prevention Program*: is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded program within the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) that is working towards the goal of increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, and preventing obesity among all Californians. See [http://cdph.ca.gov/obesityprevention](http://cdph.ca.gov/obesityprevention)

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This document was developed with support from the California Obesity Prevention Program, California Department of Public Health, a program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cooperative agreement 805 state nutrition, physical activity and obesity program.
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

**Cautionary Notice:** As added and amended by SBX3 4 (Ch. 12, Third Extraordinary Session, Statutes of 2009), ABX4 2 (Ch. 2, Fourth Extraordinary Session, Statutes of 2009), and SB 70 (Ch. 7, Statutes of 2011), Education Code 42605 grants districts flexibility in "Tier 3" categorical programs and provides that districts are deemed in compliance with the program and funding requirements for these programs for the 2008-09 through 2014-15 fiscal years. As a result of this flexibility, the district may choose to temporarily suspend certain provisions of the following policy or administrative regulation that reflect those requirements. However, this flexibility does not affect or alter any existing contract or bargaining agreement that the district may have in place. Thus, districts should examine the terms of those contracts and agreements and consult with district legal counsel for additional guidance. Also see BP 2210 - Administrative Discretion Regarding Board Policy.

**Cautionary Notice 2010-13:** AB 1610 (Ch. 724, Statutes of 2010) amended Education Code 37252.2 and Government Code 17581.5 to relieve districts from the obligation, until July 1, 2013, to perform any activities that are deemed to be reimbursable state mandates under those sections. As a result, certain provisions of the following policy or administrative regulation that reflect those requirements may be suspended.

**Note:** The following optional policy may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Governing Board recognizes that an extended break from the instructional program may result in significant learning loss, especially among disadvantaged and low-achieving students, and desires to provide opportunities during the summer for students to practice essential skills and make academic progress.

Summer programs offered by the district shall be aligned with district goals and curriculum. When feasible, summer programs shall blend high-quality academic instruction in core curricular and/or elective subjects with recreation, nutrition programs, social/emotional development, and support services that encourage attendance, student engagement in learning, and student wellness.

(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)
(cf. 3552 - Summer Meal Program)
(cf. 5030 - Student Wellness)
(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)
(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development Program)
(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education and Activity)
(cf. 6153 - School-Sponsored Trips)

**Summer School**

Note: Summer school programs may be funded through a variety of sources that include, but are not limited to, state hourly reimbursement funding for supplemental instruction (Education Code 37252, 37252.2) as described below, Title I funding (20 USC 6311-6322), supplemental funds as part of After School Education
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS (continued)

and Safety Program grants (Education Code 8482-8484.6), supplemental funds as part of 21st Century Community Learning Center grants (Education Code 8484.7-8484.9; 20 USC 7171-7176), and other federal, state, and district funds.

In addition, Education Code 54444.3 requires agencies receiving federal Title I Migrant Education funding to conduct summer school programs for eligible migrant students; see BP/AR 6175 - Migrant Education Program.

When funds are available, the Superintendent or designee, with Board approval, shall establish summer school day and/or evening classes.

(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Program)
(cf. 6171 - Title I Programs)
(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 37252 and 37252.2, districts must offer supplemental instruction to students in grades 7-12 who are not making sufficient progress toward passing the state exit examination required for high school graduation and students in grades 2-9 who are retained or recommended for retention pursuant to Education Code 48070.5. These programs and other optional supplemental instructional programs described in Education Code 37252.8 and 37253 may be offered during summer, on Saturdays, before school, after school, and/or during intercessions. In addition, the Pupil Retention Block Grant (Education Code 41505-41506) allows block grant funding to be spent for the purposes of intensive reading or algebra programs described in Education Code 53025-53032 and 53091-53095, as these repealed statutes read on January 1, 2004, which may include summer programs. See BP/AR 6179 - Supplemental Instruction for descriptions of all these supplemental instructional programs.

The following optional paragraph is for use by districts that choose to offer supplemental instructional programs during the summer in accordance with law.

The district's summer school program may be used to provide supplemental instruction for students failing to meet academic requirements and/or students who desire enrichment in core academic subjects in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulation. (Education Code 37252, 37252.2, 37252.8, 37253, 41505-41506; 5 CCR 11472)

(cf. 5123 - Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)
(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)
(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6146.5 - Elementary/Middle School Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)
(cf. 6176 - Weekend/Saturday Classes)
(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

Note: The following optional list establishes enrollment priorities for the provision of summer school instruction and may be revised to reflect district practice. Items #1-2 establish priority for students eligible for mandatory supplemental instructional programs pursuant to Education Code 37252 and 37252.2. Item #3 should be deleted by districts that do not maintain grade 12.
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS (continued)

Priority to enroll in summer school programs shall be given to district students who:

1. Are eligible for supplemental instruction on the basis of retention or recommendation for retention pursuant to Education Code 37252.2
2. Are eligible for supplemental instruction on the basis of insufficient progress toward passing the state high school exit examination pursuant to Education Code 37252
3. Need course credits in order to graduate from high school before the beginning of the next school year

OPTION 1: The remaining openings shall be offered to district students on a first-come first-served basis.

OPTION 2: The remaining openings shall be offered to district students on a lottery basis.

Note: Although the determination of excused and unexcused absences is irrelevant for accounting purposes pursuant to Education Code 42238.8, verification of excused absences may still be relevant for purposes of awarding credit for summer school classes. The following optional paragraph should be modified to reflect district practice.

