



# Moving Summer Learning Forward: **A Strategic Roadmap for Funding in Tough Times**



Local  
Partner-  
ships

State  
Incentive  
Funds

21st  
CCLC

Title I

# About the National Summer Learning Association

The vision of the National Summer Learning Association is for every child to be safe, healthy, and engaged in learning during the summer. To realize that vision, our mission is to connect and equip schools, providers, communities, and families to deliver high-quality summer learning opportunities to our nation's youth to help close the achievement gap and support healthy development.



NSLA serves as a network hub for thousands of summer learning program providers and stakeholders across the country, providing tools, resources, and expertise to improve program quality, generate support, and increase youth access and participation.

We offer professional development, quality assessment and evaluation, best practices dissemination and collaboration, and strategic consulting to states, school districts, community organizations, and funders. Our efforts are focused on achieving the following results:

- Increase the number of providers offering high-quality summer learning programs to young people living in poverty;
- Increase the number of organizations and policymakers that identify summer learning as a public policy priority; and
- Increase funding for high-quality summer learning programs for young people who currently lack choices and opportunities

## How to Use This Guide

### Why a funding roadmap?

Summer learning loss creates a permanent drag on our education system, but without resources, programs cannot provide access for all of the children who need meaningful learning opportunities over the long vacation from school. With the generous support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the National Summer Learning Association developed this guide to show afterschool programs, school districts, and other stakeholders how they can obtain funding to provide meaningful programming during summer.

### Who should read this roadmap?

- State afterschool network leaders
- Summer learning providers interested in expansion and partnerships
- School district leaders interested in a new vision for their summer learning programs
- Policymakers
- State and local government leaders

### What does the roadmap include?

- Descriptions of and links to applicable federal, state, and local funding streams
- Examples of how to use local partnerships and private funding to leverage public resources
- Spotlighted strategies and examples of funding in action
- Case studies of how high-quality district and community-based summer learning programs obtained funds

### How can I learn more and receive updates on the information?

Throughout 2013, the National Summer Learning Association will be conducting webinars and trainings to help the summer learning field access funding streams, including its [tenth annual national Summer Changes Everything™ conference](#) November 11-13, 2013, in Orlando, Florida.

For the latest updates and information, become a member of NSLA at [summerlearning.org/join](http://summerlearning.org/join).

# Why Summer Learning?



Summer is the most unequal time in America for young people, and a season of setbacks in education and health. A strong body of educational research confirms what teachers know from experience: many students lose months of the skills they learned during the school year over the summer break. Students typically score lower on standardized tests after the summer than they did before it.<sup>1</sup> Most students lose two months of mathematical skills every summer, and low-income children typically lose another two to three months in reading.<sup>2</sup> A Johns Hopkins University study found that summer learning loss during elementary school accounted for two-thirds of the achievement gap in reading between low-income children and their middle-income peers by ninth grade.<sup>3</sup> Young people also are prone to weight gain over the summer and lose access to some basic needs provided during the school year, such as federally funded meals and regular physical activity, undermining their health and readiness for learning.<sup>4</sup>

Many children do not have the freedom, resources, or access to experience the stimulating aspects of the summer season through the safety and direction of learning programs and opportunities, camps, or family vacations. Instead, far too many are left inside and inactive, or on the streets without guidance or supervision.

Recent research from the RAND Corporation and funded by The Wallace Foundation shows that high-quality summer learning programs with characteristics such as individualized instruction, parent involvement, and small classes can not only curb summer learning loss, but even help boost student achievement.<sup>5</sup> Given that evidence, a growing number of schools are now transforming the old punitive model of summer school, which focused mostly on children who had failed the preceding grade, and embracing a new vision that brings together the best of education and youth development to eliminate summer learning loss, help close the achievement gap, and engage students through innovative teaching and learning.<sup>6</sup> The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) has brought 24 of these districts, serving more than 2 million children, together in the New Vision for Summer School Network for regular convenings and learning opportunities that support the development of this new model for summer learning and its influence on the central work of the school year.

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These districts are adopting important aspects of the tactics thousands of community summer learning providers have used for years to engage young people and help them thrive. The district summer learning movement, which has the potential to bring access to academically-aligned programs to many more children, took a major leap in proving its worth with temporary federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) stimulus funds, which the Obama Administration urged districts to use for summer learning. While those funds have sunsetted, important pathways remain to continue these strides through other public funding mechanisms.

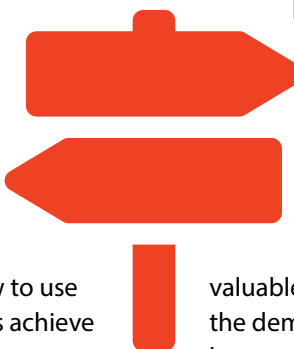
Summer learning is a strategy that works directly toward the most important goals of modern education reform efforts, including readying students and teachers for the higher performance targets of the Common Core State Standards; closing achievement gaps; driving competency and interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) careers; raising the percentage of children reading on grade level by third grade; and lowering the dropout rate. Indeed, without more access to high-quality summer learning, efforts to achieve these overall goals will be less successful because of the months of skills lost by low-income children every year during the summer.

While summer learning is an emerging strategy for education reform, uncertainty over how to pay for it, especially in a post-ARRA environment of tough budget choices, has been a barrier for school districts and community partners alike. But for those who know where to look and devise creative strategies to combine funding streams for summer learning, there is also substantial opportunity. This funding roadmap is designed to help state and local leaders identify the most promising funding streams to support summer learning and show how innovative states, districts, and communities have creatively developed and sustained high-quality summer programming.

# The 2013 Roadmap for Funding Opportunities

The importance of summer learning is clear. But while committing to summer as a key educational support for students is an important first step, it is only half the battle. Understanding how best to leverage public and private funding is key to creating and sustaining summer learning programs over the long term. While few funding sources exist that are dedicated only to summer learning, deep knowledge of and savvy about how to use a variety of funding streams can help communities achieve their summer learning goals.

Federal funding for summer learning programs that are more than strictly remedial has its roots in the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program. 21st CCLC has played a key role in the growth of summer programming and includes a strong focus on school-community partnerships and hands-on enrichment activities. In some states that have recently received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education, 21st CCLC applicants for funding may be able to use some of their grant to extend the school day or year. No matter what approach a state may take, one of the strengths of 21st CCLC funding is that it promotes innovative and exciting teaching and learning opportunities, rather than “more of the same” schooling. 21st CCLC also encourages partnerships between schools and community-based organizations, like the one



between the community-based organization Summer Scholars and the Denver Public Schools, which can enhance summer program offerings while making them more effective and less expensive. ([Read more about the Summer Scholars/DPS Partnership.](#)) As appropriate, summer providers should emphasize these points in their applications. Although 21st CCLC remains a valuable source of federal funding, it is not enough to meet the demand for summer programs nationally.<sup>7</sup> Providers can, however, leverage the successes of summer learning programs funded by 21st CCLC by using outcome data as proof points for summer learning as a smart investment under any related funding stream.

The following section summarizes the key trends in federal policy that open doors for funding opportunities, and an outline of key federal, state, and local funding streams that summer learning providers should consider accessing to support their strategies and goals. While there is no silver bullet solution to the challenges of how to fund summer learning, funding is available to those who know where to find it and how to effectively demonstrate their eligibility. Streams of federal, state, and local support can be effectively combined to help implement programs that will improve learning outcomes for children.

## Trends in Federal Policy that Open Doors to Funding Opportunities

### FLEXIBILITY AND PARTNERSHIPS PROVIDE NEW POSSIBILITIES

In recent years, the role of the federal government in education policy has shifted to provide more flexibility at the state and local levels in education, and to create strong partnerships across educational entities – federal and state partnerships, state and local partnerships, school and community partnerships, and any other kind of partnership that can be created to improve outcomes for youth. The federal role is moving toward setting goals for outcomes while allowing increased flexibility in how to achieve those outcomes. Summer learning providers and interested school districts can seize the opportunities created by this increased flexibility to fund summer learning programs.

Given the current fiscal climate, dominated by tight budgets and the desire to consolidate programs at the federal level, and the focus on evidence-based strategies, summer learning providers must be prepared to take advantage of flexible funding and leverage the evidence on summer learning to diversify funding opportunities. Many federal, state, local, and private funds can be leveraged towards summer learning if the activities provided are at least allowable uses and a case is clearly made that an investment in summer learning will help achieve the overall goals of the program.

As providers look at available federal funding streams, they should analyze the multiple ways that summer learning could address the broad goals outlined in the grants. If a program does not specifically prohibit funding for summer learning, and summer learning fits the broader eligibility requirements and goals outlined by the federal policy, then the program could and should be a match. For example, if a

federal grant program is competitively awarded to states or districts with requirements that the grant be used to address areas prioritized by the states or districts in order to increase student achievement, summer learning would be a match. Advocates can say with confidence that providing additional time for student learning during summer, which is otherwise a season when young people typically lose academic ground, will help to improve student achievement.

In addition, as flexibility at the local level has increased, states and districts have sought to increase their capacity by building strong local partnerships with nonprofit organizations and others. These partnerships open doors to funding that may not have previously been available. For example, if a summer learning provider finds a grant program that aligns with its mission, but the eligible entity for the grant is a district (also called a local educational agency or LEA), the summer learning provider could build a relationship with the district and plan for how the grant funds can be utilized if they are given an award.

## EVIDENCE MATTERS

In May 2012, the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget issued a memo to the heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on the use of evidence and evaluation in the 2014 budget.<sup>8</sup> The memo directed federal agencies to:

- demonstrate the use of evidence throughout their Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 budget submissions, and
- include a separate section on agencies' most innovative uses of evidence and evaluation.

The OMB Memo also specifically called for infusing evidence into grantmaking. Grantmaking agencies must demonstrate that, between FY 2013 and FY 2014, they are increasing the use of evidence in formula and competitive programs.

In addition, other funding entities, including philanthropies and businesses, are increasingly focused not only on addressing a need, but on proposals that address a need with evidence-based solutions. They want to know that their investment will pay off. For example, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation identifies highly effective nonprofits serving disadvantaged youth from low-income communities and makes substantial long-term investments to replicate and expand these programs and strengthen their evidence base.<sup>9</sup> The Robin Hood Foundation targets poverty in New York City by finding and funding the best and most effective anti-poverty programs and partnering with them to maximize results. Robin Hood has developed a rigorous cost/benefit metrics system to help it analyze the best use of funds among its target population.<sup>10</sup>

As funders encourage a deeper focus on evidence and strong outcome data for funded programs, it is more important than ever for summer learning providers to be prepared to make an evidence-based case for their programs and to continue to collect program data, package it to tell a clear story of positive impact that aligns with school-year goals, and use it effectively to advocate for funding opportunities.

## Creating a Successful Strategy for Accessing Federal Funds for Summer Learning

Several key strategies can help summer learning providers to improve their chances of effectively accessing federal funding:

- **Understand the landscape for federal programs**, including understanding how and when the grants are funded; who is eligible to receive the funds; and the purpose or goals for the funding.
- **Plan early to best synchronize timing for grant awards, school district budget cycles, and high-quality summer learning.** Ongoing research from the RAND Corporation<sup>11</sup> has found that program leaders who began planning in January were able to run programs more smoothly, with less disruption to academic instruction.
- **Continuously work to build partnerships so that summer learning programs can access funding** even if they don't directly receive funds through formulas, or can't apply directly for competitive grant funds.
- **Collect, analyze, and share strong outcome data** to prove that summer learning programs are successful.
- **Make communities, schools, and parents aware** of summer programs and their benefits to build support and advocacy.



# Federal Funding for Summer Learning: Promising Streams



Several of the largest federal funding streams for education, including Title I and School Improvement Grants, can be used for summer learning. It is vital for grant-seekers to understand what is allowable under the law, how grants are administered, and who administers the grants: state educational agencies (SEAs), which are also called state departments of education; school districts, which are also called local educational agencies (LEAs); nonprofit organizations or community-based organizations (CBOs); or others. The chart and program summaries below are intended to help providers better understand the federal landscape to help achieve their summer learning goals.

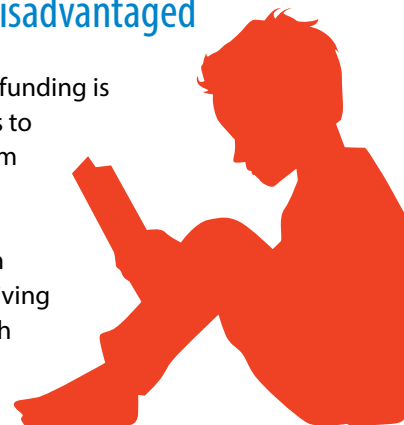
Program	Type of Assistance	Activities
<b>ESEA – Title I, Part A</b>	Formula grants to SEAs and then LEAs.	LEAs target the Title I funds they receive to schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families. These funds can support a wide variety of uses, including summer programs. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html</a> .
<b>ESEA – School Improvement Grants (SIG)</b>	Formula grants to SEAs and then competitive grants to LEAs.	LEAs use SIG funds to implement one of four specified school intervention models. Both the Transformation Model and the Turnaround Model require the use of extended learning time (which can include summer programming). Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html</a> .
<b>ESEA – Title II, Part A</b>	Formula grants to SEAs and then formula grants to LEAs	LEAs may use funds to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, and for professional development activities for teachers and principals. Professional development activities can occur during the summer. Summer providers, in some cases, may also be able to benefit from professional development activities. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/index.html</a>
<b>Waiver Flexibility</b>	States apply to the U.S. Department of Education for waiver flexibility.	States that are granted waivers will be required to identify and focus on the lowest-performing schools in the state. LEAs must implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each of these schools. Turnaround principles include redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility">http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility</a> .
<b>ESEA – 21st Century Community Learning Centers</b>	Formula grants to SEAs, then competitive grants to LEAs, CBOs, and other public and private entities.	Each eligible entity that receives an award from the state may use the funds to carry out a broad array of activities before and after school (including those held during summer recess periods) to advance student achievement. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html</a> .
<b>ESEA – Title I, Part C – Education of Migratory Children</b>	Formula grants to states.	Funds must be used for the specific purpose of educating migrant children; however, the uses of funds are very flexible and can be applied to summer learning. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/mep/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/mep/index.html</a>
<b>ED – Promise Neighborhoods</b> (Established under the authority of the ESEA Fund for the Improvement of Education program)	Competitive grants to eligible entities that include (1) nonprofit organizations, (2) institutions of higher education, and (3) Native American tribes.	Eligible applicants must partner with at least one target school that is low-performing and, among other things, implement a school intervention model that may include increased learning time (which means using a longer school day, week, or extended year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time). Additional information available at: <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html</a> .

Program	Type of Assistance	Activities
<b>HHS – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)</b>	TANF funds are allocated to states.	TANF funds can be used to support afterschool and summer activities for youth while their parents, who are eligible for the program, work. Additional information at: <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf</a>
<b>HUD – Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)</b>	Formula grant that provides funds to over 1,200 general units of local government and states.	At local discretion, CDBG funds could be used to support summer programming. Additional information available at: <a href="http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs">http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs</a>
<b>CNCS – AmeriCorps</b>	Competitive grants (national and state) are awarded to national, state, and local nonprofit organizations, community and faith-based organizations, higher education institutions, and state and local governments.	The purpose of AmeriCorps State and National is to engage AmeriCorps members in direct service and capacity-building to address critical community needs. The grant applicant designs service activities for a team of members serving full- or part-time for one year or during the summer. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/ameri-corps.asp">http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/ameri-corps.asp</a>
<b>DOL – Workforce Investment Act (WIA)</b>	Formula grants to states and local areas.	Programs could provide summer employment opportunities to youth that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services">http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services</a>
<b>USDA – Summer Food Service Program</b>	Reimbursements to approved sponsors through the state agencies.	Approved sponsors serve meals that meet federal nutritional guidelines. The National School Lunch Program also provides reimbursements to summer programs that are school-sponsored and have a school food service department that is willing to provide healthy snacks and meals. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/Sponsor.htm">http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/Sponsor.htm</a>
<b>NASA – Summer of Innovation Initiative and other STEM opportunities</b>	Grants to community based organizations that serve middle-school students and/or teachers, especially those involved with underrepresented and underserved populations.	NASA provides grants to strengthen the capacity of community- and school-based organizations that inspire and engage middle school students in STEM content during the summer. Additional information available at: <a href="http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/national/summer/home/index.html">http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/national/summer/home/index.html</a> . For more detail on other STEM funding opportunities that may be available for summer learning, see the Afterschool Alliance guide <a href="#">Know Your Funders: A Guide to STEM Funding for Afterschool</a> .

## Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Part A—Education for the Disadvantaged

The purpose of Title I, Part A funding is to provide an equal, high-quality education to all students. The funding is allocated through formula grants to SEAs, which then sub-allocate grants to LEAs. LEAs use Title I funds to provide services to students at public schools with the highest percentages or numbers of children from low-income families.

Title I offers an important opportunity for those interested in providing summer learning to students in need. In addition to the significant flexibility in current law surrounding the use of funds for Title I-receiving schools, the law specifically references summer learning as an allowable activity in several places, which means that there is an explicit authorization to use Title I funds for summer learning.



# Pittsburgh Public Schools Summer Dreamers Academy

Pittsburgh Public Schools Summer Dreamers Academy is an excellent example of how Title I funds can be effectively leveraged for summer learning. Recognizing that summer learning activities are authorized under Title I, Summer Dreamers Academy staff made the case to the district that the program could help advance the goals of the district by increasing student academic achievement. They outlined how they could both create and provide the district with rigorous program and lesson plans that aligned with state standards, and through a proposals process, asked community partners providing enrichment activities to specifically map those activities to standards. Once district leaders were sold on the importance of this program, they helped sell it at the state level. Key state and district level support also helped gain buy-in from the schools, parents, and community.

[Get more details on Summer Dreamers' program and funding.](#)

In order to receive grant funds under Title I, Part A, SEAs must submit plans to the Secretary of Education, and LEAs must submit plans to the SEA. LEA plans must include, where appropriate, a “description of how the local educational agency will use the funds to support after school (including before school and summer school) and school-year extension programs.”<sup>12</sup>

There are two basic types of Title I, Part A programs: school-wide programs and targeted assistance programs. The law references summer learning in each of these programs:

- **School-wide Programs:** LEAs may consolidate and use Title I, Part A funds with other federal, state, and local funds for school-wide programs that benefit all students in the school if low-income students make up 40 percent or more of the school population. School-wide programs must use effective methods and instructional strategies that, among other things, increase “the amount and quality of learning time of students, such as providing an extended school year and before- and after-school and summer programs and opportunities, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum.”<sup>13</sup>
- **Targeted Assistance Programs:** These funds are generally limited to the lowest-achieving students in the school. Targeted assistance programs must also use effective methods and instructional strategies that strengthen the core academic program of the school and that, among other things, “give primary consideration to providing extended learning time, such as an extended school year, before- and after-school, and summer programs and opportunities.”<sup>14</sup>

Since Title I, Part A, is such a flexible funding stream that specifically authorizes summer learning activities, summer learning providers should try to be key players in the drafting of the state and local plans.



**If the plans have already been drafted, summer learning providers should closely examine the state and local plans as well as individual school improvement plans to identify how summer learning opportunities address the goals set forth in their plans.** Building partnerships among states, districts, community organizations, and nonprofits will only help in accessing these funds. Securing the support of community partners, students and their families, teachers, principals, and other school staff is essential. Convincing all of the players that summer learning is key to improving student achievement will help to ensure that more Title I funds are used to support summer learning.

## Elementary and Secondary Education Act, School Improvement Grants (SIG)

School Improvement Grants are authorized under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to support turnaround efforts in persistently low-achieving schools. Formula grants are awarded to SEAs based on their share of Title I funds. States then award competitive grants to LEAs to implement one of the four specified intervention models: Turnaround, Restart, School Closure, and Transformation.<sup>15</sup> According to a report by Education Sector, 73 percent of those using SIG funding have used the Transformation model.<sup>16</sup>



The two models most relevant to summer learning are outlined below:

- **Transformation:** The Transformation Model requires an LEA to implement all of the following core strategies:
  - o Developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness by replacing the principal and implementing a teacher and principal evaluation system;
  - o Comprehensive instructional reform strategies that include research-based, vertically aligned instructional programs, and use of student data to drive interventions;
  - o Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools; and
  - o Providing operational flexibility (ie. flexibility around budget, staffing, calendars and time) and sustained support through technical assistance, or partnerships with external providers.
- **Turnaround:** The Turnaround Model requires that the principal be replaced and that new leadership be granted greater operational flexibility (such as flexibility around budget, staffing, calendars, and time). This model also requires that no more than 50 percent of existing staff be re-hired at the school. In addition, schools must implement a research-based and vertically aligned instructional program; use data to drive decision-making and interventions for students; establish schedules and implement strategies that provide increased learning time; and provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students.

The U.S. Department of Education defines increased learning time as “using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for (a) instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography; (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.”<sup>17</sup>

Since SIG funds are targeted to the lowest-performing schools in a district, grantees that are funded will be expected to produce student success. Data demonstrating high-quality programs is key, and partnership development is essential to accessing funds that are available only to the lowest-performing school districts. For example, Aim High, a community-based nonprofit organization in the San Francisco Bay area, had a long history of partnerships for program implementation that helped them in securing SIG funding in coordination with the San Francisco Unified School District.

## Aim High and SIG Funding

San Francisco’s “New Day for Learning” task force, comprised of a variety of community-based and local government out-of-school time providers (including the public library, the Y, Crissy Field Center, Aim High, and the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Families, among others) worked with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to develop a federal School Improvement Grant proposal to support summer learning in two “superintendent’s zones”—the Mission District and Bayview Hunter’s Point, two of the lowest-income areas of the city. The work started first in the Mission District, where SFUSD identified three schools with extreme need. Aim High, which offers academic classes in math, science, and humanities as well as arts, culture, and sports, was contracted to serve 50-60 middle school students during the summer of 2011 using \$100,000 in SIG funds.

[Read more about the partnership.](#)

## Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Improving Teacher Quality State Grants

The Improving Teacher Quality State Grants are authorized under Title II, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.<sup>18</sup> Funds are provided to states by formula, and states must pass 95 percent of the funds to LEAs in order to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, and for professional development activities for teachers and principals, consistent with a locally developed needs assessment. Districts have a large amount of flexibility in how they use Title II funding. Most use it for class size reduction and professional development activities.

Professional development activities supported by Title II funds can take place during the school day, after school, in workshops, and during the summer. However, according to a report by the Center for American Progress, there is very little empirical evidence on the effectiveness of professional development currently offered.<sup>19</sup> This could lead to opportunities for summer learning providers who have evidence-based, high-quality programs for teachers. In addition, as districts consider expanded learning opportunities and fund summer learning programs, they will be working to better align these programs with the regular school day. Successful programs will support joint professional development for both teachers and summer learning providers. Providers should work with their districts to target professional development needs and opportunities.

### Waiver Flexibility

The U.S. Department of Education recently allowed states to request flexibility through waivers for certain provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. States that are granted waivers will be required to identify and focus on their lowest-performing schools. These schools will be referred to as “priority schools,” and LEAs must implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each of these schools.

As defined by the Department of Education, turnaround principles include redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration. In addition, a priority school that implements one of the four SIG models is implementing an intervention that satisfies the turnaround principles.<sup>20</sup>

Summer learning providers can play an important role in efforts to provide additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration. Providers should work to ensure that efforts to redesign the school day, week, or year involve strong partnerships with community and nonprofit organizations. Partners can build capacity within districts to provide effective programs that align with, but do not replicate, the traditional school day and keep students engaged and motivated to improve their achievement.



This language offers advocates a prime opportunity to make the case that summer learning – decidedly different from the school day, yet in alignment with school goals – is a strategy worth funding.