Because summer courses cover extensive instructional content in a relatively short time period, students who have more than three excused absences or one unexcused absence may not receive credit for summer session class(es) unless they make-up missed work in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulation.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)
(cf. 6154 - Homework/Make-Up Work)

Note: State funding is not available for transportation to summer school. To accommodate students and parents/guardians who need to provide their own transportation, some districts rotate the sites at which summer sessions are offered, as provided in the following optional paragraph.

Sites for summer school programs may be rotated in an effort to make summer school programs more accessible to all students, regardless of residence or regular attendance area, and to accommodate the maintenance needs of district schools.

Note: The following optional paragraph should be revised to reflect indicators for program evaluation that have been agreed upon by the Board and Superintendent, as well as a timeline for reports to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board on summer school enrollment in the current year and previous year for the program as a whole and disaggregated by grade level, school that the students attend during the regular school year,
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS (continued)

and student population such as students from low-income families, students with disabilities, and English learners. In addition, he/she shall report on the extent to which students successfully achieved the academic outcomes established for the program.

Additional Summer Learning Opportunities

Note: The following optional section may be revised to reflect district practice and may be adapted for use during intercessions other than summer break. For further information about summer learning opportunities, see CSBA's policy brief School's Out, Now What? How Summer Programs Are Improving Student Learning and Wellness.

The Superintendent or designee may collaborate with parents/guardians, city and county agencies, community organizations, child care providers, and/or other interested persons to develop, implement, and build awareness of organized activities that support summer learning.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)
(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)
(cf. 1700 - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

Strategies to support summer learning may include, but are not limited to:

1. Gathering and providing information to students and parents/guardians about summer reading programs scheduled to be conducted by public libraries or community organizations

2. Collaborating with the local parks and recreation agency and/or community organizations to provide day camps, sports programs, or other opportunities for physical education and activity

(cf. 1330.1 - Joint Use Agreements)

3. Collaborating with workforce development agencies, businesses, and community organizations to provide summer job training programs that include an academic component

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)
(cf. 5113.2 - Work Permits)
(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)

4. Encouraging reading in the home, such as providing lists of recommended reading to students and parents/guardians, establishing a target number of books or pages, and providing prizes for achievement of reading goals
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS  (continued)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

5. Assigning summer homework in core curricular subject(s) that is due at the beginning of the school year for extra credit

6. Conducting occasional, interactive "fun days" during the summer to provide activities related to art, music, science, technology, mathematics, environmental science, multicultural education, debate, or other subjects

7. Arranging opportunities for community service

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

Legal Reference: (see next page)
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE
8482-8484.6 After School Education and Safety Program
8484.7-8484.9 21st Century Community Learning Centers
37252-37254.1 Supplemental instruction
39837 Transportation to summer employment programs
41505-41508 Pupil Retention Block Grant
41976.5 Summer school programs, substantially disabled persons or graduating high school seniors
42238.8 Revenue limit for average daily attendance
42239 Summer school apportionments
48070-48070.5 Promotion and retention
51210 Areas of study for elementary schools
51220 Areas of study for grades 7-12
51730-51732 Powers of governing boards (authorization for elementary summer school classes)
54444.3 Summer program for migrant students
56345 Extended-year program for special education students
58700-58702 Credit towards summer school apportionments for tutoring and homework assistance
58806 Summer school apportionments
60851 Supplemental instruction toward exit examination

REPEALED EDUCATION CODE FOR CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS
53025-53032 Intensive reading instruction
53091-53095 Intensive algebra instruction

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
3043 Extended school year, special education students
11470-11472 Summer school

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
6311-6322 Improving basic programs for disadvantaged students
7171-7176 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS
School's Out, Now What? How Summer Programs Are Improving Student Learning and Wellness, Policy Brief, April 2013

NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS
Healthy Summers for Kids: Turning Risk into Opportunity, May 2012
New Vision for Summer School, 2010

RAND CORPORATION PUBLICATIONS
Making Summer Count: How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning, 2011

WEB SITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
California Department of Education: http://www.cde.ca.gov
National Summer Learning Association: http://www.summerlearning.org
Partnership for Children and Youth: http://partnerforchildren.org
RAND Corporation: http://www.rand.org
Summer Matters: http://summermatters2you.net

(11/01 7/05) 4/13

Policy Reference UPDATE Service
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All rights reserved.
Note: The following optional policy is for use by any district that has been approved by the California Department of Education (CDE) to serve as a program sponsor under the federally funded Seamless Summer Feeding Option (SSFO) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), pursuant to 42 USC 1761 (as amended by P.L. 111-80) and 7 CFR 225.1-225.20. Both programs are designed to provide meals to children in low-income communities during summer vacation; however, SSFO funding is available only to districts that also participate in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program (42 USC 1751-1769, 1773).

Pursuant to 7 CFR 225.14, districts participating in SSFO or SFSP must make summer meals available to all children in the community, not just those enrolled in summer school. Districts that offer meals only to students enrolled in summer school and not to other children in the community are not eligible to receive reimbursements under SSFO or SFSP, but may continue to provide meals through the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program.

The Governing Board recognizes that child nutrition programs have a positive and direct impact upon children's well-being and achievement. To help students and other children in the community remain well nourished throughout the summer vacation, the district shall sponsor a summer meal program as approved by the California Department of Education (CDE).

(cf. 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program)
(cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)
(cf. 5030 - Student Wellness)
(cf. 5141.27 - Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs)

Note: The following optional paragraph is for use by districts that maintain one or more schools on a year-round schedule. Pursuant to 42 USC 1761, the SSFO and SFSP may provide meals at off-session/off-track times of the year for schools on a continuous school calendar. According to the CDE's Frequently Asked Questions, under the SSFO, schools on a year-round schedule may be approved to serve meals during breaks of at least 10 school days. For purposes of the SFSP, 7 CFR 225.2 defines a "continuous school year" as having vacation periods of 15 continuous school days or more during the period from October through April.

The district may apply to the CDE to provide meals to children during any extended break in a year-round school schedule. (42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.2, 225.6, 225.14)

(cf. 6117 - Year-Round Schedules)

Between October and April, or at any time of year for a school on a year-round schedule, the district may serve meals at a nonschool site in cases of unanticipated school closures, such as a natural disaster, unscheduled major building repair, court order related to school safety or other issues, labor-management dispute, or similar cause as approved by the CDE. (42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.6)
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM  (continued)

Note: Both the SSFO and SFSP contain criteria for choosing locations to operate a summer meal program; see the accompanying administrative regulation. Meal service must not begin prior to receiving CDE approval of the site.

The Superintendent or designee shall recommend to the Board one or more sites for meal services based on state and federal program criteria and an assessment of family and community needs. When feasible, the Superintendent or designee shall involve local governmental agencies, food banks, and/or community organizations in identifying suitable site locations. The site(s) shall be approved the CDE before meal service is initiated.

Note: The following paragraph is optional. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors encourages sponsors to select sites or design programs to offer other organized activities that attract children to the summer meal program.

The summer meal program may be offered in conjunction with educational enrichment or recreational activities in order to encourage participation in other wellness and learning opportunities.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)
(cf. 1330.1 - Joint Use Agreements)
(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)
(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)
(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education and Activity)
(cf. 6177 - Summer School)

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and coordinate outreach and promotional activities to inform parents/guardians and the community about the availability of the summer meal program and its location(s) and hours.

(cf. 1100 - Communication with the Public)
(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)
(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

Note: Districts participating in either the SSFO or SFSP must submit reimbursement claims through the CDE's online Child Nutrition Information and Payment System.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain accurate records of all meals served and shall ensure the timely submission of reimbursement claims in accordance with state procedures.

(cf. 3551 - Food Service Operations/Cafeteria Fund)

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly report to the Board regarding program implementation, number of participants at each site, feedback from participating children and their parents/guardians regarding menus and service, and program costs. As needed, the
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM (continued)

Board shall direct the Superintendent or designee to identify program modifications to increase program quality or children's access to meal services.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
49430-49436 Pupil Nutrition, Health, and Achievement Act of 2001
49490-49494 School breakfast and lunch programs
49500-49505 School meals
49510-49520 Nutrition
49530-49536 Child Nutrition Act
49547-49548.3 Comprehensive nutrition services
49550-49562 Meals for needy students
49570 National School Lunch Act
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
15510 Mandatory meals for needy students
15550-15565 School lunch and breakfast programs
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42
1751-1769i School lunch programs, including:
1751 Note Local wellness policy
1761 Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Feeding Option
1771-1792 Child nutrition, especially:
1773 School breakfast program
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 7
210.1-210.31 National School Lunch Program
220.1-220.22 National School Breakfast Program
225.1-225.20 Summer Food Service Program

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS
Providing Access to Nutritious Meals During Summer, Policy Brief, June 2010
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT BULLETINS
USDA-SFSP-06-2008 Summer Food Service Program Outreach Requirement Clarification, October 2008
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS
The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010, Nutrition Guidance for Sponsors, rev. March 2010
The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010 Site Supervisor's Guide, rev. January 2010

Management Resources: (continued on next page)
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM (continued)

Management Resources: (continued)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS (continued)
The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors, rev. December 2009
National School Lunch Program’s Seamless Summer Option Questions and Answers, 2009

WEB SITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
California Center for Research on Women and Families, Summer Meal Program Coalition: http://www.ccrwf.org
California Department of Education, Nutrition: http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu
California Food Policy Advocates: http://www.cfpa.net
California School Nutrition Association: http://www.calsna.org
Child Nutrition Information and Payment System: https://www.cnips.ca.gov
Note: The following optional administrative regulation is for use by any district that has been approved by the California Department of Education (CDE) to serve as a program sponsor under the federally funded Seamless Summer Feeding Option (SSFO) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), pursuant to 42 USC 1761 (as amended by P.L. 111-80) and 7 CFR 225.1-225.20. The district should select the section(s) below that correspond to the program(s) offered by the district.

**Site Selection**

Note: The following section is for use by districts that participate in either the SSFO or SFSP.

In identifying locations where summer meals may be provided, the Superintendent or designee shall document site eligibility according to the following criteria: (7 CFR 225.2, 225.15)

1. **Open Site:** The site provides meals to all children in the area and is located at a school or nonschool site within the geographical boundaries of a school attendance area where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

   *(cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)*

2. **Restricted Open Site:** The site initially meets the criteria of an "open site," but the district must restrict or limit participation on a first-come, first-served basis due to security, safety, or control concerns.

3. **Closed Enrolled Site:** The site is open only to children enrolled in a specific program or activity, as opposed to the community at large, and at least 50 percent of the enrolled children at the site are eligible for free or reduced price school meals, as determined by approval of applications in accordance with 7 CFR 225.15(f).

Note: The following optional paragraph is for use by districts that offer meals during summer school session. 7 CFR 225.14 requires such districts to make summer meals available to all children in the community, not just those enrolled in summer school. Districts that offer meals only to students enrolled in summer school and not to other children in the community are not eligible to receive reimbursements under SSFO or SFSP, but may continue to provide meals through the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program (42 USC 1751-1769h, 1773; 7 CFR 210.1-210.31, 220.1-220.21).