In Kansas’ waiver application, for example, “maximizing learning time” is listed as an intervention and turnaround principle. It is described, in part, as redesigning the school day, week, or year by adding time before and after school or additional time during the summer.<sup>21</sup>

Another example is Louisiana. In Louisiana’s waiver application, “redesigning learning time” is listed as an intervention for priority schools. By law, each public school in Louisiana must provide for 177 days of instruction, with 360 minutes of instructional time each day. In addition, students who do not demonstrate mastery on state standardized tests attend an additional three weeks of class during the summer to participate in an accelerated instructional program to move these students to grade level and prepare for summer re-tests.<sup>22</sup>

Waiver flexibility also relieves LEAs from the required 20 percent set aside of Title I funds for supplemental education services (SES), which is free extra academic help, such as tutoring or remedial help, that is provided to students in subjects such as reading, language arts, and math. Some state waiver applications indicate that the funds previously used for SES will now be used for expanded learning opportunities. For example, in Colorado, LEAs will maintain options for School Choice Transportation (Choice) and SES for their Title I priority and turnaround schools.<sup>23</sup> LEAs with these schools must set aside 15 percent of their Title I funds to cover costs associated with Choice and SES. LEAs that meet the demand for Choice and SES by the end of the first semester will be required to use the remaining set-aside funds to provide expanded learning opportunities, such as before- or afterschool programs, and summer school. For example, if an LEA meets the demand for Choice and SES using only 10 percent of funds, the remaining 5 percent would be used for expanded learning opportunities.

State timing for implementation of waiver plans will vary, but summer providers should work with their states and districts to better understand how the plans can incorporate summer. **As states begin to implement plans for the waiver flexibility, summer learning could be an important aspect of school turnaround, and summer learning providers should focus on building strong partnerships to ensure effective programs are utilized at the local level.** In addition, districts should consider partnering with summer providers to better utilize funds previously allocated to SES. Summer learning providers should actively pursue re-purposed SES funds.

## 21st Century Community Learning Centers

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), authorized under Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, is the only federal funding stream dedicated to activities provided during non-school hours which includes summer learning as well as programs before and after school. The term 21st Century Community Learning Center is federally defined and means an entity that:



- Assists students in meeting state and local academic achievement standards in core academic subjects such as reading and mathematics, by providing students with opportunities for academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities (such as drug and violence prevention, counseling, art, music, recreation, technology and character education programs) during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session that reinforce and complement the regular academic programs.
- Offers families of students served by the centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development.<sup>24</sup>

Funds for this program flow through a formula to states and are then competed out to eligible entities that include LEAs, community-based organizations, another public or private entity, or a consortium of the above agencies, organizations, or entities. The funds must be used to advance student achievement through activities that include remedial education activities and academic enrichment programs; mathematics and science education activities; arts and music education activities; entrepreneurial education programs, tutoring services; mentoring programs; programs for ELL students; recreational activities; technology education programs; drug and violence prevention programs, and counseling programs.

In fiscal year 2012, the program was funded at \$1.15 billion, which was its highest funding level to date after steady increases over time. Several states, such as New Jersey, Michigan, and Texas, have made changes to their funding regulations by requiring a summer component for grantees.

The program has also been shifting. For the first time, the Administration's ESEA flexibility waivers allow states the opportunity to use 21st CCLC funds not only for non-school hours, but also for expanded learning programs that lengthen the school day, week, or year. It is not yet clear how states will implement this option. It is clear, however, that current 21st CCLC language encourages innovation and enrichment to make the most of out-of-school learning time. Moreover, if an extended school year still leaves a long summer break in place, many of the student achievement gains made during the year will still be lost over the summer.

## States Prioritize Summer in 21st CCLC Funding

Several states have strengthened priorities for summer learning for their 21st CCLC funding:

### Michigan

The state will award a maximum of \$135,000 per site to programs offering services a minimum of four days per week at least two and a half hours per day for 38 weeks total, including six weeks during the summer recess.

### Texas

Grantees are required to offer four hours per day, four days per week, four weeks of summer programming. Applicants receive bonus points for exceeding these minimums.

### New Jersey

Grantees are required to operate for at least four hours per day, five days per week for a minimum of four weeks during summer.

Summer learning providers need to be attentive to how 21st CCLC is or is not changing in their states and write their applications to make the strongest possible case for their programs. In states that have applied for and been granted waivers, and have chosen to use 21st CCLC program funds for expanded learning, including extending the school day, week, or year, summer learning providers should encourage districts to partner with them to utilize existing and effective summer learning programs.

To apply for 21st CCLC grants, summer learning providers should monitor the appropriations process for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 to ensure there is funding for these grants, and then monitor the appropriate state department of education websites to determine when applications for the grants will be due. 21st CCLC competitions may be held at different times in different states, so it is important to look at past-year grants and the federal funding cycle to determine timing of applications.

## Title I, Part C, Education of Migratory Children

Summer providers who serve the migrant student population have a unique ability to access Title I, Part C funding for migrant students because of the high demand for summer learning among this population.

Title I, Part C funds flow to SEAs through a formula based on each state's number of migratory children and youth aged 3-21 and the Title I, Part A state expenditure factor. The U.S. Department of Education may also make grants for the coordination of services and transfer of educational records for migratory students.

Each state that receives funding through this program must develop a state plan that provides that migratory children will have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic content standards and challenging state student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet; specifies measurable program goals and outcomes; and encompasses the full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, state, and federal educational programs. SEAs and LEAs have the flexibility to determine what activities are provided through this funding.<sup>25</sup>

Summer learning programs that serve migrant students must work to build partnerships with the SEA so that they can work to develop the plan for use of migrant education funds. It is also important for summer learning providers to work with LEAs to inform them of the important services they can provide to migrant students so that districts that receive funds from the SEAs know who to turn to in order to build their capacity to effectively serve these students.

## Understanding State Funding Opportunities

State funding can produce important resources for summer learning programs and can be administered by a wide array of state agencies. Summer learning providers must look comprehensively at agencies that administer education programs, health programs, juvenile justice programs, workforce development programs, library programs, and more, to determine the best options for funding. A growing number of states have specifically prioritized summer learning, which has led to increased support at the local level. Below are examples of states that have committed to providing additional opportunities for summer learning. While all states are different, these examples may prove helpful in determining where to look for funding in any given state, and provide a framework for how to advocate for future funding streams in your state.



### CALIFORNIA

#### *Creating and Strengthening Federal and Local Funding Streams to Support Summer Learning*

In California, funding from the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was split so that half of the funding went to afterschool programs for elementary and middle school students, and the other half of the funding went to afterschool programs for high school students. The number of high schools seeking new funding was decreasing, while the number of elementary and middle schools seeking funding remained very high. Senate Bill 798, signed into law in 2010, says that in fiscal years when the state's appropriation exceeds the 2008-09 level, the state must allocate 15 percent of the additional funding to summer learning programs for elementary and middle school students.<sup>26</sup> Districts, community-based organizations, other public or private entities, or consortiums of the preceding groups can all apply for this funding.

In addition to SB798, a small portion of California's state funding for afterschool programs (known as the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program) and of existing 21st CCLC funding can be used for summer programming. These funds, known as "Supplemental" grants, total about \$36 million, and can be used for programming on any non-school day. In recognition of the need for greater flexibility in the use of this funding, Senate Bill 429 was signed into law in 2011. This legislation provided Supplemental grantees with greater flexibility in the hours of programming, funding level, location, and target populations to better meet the needs of students and communities during the summer months.<sup>27</sup>

## FLORIDA

### *Using Summer Learning to Help Make Gains in Student Academic Achievement*

The Supplemental Academic Instruction fund was created in 1999 as part of the A+ Education Plan in Florida. Since 2000, it has been funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). The funding is meant to assist districts in providing supplemental instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 12. The instruction can be provided during school hours or beyond the traditional school day, week, or year. The funds must be used to help students gain at least a year of knowledge for each year in school and to keep students from falling behind. Supplemental instruction strategies may include, but are not limited to:<sup>28</sup>

- afterschool instruction;
- extended school year;
- intensive skills development in summer school;
- modified curriculum;
- reading instruction;
- tutoring;
- mentoring;
- class size reduction; and
- other methods to improve student achievement

Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) (Jacksonville, Fla.) worked hard to get "buy-in" locally from the school board, cluster chiefs, and key principals to leverage Supplemental Academic Instruction funds to support two broad summer school programs—the Enhanced Regular Program (ERP) and the Superintendent's Academies (SAs). DCPS staff shared strong data on the impact of summer on student performance and demonstrated how the programs were different from traditional summer school, and an arena to develop Common Core and other instructional strategies. The ERP is made up of nine programs, including early grades reading, middle and high school credit recovery, college readiness, English Speakers of Other Languages, and others. The SAs include early grades reading and math, bridge academies for the transitions into middle and high school, high school recovery and ACT/SAT prep, and camp programs provided through community partners. [Read more about summer learning in Duval County in this case study.](#)

## MINNESOTA

### *Targeting Students Facing Challenges*

Minnesota has a history dating to the 1960s of funding education programs to support at-risk students under the [Graduation Incentives](#) law (GIL). Included in this legislation is funding for local school districts to offer 20 percent extra instructional time to eligible students. Relying on research reports on summer learning loss highlighted by NSLA, Minneapolis Public Schools administrators recognized that the GIL could support summer learning and won the support of local political leaders. The district used these funds to expand summer learning for GIL-eligible students in 2009. By 2011, the Minneapolis summer program had a budget of approximately \$6 million to support about 9,000 Pre-K-12 students (about 35 percent of those eligible). Ninety percent of the funding came from the GIL.