Whenever the district offers the summer meal program at a site that provides summer school sessions, it shall ensure that the site is open to students enrolled in summer school and to all children residing in the area served by the site. (7 CFR 225.14)
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM  (continued)

(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)
(cf. 6177 - Summer School)

Meal Service

Note: The following section is for use by districts that participate in either the SSFO or SFSP. The district may revise the following paragraph to reflect meals provided by the district.

In accordance with the district's agreement with the California Department of Education (CDE), the summer meal program may offer breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, and/or supper. The program may provide up to two meals/snacks per day in any combination, except that lunch and supper shall not be provided by the same site on the same day. Sites that primarily serve children from migrant families may apply to serve up to three meals, or two meals and one snack, per day. All meals/snacks shall be provided within the time periods specified in 7 CFR 225.16. (42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.16)

(cf. 3551 - Food Service Operations/Cafeteria Fund)
(cf. 5030 - Student Wellness)

Meals provided through the district's summer meal program shall be available at no cost to:
(42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.2)

1. Children age 18 or younger
2. Persons over age 18 who meet the CDE's definition of having a physical or mental disability and who are participating in a public or nonprofit private school program established for individuals with a disability

(cf. 6164.4 - Identification of Individuals for Special Education)

Note: The following paragraph is optional. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors encourages sponsors to designate a site supervisor for each site, as specified below.

The Superintendent or designee shall designate a person at each participating site to serve as the program's site supervisor. The site supervisor shall oversee the order or preparation of meals, ensure the site is cleaned before and after the meal, and record the number of complete meals served to eligible children each day.

Additional Requirements for Seamless Summer Feeding Option

Note: In addition to the requirements in the "Site Selection" and "Meal Service" sections above, districts participating in SSFO are subject to the requirements in the following optional section. Districts that participate in SSFO also participate in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program (42 USC 1751-1769, 1773) and have one agreement with the CDE for their entire food services operation.
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM  (continued)

All meals offered through the summer meal program shall meet menu planning requirements for the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program pursuant to 7 CFR 210.10 or 7 CFR 220.8. (42 USC 1761)

(cf. 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program)
(cf. 5141.27 - Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs)

Note: The following optional paragraph should be revised to reflect district practice. As part of the application process, districts applying to participate in the SSFO and operate an open site are required to describe how each site will advertise the availability of meal services to children in the community. The CDE's web site specifies that districts must have a large banner or marquee demonstrating that the meal service is available to all children in the community. Additional sample outreach materials, including a flyer translated into multiple languages, a poster, and a template letter for web sites, are available through the CDE.

According to the CDE's Frequently Asked Questions, the district should maintain documentation, such as copies of advertisements, flyers, or radio or TV announcements, so that the advertising method can be confirmed during a CDE review.

Whenever the district operates an open site as defined in the section entitled "Site Selection" above, the Superintendent or designee shall advertise the availability of summer meal services to the neighborhood community. A large banner or marquee shall be prominently displayed at each site before and during the meal service. Other outreach strategies may include, but are not limited to, sending a news release to the local media, distributing a flyer to parents/guardians of district students, posting information on the district or school web sites, and placing posters throughout the community.

(cf. 1100 - Communication with the Public)
(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)
(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

Note: Meals provided through the SSFO are reimbursed at the same rate applicable to free meals served through the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program. Reimbursement claims for meals served through the SSFO must be submitted through the CDE's online Child Nutrition Information and Payment System as part of the district's National School Lunch or Breakfast Program claim.

At the point of service, on-site staff shall count the number of eligible meals served. Reimbursement claims shall be submitted using the same procedure used during the school year for the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program.

Note: According to the USDA's National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Option Questions and Answers, each SSFO site must be locally reviewed at least once each year unless this requirement is waived by the CDE. The site monitoring review should be completed using a form available from the CDE. State review of local SSFO programs occurs every five years during the CDE's Coordinated Review Effort process.
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM (continued)

Each year the Superintendent or designee shall conduct at least one review of each site to ensure its compliance with meal counting, claiming, menu planning, and food safety requirements. For newly established sites, such reviews shall be conducted within three weeks of the start of operation.

Additional Requirements for Summer Food Service Program

Note: In addition to the requirements in the "Site Selection" and "Meal Service" sections above, districts participating in SFSP are subject to the requirements in the following optional section. The SFSP requires annual approval of the program from the CDE.

The district shall annually submit to the CDE a program application and budget for anticipated operational and administrative costs.

Note: 7 CFR 225.15 requires districts that sponsor open sites, as defined in item #1 in the section entitled "Site Selection" above, to send a notice to the media publicizing the availability of the program. A sample news release is available in the USDA's The Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School is Out, 2010 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually send a notice to the media serving the area from which the district draws its attendance regarding the availability of free meals. (7 CFR 225.15)

(cf. 1112 - Media Relations)

In addition, the district and each open site shall:

1. Make program information available to the public upon request

2. Make reasonable efforts to provide information in the appropriate translation concerning the availability and nutritional benefits of the program

3. Display, in a prominent place at the site and in the district office, the nondiscrimination poster developed or approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service

4. Include the nondiscrimination statement and instructions for filing a complaint in the public release and in any program information directed to parents/guardians of participants and potential participants
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM (continued)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 1100 - Communication with the Public)
(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

Note: CDE Management Bulletin USDA-SFSP-06-2008 states that sponsors of open sites are also required to post signage as provided in item #5 below.

5. Post signage, such as a banner, marquee, poster, or other large display on the exterior of the building facing the street nearest the entrance of the meal service area at each site, before the meal service begins and throughout the service time.

All meals offered through the summer meal program shall meet U.S. Department of Agriculture minimum meal patterns as specified in 7 CFR 225.16 or the meal patterns required for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. (42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.16)

(cf. 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program)
(cf. 5141.27 - Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs)

The Superintendent or designee shall submit to the CDE monthly reimbursement claims based on the number of eligible meals served.

Note: 42 USC 1761 and 7 CFR 225.15 and 225.7 require the district to provide training for program administrative and site personnel as provided below. In addition, administrative personnel must participate in mandatory training conducted by the CDE each year before the CDE will approve the SFSP agreement.

Program administrative personnel shall annually attend mandatory training provided by the CDE. In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall annually hold program training sessions for administrative and site personnel and shall allow no site to operate until personnel have attended at least one of these training sessions. Training of site personnel shall include, but not be limited to, the purpose of the program, site eligibility, record keeping, site operations, meal pattern requirements, and the duties of a program monitor. The Superintendent or designee shall provide training throughout the summer to ensure that administrative personnel are thoroughly knowledgeable in all required areas of program administration and operation and are provided with sufficient information to carry out their program responsibilities. Each site shall have present at each meal service at least one person who has received this training. (42 USC 1761; 7 CFR 225.15, 225.7)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Note: In addition to the self-reviews required by 7 CFR 225.15 as described below, districts are subject to reviews by the CDE at least once every three years, and more frequently under some circumstances, in accordance with 7 CFR 225.7.
SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM  (continued)

The Superintendent or designee shall monitor program operations by conducting site visits prior to opening a new site, during the first week of operation, during the first four weeks of operation, and then at a reasonable level thereafter. (7 CFR 225.15)

The Superintendent or designee shall retain all records pertaining to the program for a period of three years after the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain. (7 CFR 225.6, 225.15)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)
In order for governance teams to make informed decisions about summer learning programs, it is helpful to gain knowledge of research on summer learning loss and how summer learning programs can help mitigate that loss. In addition, boards should engage in discussions about the level and effectiveness of current district programs and establish goals and priorities for future programming. The following pages present materials for use in developing and conducting a board workshop, including a checklist for the facilitator and a sample workshop agenda. These materials may also be adapted for use in other settings.
Facilitator's Checklist

Initial contact

- Conduct outreach to district or county office of education to determine interest in the subject matter.

  » Schedule appointment with the school board president or superintendent to measure level of interest and current level of programming within the district. If the district is within the early stages of developing a program, proceed with the following facilitation guide, as-is. If the district currently has a high level of summer programming, the district may be more interested in an in-depth discussion regarding case studies of programs in other districts and/or the formulation of more concise and impactful student learning outcomes and goals.

  » Encourage the board president and superintendent to have a discussion regarding a possible workshop with the board as a whole.

  » Have a conference call with district leadership in order to: identify district staff and community partners who should be invited; organize participant recruitment and logistics; discuss the purpose and goals of the workshop; and come to agreement on the agenda and length of the workshop.

  » Contact the superintendent’s administrative assistant.

First steps

- Secure the location and timing for the meeting as soon as possible.

  » Provide at least two weeks advance notice to participants.

  » Confirm the date with the executive assistant and provide a list of needs for the facilitation, such as snacks and beverages, room set-up and other needs.
• Several days prior to the training, reconfirm all of the details and confirm key points. Who will open the facility? Will there be staff available to assist with set-up and clean-up?

• Review CSBA’s Summer Learning Series, CSBA’s policy brief entitled *School’s Out, Now What? How Summer Programs Are Improving Student Learning and Wellness*, and other related resources in CSBA’s Summer Learning and Wellness Resource Guide.


• Construct toolkits and/or slides that contain materials for the workshop, such as:

  » The workshop agenda

  » Guidelines for dialogue (see below)

  » A handout on school board roles and responsibilities

  » Information and charts demonstrating the extent and impact of summer learning loss (see Summer Matters resources at [www.summermatters2you.net/why-summer-matters](http://www.summermatters2you.net/why-summer-matters))


  » Sample budgets for styles of summer programs

  » Funding best practices from either Partnership for Children and Youth or National Summer Learning Association ([www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org))

  » CSBA sample board policies on summer learning and student wellness
Facility preparation

- Have facilities manager, or executive assistant, arrange the table beforehand, preferably in a U-shape, circle, or rectangle all facing each other and the front of the room.

- Show up well in advance to work out details or last-minute surprises.
  
  » Review lighting, power and heat/AC controls.
  
  » Check technology (computer, LCD projector, sound system, screen or blank wall). Back up all PowerPoint presentations on a flash drive.
  
  » Set up three flip chart packages that have been pre-labeled. Include flip chart easel, paper, pens and post-it notes.
  
  » Double check the number of participants attending, and lay out toolkits.
  
  » Place nametags at assigned seats to create optimal cross-pollination in small group exercises.
  
  » Provide additional nametags for last-minute participants and place them on the sign-in table.
  
  » Prepare the sign-in table.
  
  » Have the group divided in advance for breakout sessions to help with timing and effective dispersal of stakeholders and encourage cross-pollination.
As participants arrive

- Greet participants.
- Introduce yourself.
- Thank them for coming.