The Minneapolis program embraces a variety of strategies at all grade levels to target student learning in the areas of reading and math. Features include the "Seeds of Science/Roots of Reading" program in the elementary grades, an eighth-ninth grade transition program, high school credit recovery and dual high school/college credit courses offered on a local college campus, and partnerships with the National Park Service, the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Minnesota Lynx women's professional basketball team, Wilderness Inquiry outdoor adventures, the Baaken Museum focusing on science, the Guthrie Theater, and many others.





## RHODE ISLAND

### *A New Fund for Summer Learning*

In 2012, the Rhode Island General Assembly approved the inclusion of \$250,000 in new funding for innovative summer learning partnerships as part of the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative.

This landmark funding was a direct result of the work of Rhode Island's Joint Legislative Taskforce on Summer Learning and leadership of the Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance (RIASPA). Founded in 2002 by the United Way of Rhode Island, RIASPA is one of 41 statewide afterschool networks funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. With RIASPA's leadership, Rhode Island has provided a model for other states and state afterschool networks looking to make summer learning a policy priority.

Support from the United Way of Rhode Island and the legislation's two sponsors, Representative Frank Ferri and Senator Frank DeVal Jr., were critical to the funding approval. Equally critical to the success was RIASPA's ability to come to the table with match funding from the United Way of Rhode Island and Hasbro, Inc. The state budget period of July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013 bridges summer 2012 and 2013; match funding enabled planning to begin earlier in 2012 and will be used to support continued programming in summer 2013.

## Local Funding Streams and Partnerships



In a number of cities, partners have effectively accessed and combined local funding streams for summer learning. Building strong relationships is paramount. Nonprofit summer learning providers should contact their local government, including the mayor's office, to determine local funding opportunities. Local partnerships can be formed with local school districts, school boards, city and county parks and recreation departments, and libraries.

Make potential partners aware of the fact that summer learning providers bring a wealth of distinct approaches that support academic enrichment as well as social and emotional growth, which is essential to academic achievement. As districts consider how they will implement expanded learning time for SIG grants, waiver flexibility, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, or other funds described above, it is important to highlight that summer learning programs are strong partners for this policy. Summer learning programs can complement the instructional approaches of teachers by customizing experiences that build background knowledge and allow students to activate learning, while also building the foundational skills for success in school, college, and careers. Summer learning programs also are cost-effective,<sup>29</sup> and provide a safe environment where students can stay engaged through the summer months.

In a number of cities, municipal leaders, schools, and community programs have worked together to leverage local funding for summer learning:

### Washington, D.C.: One City Summer Initiative

City agencies and community-based organizations (CBOs) in Washington, D.C., have banded together to provide engaging summer programming for youth through the [One City Summer Initiative](#) (OCSI). Launched in 2011 by Mayor Vincent C. Gray, the initiative served over 40,000 youth ages 5 to 24 in summer 2012, including over 8,000 youth from high-crime, targeted neighborhoods, and 300 homeless youth. Led by the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice and the Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services, OCSI programming in 2012 was coordinated across 28 government agencies and an additional 80 community-based partners supported by The DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (the Trust). The Trust, established in 1999 with the goal of increasing the quality and accessibility of afterschool programs in D.C., works to increase resources that serve families across the city, support strategic partnerships that strengthen the quality and quantity of available services, and provide a system for tracking and measuring impact of services. In 2012, the Trust awarded more than \$2.5 million dollars in grants to community-based organizations to provide engaging summer experiences that supported the One City Summer Initiative. This funding, a combination of \$1 million in city allocations and \$1.5 million of reallocated savings from other programs, does not include additional investments by the District's Department of Parks and Recreation in programming or Department of Employment Service's Summer Youth Employment Program, both of which also served OCSI participants. Initial evaluation findings for 2012 found overall reductions in crime in the targeted neighborhoods, as well as for youth participants.

## Philadelphia: Out-of-School Time Program

Under Mayor Michael Nutter in 2008, Philadelphia embarked on an ambitious plan to reduce the city's dropout rate by 50 percent, double the number of residents with a four-year degree, decrease homicides by 25 percent, increase economic growth, and achieve other important goals. The city's Department of Human Services chose to invest in out-of-school time programs and engage community-based organizations throughout the city to support these goals. The Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) was selected to serve as the coordinating intermediary for the DHS Out-of-School-Time Program (OST program). As a nonprofit public health institute, PHMC focuses on building healthier communities through partnerships, an approach which guided their management of the OST Program. As the OST intermediary, PHMC manages an annual \$25.5 million dollar contract, supporting 180 afterschool and summer programs throughout Philadelphia. About 80 percent of the funds come from the state of Pennsylvania, and 20 percent from city allocations. Summer program providers offer a variety of opportunities, including work experiences for older youth and full day summer camp programming.

As a system, Philadelphia's OST program encourages fund recipients to incorporate academic enrichment, arts and culture exploration, and project-based learning approaches into the programming. In summer 2012, the OST program served 10,520 youth at a cost of approximately \$6 million. There were 164 program providers supported through the OST program, of which 121 served elementary youth, 25 served middle school youth, and 18 provided work experiences for high school youth.

## Oakland: Oakland Fund for Children and Youth

In 1996, voters in Oakland, Calif., passed the Kids First! Initiative – an amendment to support direct services across the city for young people. The [Oakland Fund for Children and Youth](#) (OFCY) was established and in 2009 funding was reauthorized until 2022. The amendment sets aside 3 percent of the City of Oakland's unrestricted general fund to support a variety of services, including afterschool and summer opportunities that promote youth academic and social-emotional development. OFCY is overseen by a [Planning and Oversight Committee](#) comprised of the Mayor, eight City Council members and 17 appointed community members, including nine youth. In summer 2012, OFCY administered 12 grants through the organization's Summer Enrichment Strategy totaling \$711,372, providing a diverse array of summer learning experiences to more than 1,834 young people. The 2010-13 OFCY Strategic Plan outlines that programs funded through the Summer Enrichment Strategy must target specific outcomes including: sustained learning and a reduction in summer learning loss; increased community engagement; increased confidence and self-esteem; increased fitness levels; and increased connection to caring adults. In addition, OFCY provided \$141,704 to two summer programs for older youth focused around academic and job success, and \$93,454 to two transition programs to support youth during the summer between the 5th and 6th and the 8th and 9th grades. These 16 programs served a total of 2,290 youth in 2012, with a total funding amount of \$946,530. [Read about summer learning in Oakland Unified School District in this case study.](#)

- [Read a case study about Boston's partnership for summer learning.](#)
- [Read a case study about collaboration for summer learning in Grand Rapids, Mich.](#)

**The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading** is a collaborative effort, started by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, of foundations, nonprofit partners, states, and communities across the nation to increase third-grade reading proficiency to ensure that more children in low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career, and active citizenship. The Campaign recognizes summer learning loss as one of the key factors undermining early literacy. Local foundations, community leaders, and programs are devising strategies to use summer learning to reach their goals for reading success in their communities. Learn more about engaging with the Campaign at [gradelevelreading.net](http://gradelevelreading.net).