Conducting the training

- Start on time, and stay within timeframes.
- Note that there are three common learning styles—visual, auditory and kinesthetic—and people often learn the best through a combination of those three.
- Repeatedly relate the importance of the subject matter and progress being made on improving the conditions of the children within the district.
- Ensure that the participants remain focused by limiting side conversations and reminding them to limit their comments and suggestions to two to three minutes.
- Continuously note the progress made throughout the meeting, and recap the progress.
Sample Board Agenda with Facilitator Notes

Goals of the governance conversation

1. Understand the spectrum of activity within each of the board’s five major responsibilities (setting direction, establishing an effective and efficient structure for the district, providing support to the superintendent and staff as they carry out the board’s direction, ensuring accountability, and acting as community leaders) where the board can have discussions and make decisions around the conditions of children.

2. Understand summer learning loss and programs.

3. Understand the nature and scope of programs currently available to district students.

4. Identify priorities for action based on an examination of student needs, district priorities and feasibility for action.

“A school board at its best is a visionary, strategic change agent.”—School Board Field Book
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Meeting Agenda</strong></th>
<th><strong>Facilitation Notes</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 – 6:50 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Welcome, Introductions, Meeting Objectives, Overview</strong></td>
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<td>» Review conversation purpose and discussion process</td>
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<td>» Introduce self and participants, thank the board and other participants for taking the time to have this discussion, and relate background information regarding previous conversations that resulted in this meeting.</td>
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<td>» Tell attendees that it is your hope they will gain the tools needed to act on the issue of summer learning loss by the use of information sharing, small group breakout sessions, reporting back, and resource sharing. Accent the important take-away pieces for attendees that include the extent of summer learning loss, what is currently being done in the district, best practices throughout the state in relation to outcomes and funding, and a timeline of next steps for the board on this matter.</td>
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<td>» Direct attendees to information contained in handouts.</td>
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<td>» Acknowledge that attendees may know a lot about the achievement gap and summer learning loss, but this meeting will be about providing background data and potential options to mitigate those issues.</td>
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<td>» Provide background information on summer learning loss and programs</td>
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<td>» Use video, slides or charts to provide background information on how summer learning loss contributes to the achievement gap. Afterward, quickly divide the group into pairs, where community partners are paired with school board members or district staff, and have each pair discuss (1) one thing that surprised them about the information, and (2) one question it raised or what they learned that is most relevant to their district. The objective of this exercise is to initiate discussion on the topic by connecting across organizations.</td>
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<td>» Continue with the presentation. Make sure to pause and ask for questions along the way.</td>
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<td>» Highlight test results (e.g., San Diego) and provide ample time for questions.</td>
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<td>» Provide attendees with sample policy on student wellness and relate the policy to health and wellness within the school year and in potential summer learning programs as well.</td>
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<td>» Review materials provided by CSBA</td>
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<td>» Call attention to the CSBA policy brief on summer learning entitled School’s Out, Now What?</td>
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<td>» Also direct attendees to CSBA’s Summer Learning Series.</td>
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| **Current or Previous Programs** | - Transition back into group discussion by pointing out that the presentation of background information had really important and valuable information that will integrate into the work later in the night, but first the attendees should share what programs are currently available for the students in their district during summer. (Examples may include district programs, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, etc.)  
- Allow time for all the partners to discuss the type and style of summer programming they currently run, and make notes on strengths, challenges, and opportunities of current programs.  
- Transition between discussion of current programs by stating that you heard real needs, strengths and opportunities that currently exist in the district. |
| **Environmental Analysis—Link to Learning** | - Note that you want to engage the attendees in a small group activity that will allow them to think together about sharing resources in order to strengthen the current program.  
  Divide the large group into three smaller groups that will take turns at each of the flipcharts. There is one chart for each of the following topics: strengths, challenges, and opportunities.  
  Explain that they will have five minutes at each chart, and that the group was initially divided up in order to get mixed representation in each group. They will have a stack of post-its (a different color for each group) and colored markers.  
  At each chart, they are to write down all of the district conditions that apply to that chart (strengths, challenges, and opportunities) on a post-it note and then stick the notes on the chart (one idea per note).  
  All groups rotate to every chart and read and add to previous comments.  
  After the initial small group exercise, have the groups return to their original charts and review all posted comments. Group all the post-its into main themes. Circle and name the themes using the markers. One spokesperson remains at each chart. All others return to their seats.  
- Go around the room and have each spokesperson explain the themes for his/her chart and provide a couple of key examples in each theme area.  
  The idea behind this exercise is to illustrate the major themes on each chart (strengths, challenges, and resources/opportunities) so the participants can hear and see the information needed in order to move into developing the next steps in the planning process.  
<p>| <strong>Summarize the key themes</strong> | - After the group spokespersons have all shared and returned to their seats, recap all the themes quickly a second time, but end by reviewing the strengths chart and calling attention to all of the strengths. Then hang the flip sheets on the wall for all to view and save for a later date. |</p>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moving to Action—Next Steps</strong></td>
<td>» Ask the group as a whole to come up with two lists: priorities and next steps. Make sure to transition into the activity by pointing out their progress throughout the meeting: “What are some priorities that you think need to happen, given everything that we have discussed tonight? You started out sharing all of these great ideas and activities, and then you added to that list as you worked in your small groups. So what priorities do you have that would be most impactful for your students?” List the group priorities on a flipchart sheet.</td>
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<td>» Then ask the group to list out the “REAL” next steps, and write them up on another flip chart that is located next to the priorities in order to view them side by side. Recap each point that the group brings up in order to draw out and validate the important elements said. Ask them to identify the resources that will be needed to implement the steps, and any people with whom they can meet or talk in order to achieve those next steps. Get that information down as well. It is important for the group to continuously identify all the stakeholders that should be involved. After making each list, it is important to review every point that was made on each list with the group in order to informally give them another opportunity to make corrections or add finer detail to any of the bullet points. This helps the group members to better visualize each of the bullet points regarding future action.</td>
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<td>» Again, it is important to recap the progress made throughout the whole meeting in order to illustrate the roadmap that has been developing for the board members to act upon. “Great job at finding actual concrete priorities and next steps tonight in order to improve the summer programming for the students in the district.”</td>
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<td>» Have the attendees prioritize the next steps in order of importance so they have a more detailed roadmap of focus areas over the coming months. Also, have them note which “next steps” can be taken now and which ones describe long-term actions. List them out on the third flipchart so they may keep the notes for a later date. “You all came up with great next steps that are really attainable.” Verbally review the new list of next steps. “You all have done a terrific job of dialoging with each other. Do all of you see the value of sitting in a room together and having this kind of conversation?”</td>
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<td>Optional: A group that has a well-developed summer program may want to spend some time, at this point, developing specific goals and beginning an action plan for moving forward.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Meeting Agenda

**8:40–9:00 p.m.**

**Evaluation and Feedback on the Conversation/Discussion**

- What about this process was helpful?
- What about this process could improve?

### Facilitation Notes

- Have the attendees provide feedback on the facilitation.
- Thank them for their dedication to the children, and all their hard work throughout the process of the meeting.
Guidelines for Dialogue

“A dialogue is any conversation that is animated by a search for understanding rather than for agreements or solutions.”

Focus on what matters

- We talk about what’s really important to us.

Acknowledge one another as equals

- We really listen to each other.
- We see how thoroughly we can understand each other’s views and experience.

Speak with our hearts and minds

- We say what’s true for us without making each other wrong.

Beware of judgments

- Listen in order to understand—suspend certainty and let go of assumptions.

Slow down

- We allow time for thinking and reflection.

Share collective discoveries

- We see what we can learn together by exploring things together.

Avoid monopolizing the conversation

- We make sure everyone has a chance to speak.
Annotated Literature Review of Summer Learning and Wellness Resources

This literature review contains a partial list of resources that pertain to the development of effective summer learning programs. It outlines supporting research, best practices, tools and resources for school districts, county offices of education, nonprofit organizations and other program providers to utilize as they work towards increased student learning and wellness during the summer months. These resources are divided into two categories: summer learning and summer wellness. Because of the link between wellness and learning, districts are encouraged to explore ways to enhance students’ opportunities for both during the summer.

Summer Learning


This E-magazine is a great source for developing a process timeline for the development of summer programs. The magazine is geared towards technical assistance providers and their support efforts. It contains 180 regional lead voices from across California in relation to implementation. It offers wonderful best practices, contains a timeline for quality standards improvement in relation to technical assistance support efforts and raises important key questions for consideration.

This review of the research literature, conducted by the RAND Corp. and funded by The Wallace Foundation, examines the impact of summer learning loss, the effectiveness of summer programs, what drives the costs of summer programs and what funding is available, and factors that facilitate and challenge the provision of programs. This is a must-read document for districts looking to implement or improve summer programs. Of particular interest to school boards are sections that evaluate overall program effectiveness and cost.

The authors cite significant evidence that students’ knowledge and skills decline over the summer break. Without the presence of continued practice or other reinforcement, skills deteriorate at an initially rapid pace, especially for mathematics (p. 19). The effects of summer learning loss are particularly notable among low-income students, who may lose an equivalent of one month of learning during the summer while their more affluent peers may even gain a month of learning (pp. 21-22). One hypothesis for this finding is that many low-income students do not have the same access to opportunities for home or community learning during summer. Furthermore, research shows that the effects of summer learning loss are cumulative and that unequal summer learning opportunities in elementary grades are responsible for about two-thirds of the ninth-grade achievement gap between low-income and high-income students (p. 23).

The authors concluded that intentional summer learning programs are the best option for combating summer learning loss when compared to extended school year models or modified calendars (p. 2). However, positive student outcomes are not guaranteed. Key components of quality summer learning programs include smaller class sizes, differentiated and high-quality instruction, aligned school-year and summer curricula, engaged and rigorous programming, an engaging enrichment component, different instructional feel to that found during the school year, maximized participation and attendance, sufficient duration and involved parents (p. 30).

Early challenges to establishing a program included matching implementation with expectation, securing district staff buy-in, developing partnerships with community-based organizations, interpreting funding guidelines, and developing academic content to accompany enrichment programming (p. 59). It is also important for school boards to note some of the ongoing barriers programs are likely to face. Of those challenges, funding will continue to be the most important, but low or uncertain enrollment and conflicts with facility maintenance were also issues (p. 60).
In conclusion, the authors reaffirmed the importance of districts investing in staffing and planning for summer learning programs, actively incorporating practices that will help ensure the success of programs, and maximizing the benefits of partnerships and a variety of funding sources (p. 73).


Although designed to frame discussions of state boards of education around issues related to summer learning, this guide contains useful information for school boards, district staff, and program providers. It is largely based on the RAND Corp.'s *Making Summer Count* report plus the results of an NASBE survey of state board of education members. It includes an introduction to summer learning loss, factors of effective summer programs and state-level actions to address such issues. A useful graph illustrates the differences between the traditional idea of summer school and the new vision of a “summer learning program.” Best practices from other states also provide some valuable lessons.


This resource is a quick reference guide to the National Summer Learning Association’s quality standard guidelines meant to help in the quality improvement of existing programs. It is widely used as the standards for all summer programs. Standards address the program’s purpose, finance and sustainability, program design, curriculum and activities, staff recruitment and training, partnerships, individualized instruction, intentional focus on meeting learning goals and using research-based instructional methods, integration of academic strategies and social/emotional development strategies, and creation of a unique “summer culture.”