# Private Funding: Using Strategic Philanthropy to Maximize Opportunity



From large, national foundations investing in summer learning research, systems, and programs, to community-based funders dedicated to improving summer learning access and quality in their cities and towns, private funding support plays an important role in making summer learning possible. In addition to supporting programs on its own, private funding can seed or extend use of public funding streams by providing:

- Leverage for public investment in the form of a match or seed investment
- Funding for aspects of a program not allowable under a public funding stream
- Support for the planning and resource development phase of a new program or initiative
- A critical bridge to cover gaps in timing between a program's ramp-up phase and school board approvals or public grant cycles

## The Smarter Summers Initiative: Leveraging Public Resources with Philanthropy

With an \$11.5 million investment from the Walmart Foundation in 2011, NSLA brought together four nonprofit providers with their school district partners and local intermediaries to build summer learning systems in 10 cities nationally, in a three-year initiative called Smarter Summers. Beginning in 2012, NSLA used Walmart Foundation support to fund an additional five school districts – Houston Independent School District, Oakland Unified School District, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Providence (R.I.) Public Schools, and Duval County Public Schools (Jacksonville, Fla.) — to expand their middle grades summer learning programs for two years. To date, more than \$12 million in additional public and private funding has been leveraged by Walmart's investment in these programs.

Smarter Summers providers receive step-down grants, decreasing the Walmart investment each year while requiring providers to maintain the number of youth served. In addition, Smarter Summers providers must raise at least 25 percent of matching funds from public sources, an amount that increases each year and requires increasing school district commitment or other public fundraising by providers. The five districts in the Walmart District Summer Learning Initiative receive a flat funding amount for two summers that requires additional investment of district dollars to promote long-term sustainability.

Walmart-funded providers are employing a diverse mix of public and private funding designed to create a sustainable platform for their programs and a seamless bridge from school year to school year. Districts allocate funding from sources such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, state and local general funds, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and USDA summer food subsidies. Providers are also partnering with public housing authorities and accessing child care and AmeriCorps funding for facilities and human resources. In-kind contributions of school facilities, custodians, transportation, and administrative staff are also critical to the summer learning infrastructure.



# A Roadmap to Opportunity: Strategies for Success

To be sure, the road to summer learning funding is paved with opportunity, but it is not without potholes and bumps. Federal, state, and local budgets are all stretched thin, and there are competing strategies for improving outcomes for students. But providers can dramatically increase their chances of funding when they arm themselves with the data to demonstrate that summer learning can positively impact student well-being and achievement — and develop a concrete strategy for leveraging funding that exists, including early planning for combination of multiple funding streams to help achieve program goals and sustainability.

## Key strategies for success include:

- 1. Know the specific goals and objectives of your summer learning program.** Use these as a guidepost for exploring grants. Match program goals and objectives with grant goals and objectives.
- 2. Match outcome data with design.** Once you have identified potential funding streams, analyze the outcome data required for each grant and make sure that the data collected for the summer learning program is part of your initial design.
- 3. Sell, sell, sell.** Make potential partners see and understand your vision and how it can benefit them in reaching grant goals and objectives. Funding decisionmakers might not be thinking about summer, but they should be. It's your job to make sure they do. Go into conversations with funding partners armed with clear talking points that you have rehearsed and are prepared to get across quickly. Whether or not they are partners in your grant applications, work with state after-school networks, expanded learning consortia, and other champions to raise public and policymaker awareness of summer learning loss and effective solutions.
- 4. Stay connected with the National Summer Learning Association** for updates on funding streams and policy developments in the world of summer learning and participate with us as lead advocates on National Summer Learning Day each June 21. NSLA conducts trainings, holds the national *Summer Changes Everything™* conference each year, and provides research and resources at its website, [summerlearning.org](https://summerlearning.org).
- 5. Never stop thinking about the next funding opportunity.** Continue to build evidence to bolster your success story. Continue to build relationships with funders. Continue to look for new opportunities for funding. Continue to share your successes.

## Conclusion: Expanding Future Streams

Summer providers that successfully access federal, state, and local funds can also help to build the case for additional summer funding. Providers will be developing and implementing evidence-based strategies and collecting clear outcome data that can not only be shared as best practices with the field, but can also be used to advocate for increased resources. This information can be used in both state and federal advocacy efforts, including efforts in Congress to reauthorize key education legislation, such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Community Development Block Grant, and the Workforce Investment Act, as well as to maintain or even increase funding for 21st CCLC. Summer providers should inform state legislators and members of Congress about their programs and how they might be able to help advance student achievement through effective summer learning programs. In so doing, they will seed the ground for policy changes that recognize the importance of summer learning to the goals of education reform, and pave the way for many more young people to move productively forward each summer.

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# Pittsburgh Public Schools Summer Dreamers Academy

## A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study



**Year:** 2012

**Total cost of program:** \$3.1 million

**Breakdown by major funding streams:**

Title I: 13 percent

National foundations: 50 percent

Fund for Excellence (collaborative of local foundations): 37 percent

Estimate of in-kind contributions from partners: \$46,000

**The program:** Summer Dreamers Academy is a K-8 academic program with a strong focus on math and reading implemented in a camp-like atmosphere that provides fun activities the students

would not likely otherwise have. Strong partnerships with local organizations focus on activities like fencing, swimming, and the arts. Partners include libraries, museums, the Y, and a range of other community-based organizations. The Academy operates for five weeks. In 2012, average daily attendance was about 1,600 students.

**The path to Title I approval:** When state funding suddenly became unavailable for the program, Summer Dreamers Academy staff were the first to make the case for the use of federal Title I funds for summer programming on the basis of the program's academic focus on literacy and numeracy, while using somewhat nontraditional, though rigorous, methods. A key to making this case was breaking down the barriers between curricular and extracurricular activities by integrating academics into enrichment activities. The district leadership then helped the Academy staff go to the state education agency for approval to use Title I funds.

A 2009 letter from U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan urging states and local districts to use Title I funds for the arts was a useful advocacy tool with the state. State support in turn strengthened the case with other players within the local district. Community-based activity providers had to develop program and lesson plans related to state standards, and were supported by teachers from the district for continuous connection to the academic program.

While Title I funds were only 13 percent of the total program budget for 2012, their more extensive use in the two prior years (when federal stimulus funding was available) helped get the program started and leverage philanthropic support.

### Key challenges and lessons learned in securing funds:

- Engage state education leaders as early as possible, so they can support program planning and feel confident that the program addresses their standards.
- Have community partners develop rigorous yet creative programs, including lesson plans, that clearly support state education standards.
- With public education dollars in short supply, a limited investment of Title I funds can leverage significant private investment.

**Outcomes:** Survey data shows that parents, teachers, and youth all agreed that reading and math skills of participants improved as a result of having attended Summer Dreamers Academy. Students who attended the program regularly tended to retain their skills over the summer, while students who did not were more likely to have lost skills by the beginning of the next school year.

**"We put out an RFP to all of our partners and told them their original proposals were null and void, and that we needed them to center their programming around academics while keeping it fun and exciting for kids. We got a ton of proposals that did exactly that."**

**--Eddie Willson, Director of Operations, Student Support Services, Pittsburgh Public Schools**



# Summer Scholars and Denver Public Schools

## A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Year:** 2012

**Total cost of program described:** \$772,043

**Breakdown by major funding streams:**

<u>21<sup>st</sup> CCLC</u>	53 percent
<u>Foundations and Donations</u>	9 percent
<u>Denver Parks and Recreation</u>	17 percent
<u>District Fees for Service</u>	4 percent
<u>In-Kind Services and Facility Use</u>	17 percent

**The program:** Denver Public Schools and Summers Scholars, a private nonprofit organization, partner to deliver a summer learning program that operates for six weeks, five days a week, from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The program serves Denver Public School students ages 5-11, with 700 attending in the summer of 2012. The program's mission is to support low-income, academically struggling young learners by providing rigorous literacy instruction and enrichment programs to achieve measurable success and inspire life-long learning. During the school year, Summer Scholars operates an afterschool program to provide integrated year-round services to as many students as possible.

Summer Scholars began in reaction to youth violence in Denver neighborhoods in 1993. Understanding that the violence was linked to academic failure, teachers and community activists launched Summer Scholars in one school, but it quickly grew. During the summer, the program focuses on literacy tutoring in the morning and enrichment activities in the afternoon, including field trips, swimming, and other theme-based activities incorporating literacy skill development related to the morning curriculum.