The National Summer Learning Association, funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, developed this roadmap to illustrate how summer learning programs can find potential funding. This document includes an easy-to-read chart of federal funding sources, types of assistance, and activities funded under those programs. Each of those federal possibilities is then explained in greater detail with examples of best practices of those that used such funding. Possible state, local and private funding opportunities are also outlined. Finally, the document includes strategies to help program providers increase their chance of success in obtaining funding, such as by arming themselves with the data to demonstrate that summer learning can positively impact student well-being and achievement and developing a concrete strategy for leveraging existing funding.


This online resource guide contains helpful links to information that can aid in improving and supporting summer learning programs. Links include funding resources/opportunities, find a summer program, curriculum, activity resources, tips for leading summer learning programs, out-of-school time, and social-emotional learning activities for after-school and summer programs.


This comprehensive planning guide, available for sale through NSLA, recommends that program directors, managers and others begin thinking, assessing and planning in September for next year’s summer programs. The guide outlines the steps in each planning and improvement process (e.g., staffing, curriculum development) in relation to the school year calendar and provides a number of helpful checklists.

This document has a substantial list of best funding practices from various California schools, districts, and county offices of education. Also see more recent information on current funding options from the National Summer Learning Association.


This document is a quick introduction to SB 429 (2011), which provides more flexibility in the use of supplemental funding for After School Safety and Education programs and 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

Summer Matters. *How Summer Learning Strengthens Students’ Success*. Oakland, CA: Summer Matters. [http://g.virbcdn.com/_f2//files/d0/FileItem-285234-201213Summer_Matters_CaseStudy_STC.pdf](http://g.virbcdn.com/_f2//files/d0/FileItem-285234-201213Summer_Matters_CaseStudy_STC.pdf)

This study shows the outcomes of three summer learning programs within Los Angeles, Sacramento and Fresno. The study measured students’ reading efficacy, vocabulary, work habits, social skills and attendance and found no noticeable increase or decrease across those three programs for any of the elements observed. That is a positive outcome because summer programs are working towards minimizing the “summer slide.”


This manual is a large and extensive resource for technical assistance providers who are aiming to help existing programs improve their quality and level of outcome. It contains checklists, brainstorming activities, and resources to consider at every step in the quality improvement timeline. The manual itself comes in four parts, each tackling a different topic in relation to the continuing cycle of summer program development: (1) Plan, (2) Train, (3) Assess, and (4) Reflect.

This website offers key resources that will be useful during the development of a process timeline. It contains a planning timeline and three sample budgets so individuals can start thinking about the amount and types of funding they will need.

**Multimedia Sources for Presentations**

In addition to the written materials above, there are a number of video resources that provide information about summer learning and might be used in presentations to school boards, community groups and other stakeholders. Examples include:

- A short video that helps an audience to better understand what summer learning loss is and how it can affect low-income students. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ahhj3wxkDM

- A moving six-minute video found on the Summer Matters website that illustrates the importance of summer learning programs by connecting education and enrichment in order to impact low-income learners. www.youtube.com/watch?v=38jVE3iVa8A&feature=player_embedded#!

- Footage of the National Summer Learning Day 2012 where 200 students from Fresno, Mt. Diablo and Sacramento, in addition to public officials across the state, convened on the California state capitol to share successes as they rallied for continued summer learning program support. www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v9LNJNLgp0&feature=player_embedded

- An overview of programs in Oakland, Fresno and Gilroy which briefly quotes a Johns Hopkins study and ties it all together. www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHJiTFT1-wQ&feature=endscreen. See videos about each of these programs at Oakland (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQtG769O6BE), Fresno (www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aac_3rdyc), and Gilroy (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU06bHlBLlo&feature=endscreen).
Summer Wellness


This annual report tracks trends in the federally funded summer nutrition programs. The 2012 report found a decline of six percent in the number of low-income children served between July 2010 and July 2011 and a decline of over 50 percent in the past decade, a decline that the report attributes to the loss of summer learning programs.

http://frac.org/pdf/2012_summer_nutrition_report.pdf

This source is a national call to action around the falling numbers in summer nutrition participation. It has a quantitative breakdown of summer meal participation by state, outlines missed opportunities and discusses what needs to be done in order to fix the issue. The report found that, out of 100 children served through the National School Lunch Program during the traditional school year in California, only 17 were served through summer nutrition programs in 2011. Furthermore, by failing to serve 556,346 eligible children, the state missed out on over $36 million in federal funds available for summer meal programs.


The authors gathered information from 73 overweight youth in two-month intervals for a period of one year in order to find any patterns in weight gain over that timeframe. The results showed that significant weight gain occurred among those students during the months of July and August and that the weight gain can easily undermine effective weight treatments that happen throughout the traditional school year.

This resource melds together findings from research previously conducted on summer weight gain, the issue of declining summer meals enrollment, and potential funding sources to help pay for summer meals programs.


This report provides a quick overview on how summer programming can help improve the quality of student health and academic achievement. It outlines the challenges that students face over the summer vacation, the risk of increased obesity during those months, and how that relates to lessened levels of achievement and food insecurity. It also offers next steps and outlines numerous best practices.


No Kid Hungry, a project of Share Our Strength, is a campaign dedicated to resolving childhood hunger through various avenues such as school meals, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, summer meals, early childhood outreach, and healthy eating education. Its website contains helpful information and tools such as *Outreach Timeline for Summer Food,* Sedexo Foundation Summer Meals Outreach Tool Kit, research studies, and other information.