**The path to 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funding:** Summer Scholars takes the lead on applying for federal 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds from the Colorado Department of Education, but the partnership – and the support of school district leadership – has been essential to securing the funds. The award is for five years. Teachers and principals have been important in establishing the program as integral to public education in Denver.

### Three key steps taken to secure these funds for summer learning:

- Recognize the importance of year-round out-of-school time learning to student success.
- Collaborate with community-based organizations capable not only of operating a high-quality program, but also of applying for and managing federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers funds.
- Provide in-kind resources to the partnership, including building space and teacher recruitment.

### Key lessons learned/challenges in securing funds:

- A successful funding application builds on a research-based curriculum. Start early in developing the application as the work can be time-consuming.
- Read funding application questions carefully. Answer them directly to make the reviewers' task as easy as possible.
- Use core federal funding to leverage other resources, including private grants.
- Strategize to diversify your funding base. While 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds can be vital to a summer program, the grant amount typically diminishes over the five years. Today more than ever, federal funds may be at risk.

**Partnerships:** The partnership between the school district and community-based organization is the foundation of the program. But local philanthropies and other public agencies can play an essential role.

**Outcomes:** Summer Scholars uses DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) for student progress assessment. Students gained an average of 6.5 words per minute in reading fluency (primary grades increased 3.7 words/minute and intermediate grades increased 9.2 words/minute). The percentage of students testing "at risk" – the most academically vulnerable level - at the beginning of the six weeks for summer decreased from 48 percent to 39 percent, while those identified at "some risk" went from 22 percent to 25 percent, and those "at benchmark" increased from 30 percent to 36 percent.



## Duval County Public Schools

### A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Year:** 2012

**Total cost of programs described:** \$10.5 million

**Breakdown by major funding streams:**

#### Superintendent's Academy

Foundations: \$1.1 million

Title I: \$2.1 million

\$3.2 million

#### Enhanced Regular Program

State and local funds: \$7.3 million

**The program:** Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) has two broad summer school programs—the Enhanced Regular Program (ERP) and the Superintendent's Academies (SAs). The overall model is 29 seven-hour days with extensive collaboration with community-based partners. About 10,000 students enrolled in 2012, up from 2,500 in 2008. The ERP is made up of nine programs, including early grades reading, middle and high school credit recovery, college readiness, English Speakers of Other Languages, and others. The SAs include early grades reading and math, bridge academies for the transitions into middle and high school, high school recovery and ACT/SAT prep, and camp programs provided through community partners. Essential components include research-proven curricula with Common Core State Standards embedded where appropriate, highly effective teachers, rigorous learning activities, theme-based enrichment, counseling, coaching, and data support.

**The path to funding:** Key staff convinced the school board that Duval County needed a new approach to summer school that engaged the best teachers and focused on innovation. This took about a year, but made it possible then to convince “cluster chiefs” and key principals. Strong support within the local system helped make it possible to secure supplemental academic instructional categorical funds (SAI) from the state. National foundation support for the Superintendent's Academies allowed those to grow while more state resources went to the Enhanced Regular Program.

#### **Three key steps the district took to secure these funds for summer learning:**

- Get “buy-in” locally from school board, cluster chiefs, and key principals.
- Use K-2 reading requirement and SAI state categorical funds to leverage use of federal Title I.
- Use state and federal funds, bolstered by strong data on student progress, to win support from national foundations interested in innovative summer learning programs.

#### **Key lessons learned/challenges in securing funds:**

- State supplemental academic instructional categorical funds are crucial. Having strong data on the impact of summer on student performance is essential to compete for them.
- Program leaders must be able to demonstrate how the program is different from traditional summer school, and an arena to develop Common Core and other instructional strategies.

**Partnerships:** Having a strong leadership collaborative within the school district, from the superintendent through principals and teachers, is essential to secure resources and ensure quality programming and staffing. The district has an extensive network of community-based partners for program implementation and has built strong national partnerships with funders and, through the National Summer Learning Association, with other urban districts committed to a New Vision for Summer School.

**Outcomes:** Pre-test and post-test data are integral to the Duval County summer programs. They show strong positive results in K-2 reading, K-5 reading and math, and other categories. For example, the K-5 Superintendent's Academy math test scores showed 70 percent of kindergarteners scoring at grade level at the end of the summer, compared with 29 percent at the start of summer. Those percentages rose from 41 percent to 64 percent for first-graders; 27 percent to 48 percent for second graders; 41 percent to 62 percent for third graders; 43 percent to 76 percent for fourth graders, and 9 percent to 38 percent for fifth graders.



# Believe 2 Become Summer Learning Academy (Grand Rapids, Mich.)

## A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Year:** 2012

**Total cost of program described:** \$1.2 million

**Initiative partners:**

Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation  
Grand Rapids Public Schools (Title I, LOOP / LOFT state funds, SIG)  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Douglas and Maria DeVos Foundation

**The program:** Launched in 2010, the Summer Learning Academy (SLA) is a program of the [Believe 2 Become initiative](#) (B2B), a collaborative partnership of schools, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, community foundations, and civic leaders united under a shared vision of closing the achievement gap in Grand Rapids by 2025. The SLA was co-developed by Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS) and the Douglas and Maria DeVos Foundation (DeVos) to reduce summer learning loss in math and reading by increasing the overall academic dosage youth receive during the summer months. Each youth attends one GRPS school in the morning for literacy and math academics and then moves to a community or faith-based organization in the afternoon for integrated learning activities. The B2B funding collaborative funds more than 20 local organizations to lead the afternoon components of the program. The SLA served 1,200 youth at 36 sites during the eight-week program in 2012.

**The path to funding:** In early 2009, leaders from the B2B neighborhood engagement team, [LINC Community Revitalization, Inc](#) and [National Community Development Institute](#), coordinated a series of town-hall meetings to address a single question: “*What are the barriers children in Grand Rapids face in reaching their full potential?*” Families and stakeholders alike identified limited access to high-quality learning experiences as a key challenge to address. Motivated by the research on summer learning loss, B2B leadership understood that summer learning was a necessary strategy to support student achievement. B2B found a summer ally in GRPS Superintendent Teresa Weatherall Neal, who at the time was the Assistant Superintendent of Community and Student Affairs. Neal recognized the importance of a coordinated summer strategy and brought district resources to the table, including funding, curriculum, facilities, and staff.

**Three key steps to creating a citywide model:**

- Engage stakeholders in identifying community needs. This creates buy-in and will encourage investment in solution strategies.
- Build on existing assets. Instead of creating new programs, invest in strengthening and expanding existing programs that already work with targeted youth.
- Understand the value of in-kind resources. Identify resources that all partners – from large districts to grassroots organizations – can leverage to cut costs and share accountability.

**Key lessons learned/challenges in security funds:**

The B2B funders knew that in order to impact population-level change, collaborative action on a system level was necessary. “It was time to shift resources to a more catalytic approach that ignites social innovation,” said Chana’ Edmond-Verley, Senior Program Officer, Douglas and Maria DeVos Foundation.

**Partnerships:** To ensure that afternoon enrichment activities support the initiative’s goals, local organizations are selected through a competitive grant process in which they are required to identify at least one academic area that will be integrated into the program. In 2012, each provider was required to engage a classroom teacher to further ensure that the design and instruction of all activities effectively support academic development.

**Outcomes:** The SLA has shown exciting results in academic achievement. A 2011 evaluation found that summer participants experienced significantly better math outcomes over the summer when compared with peers from similar demographics who did not participate in the SLA, with average gains equivalent to 6.7 weeks of school-year instruction in math. Middle school SLA participants benefited the most, with average gains equivalent to 14.1 weeks of school-year instruction in math.





# Aim High and San Francisco Unified School District

## A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Years:** 2011 and 2012

**Total cost of program described:** \$100,000

### **Breakdown by major funding streams:**

<u>Federal School Improvement Grant (SIG)</u>	100 percent in 2011 50 percent in 2012
<u>Private philanthropy</u>	50 percent in 2012

**The program:** Aim High is a community-based nonprofit organization in the San Francisco Bay area founded in 1986 with a mission of inspiring a lifelong love of learning and instilling a sense of community, opportunity, and respect so that students are prepared for success in school and life. The organization provides high-need urban middle school students with free access to an innovative, challenging, and supportive five-week, full-time summer school program. Students typically participate for three or four consecutive summers. Key components of Aim High include academic classes in math, science, humanities, and issues and choices; arts, culture, and sports; advising, core values, and college awareness; teacher training; community partnerships; parent/caregiver involvement; and connections to caring teachers.

**The path to SIG approval:** San Francisco's "New Day for Learning" task force, comprised of a variety of community-based and local government out-of-school time providers (including the public library, the Y, Crissy Field Center, Aim High, and the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Families, among others) worked with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to develop a federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) proposal to support summer learning in two "superintendent's zones"—the Mission District and Bayview Hunter's Point, two of the lowest-income areas of the city. The work started first in the Mission District, where SFUSD identified three schools there with extreme need. The district contracted with Aim High to serve 50-60 students during the summer of 2011 using \$100,000 in SIG funds. This was compatible with Aim High's usual cost per student of about \$2,000.

### **Key steps to making the case for SIG funding:**

- Recognizing that summer learning is an allowable use of federal School Improvement Grant funds.
- Partnering with local summer learning providers with a track record of high-quality program success.
- Articulating in the proposal not only the quality of the summer programming, but how it is integrated into the overall school improvement plan.

### **Key lessons learned/ challenges in securing funds:**

- Summer learning advocates must work with district officials to engage them on the importance of summer learning to their broader agendas.
- Program leaders must recognize that summer learning will be only one use of a district's SIG funds and that, over the three years of funding, there will be pressure to reallocate funds to other priorities.
- Given the uncertainties around federal education funding generally, program leaders should plan for other sources of continuation funding after three years.

**Partnerships:** A strong partnership between the school district and other out-of-school time providers is essential. Aim High has a long history of partnerships for program implementation and the New Day for Learning task force provided a framework for a strong advocacy partnership.

**Outcomes:** In 2012, over the course of five weeks, Aim High students increased their math assessment scores by 14.5%. A survey of students revealed that well over 90% reported improvement in math, science, reading, and writing, and said they feel safe at Aim High, feel a sense of community, and imagine themselves as successful college students.



## Oakland Unified School District

### A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Year:** 2012 (multiple programs)  
**Total cost of program described:** \$2.7 million

#### Breakdown by major funding streams:

Unrestricted funds from district	47 percent
Private grants	23 percent
Title I	
District Title I	10 percent
Individual Site Title I	20 percent

**The program:** The Oakland Unified School District's summer learning initiative in 2012 included 17 different programs across 50 sites serving about 6,500 students from pre-K to young adult. These include early childhood education, migrant and refugee student programs, a pre-collegiate academy, and the SEEK (Summer Engineering Experience for Kids) program sponsored by the National Society of Black Engineers that engages 140 students rising into the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, among others. Bridge programs serving students entering the sixth and ninth grades are a particular focus. Most are four-week, half-day programs, though support from the Walmart Foundation has provided full-day programming for about 1,000 students, mostly in the middle grades.

**The path to Title I funding:** District leadership has been key. Superintendent Tony Smith and deputy superintendents have made summer learning for those most in need a priority. They provide a combination of unrestricted funds and federal Title I funds to individual schools in order to provide the infrastructure necessary to keep buildings open during the summer. In addition, individual school sites also allocate Title I funds via the School Site Committee at each school, including parents, the principal, teachers, and other staff, to determine the allocation of Title I funds to particular uses within the school. School Site Committees have allocated necessary funds to summer programs with support from the district leadership. These funds have in turn leveraged other resources for summer learning.

#### Key steps to secure these funds for summer learning:

- Recognize at the district level that federal Title I funds can support summer learning.
- Provide information to School Site Committees on the challenge of summer learning loss and the appropriateness of using Title I funds to address it.
- Monitor school site Title I spending throughout the school year to protect summer allocations.

#### Key lessons learned/challenges in securing funds:

- Gain support from district leadership – it's key to encouraging summer as a priority at the school level.
- Secure the understanding and support of students and their families, teachers, principals, and other school staff is essential.
- Use results-based budgeting at the school level to demonstrate the power of high-quality summer programming.

**Partnerships:** Local foundations and community-based organizations that operate summer programs for the district can be key partners, attracted by the district's commitment with the schools providing space and a variety of administrative and support services using unrestricted funds. The success of Oakland's summer programs has received national attention and, for example, attracted the National Society of Black Engineers to invest in the summer engineering program in Oakland.

**Outcomes:** Oakland has focused on school-level outcomes, since key funding decisions are made at the school site. School Site Committees look at student attendance and academic achievement at their respective schools to determine continuation of funding.



# Boston Summer Learning Project

## A Funding Road Map for Summer Learning Case Study

**Year:** 2012

**Total cost of program described:** \$3 million<sup>1</sup>

**Breakdown by major funding streams:**

<u>Boston Opportunity Agenda</u>	41 percent
<u>National foundations</u>	34 percent
<u>Title I (Boston Public Schools)</u>	15 percent
<u>Other private sources</u>	9 percent <sup>2</sup>
<u>Federal Meals Program</u>	1 percent

**The program:** The Boston Summer Learning Project (BSLP) aims to increase summer learning access and meet the needs of previously underserved youth within Boston's Circle of Promise, an area of the city with the highest concentrations of poverty. Launched by Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the Boston Opportunity Agenda in 2010, BSLP is a key initiative of the Opportunity Agenda's education pipeline collaboration, helping students meet key education benchmarks, stay on track for graduation, and prepare to succeed in college and beyond. Co-managed by Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Boston Afterschool & Beyond (BASB), a citywide intermediary focused on expanding learning opportunities for the city's young people, BSLP served 1,585 students from 40 schools in 2012. Schools worked in partnership with 17 community-based organizations. Although individual partnership approaches vary based on the needs of the students and resources available, sites provide full-day, five-week long integrated learning experiences totaling an average of 170 hours of programming. In a district that manages a portfolio of summer options that serves 11,000 students, BSLP serves as a laboratory for innovation and learning. School and community educators join forces, leveraging content expertise, more time, new learning environments, and skill-building approaches that personalize learning experiences.

**The path to funding:** Boston's approach to summer learning prioritizes closing the opportunity gap as a way to address the achievement gap. Despite Boston's rich and diverse array of programs, Mayor Menino was concerned that the kids who could benefit most were not finding their way to programs. The Boston Opportunity Agenda worked with BASB to convene school district officials, summer program providers, and funders to develop a mutually understood framework for a collaboration, focusing on students from the lowest performing schools who did not have summer learning plans in place by May and June. The initial investment would subsidize program costs at \$1,500 per student.

### Three key steps to funding a citywide model:

- Identify a specific target population to get started. BSLP focused on turnaround schools in the Circle of Promise.
- Coordinate local and national initiatives to maximize investments and partnerships under a unified strategy.
- Develop common goals and measures that track both systems development and youth outcomes and inform improvement.

**"Summer allows us to address all ages. By putting the unmet needs of youth at the forefront, it became clear that we were addressing an issue that no organization could address alone."**

***Chris Smith, Executive Director, Boston After School & Beyond***

**Key lessons learned/challenges in funding citywide models:** Private and public funding sources often have specific requirements related to program activities and youth served. Coordinating resources around central goals and measures allows schools and partners the flexibility to innovate based on their particular set of resources. Early planning pays off. Evaluation and funding timelines should align with planning benchmarks. Engaging funding partners and stakeholders in year-round planning can influence earlier funding processes and decisions.

**Partnerships:** Community-based partners are selected through a rigorous application process and must demonstrate capacity to serve students identified by schools, collaborate with teachers, offer five weeks of full-time programming, and create a learning

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<sup>1</sup>Estimate based on 2011 budget

<sup>2</sup> Estimate

environment that reinforces academics, builds skills, and strengthens students' relationships with peers and adults. Each program is built around the needs and interests of the specific group of students it serves. The system is guided by a common set of goals and indicators, but programs have the freedom they need to innovate.

**Outcomes:** The project has led to notable system change, including adjustments to Boston Public Schools assessments to give the city a comprehensive measure of summer learning at multiple grade levels. BSLP efforts have created a shared understanding among stakeholders of the importance of summer learning, and the huge potential summer offers to build on the school year and close the opportunity gap. Providers and educators throughout the city now talk about one set of measures, and use a common language when thinking about the skills that support success not only in school, but throughout post-secondary options and beyond.