

# District Needs Assessment for Summer Learning in Your District

School districts can and should use their investment in summer learning strategically. As a district leader, you need to know what student outcome and professional learning goals could best be addressed through summer programs, what programs currently operate including their capacity and cost, and what opportunities for external resources and partnerships exist. The following questions can help you, as a board member, work with your superintendent and district officials to explore the information necessary to plan for summer programs.

## Student Outcome Goals

Summer programs give students more time and greater opportunity to acquire skills, master academic material, gain new experiences, develop their sense of belonging, and strengthen their relationship to learning.

- » What are your district's most pressing concerns identified in the LCAP and other planning documents about student outcomes (e.g. which grade level, student group, academic, social-emotional, health, or behavioral outcomes)?
- » What outcome goals might a quality summer learning program support? What do you hope will be different for students as a result of participating in summer learning?
- » How, specifically, are those summer goals connected to the larger district goals identified through the LCAP and other planning processes?

- » Based on those goals, who would be the ideal staff for each summer program? What content should be taught and how should it be taught?
- » What other needs do students and families have that a summer learning program could address? How can your district support those needs and student outcome goals simultaneously?

## Professional Learning Goals

Summer programs can provide an authentic opportunity for classroom teachers and after-school staff to develop new skills, try new curricula, and work on their own professional growth.

- » Are there learning goals (e.g. newly adopted standards, project-based learning, and teaching social-emotional skills) for teachers and non-certificated staff (including after-school staff) that a summer program could help support?
- » Can funds your district has set aside for professional development be leveraged to help support some of the staffing for a summer program?
- » How can professional learning for staff be provided as part of the summer program? How can the program support staff learning and innovation? In what ways might non-certificated staff and certificated teachers work together and support each other's learning?

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## Current Programs: Offerings

Summer programs run the gamut in terms of their operation, staffing, and quality. As a board member, you should expect district staff to provide a summary of the programs your district has been offering and a clear-eyed view of the goals, challenges, and successes.

- » What summer programs are currently offered at schools in your district or have been offered in recent years? What were the goals of those programs? What was the profile of the students each program served (i.e. demographics, grade level, and educational needs)?
- » How are those programs managed and staffed? In terms of staffing, what mix of credentialed and non-credentialed staff is used in each program?
- » What investments have been made in the quality of the programs, including professional development for staff and a thoughtful planning process?
- » Who is involved in planning the programs and what does that planning process look like?
- » What departments in your district work as part of the team that makes summer learning programs happen (e.g. food service, transportation, and maintenance)?
- » What subject matter areas and other activities do current programs emphasize? To what extent do those offerings align with your district's student outcome and professional learning goals?
- » What evaluations have been done to measure the quality of the programs and progress toward their intended goals? What were the results?
- » What feedback have those programs received from parents, students, teachers, and other key stakeholders?
- » What community partnerships do these programs leverage or connect your district to?
- » How do existing community partnerships enhance the education of students in your district? Is there a potential for them to do more?

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## Current Programs: Capacity and Cost

An apples-to-apples comparison of program costs compared to the number of students served—and those who are not served—is vital information that can help guide planning for future programs.

- » How many students do current programs have capacity to serve, how many students registered, and what was the attendance rate? What is the profile, in terms of demographics and needs, of students who attended?
- » What district goals are not addressed and which students are not served by current programs? Is there evidence of unmet demand such as waiting lists or other parent or community feedback?
- » Do some or all families pay a fee to attend? Is there a needs-based component to help determine what fees are charged and to whom?
- » What was the duration of the programs, including number of days and hours per day? Was there any expansion of your district programs through partnerships with other organizations?
- » How do the various programs your district offers compare in terms of cost, including:
  - › direct costs such as staffing and materials (staffing is always the major cost of a program);
  - › administrative support from your district; and
  - › additional costs such as transportation and facility maintenance?
- » How much funding is currently allocated to summer programs?
- » What funding sources has your district used to support the current programs (e.g. LCFF base funds, LCFF concentration and supplemental grants, Title I and other federal funds, Expanded Learning program grants, private philanthropic sources, other)?
- » To what extent do contributions from outside organizations, such as public agencies, either offset costs or add value to the programs (including both funds and in-kind resources)?

## COST ANALYSIS WORKSHEET FOR SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

### Calculating Comparable Costs for District Summer Programs

For each program, your district should be able to calculate a cost per pupil, per hour. In that way, program costs can be accurately compared. The equation looks something like this.

<b>Student Hours</b>	
# of days program operated	_____
# of hours per day	X _____
Total program hours	= _____
# of students served (based on actual attendance)	X _____
<b>Total Student Hours</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

  

<b>Program Costs</b>	
Salaries paid to district staff (if applicable)	_____
Contract amount to outside organizations (if applicable)	+ _____
Non-personnel costs paid by district (materials, janitorial services, transportation, other)	+ _____
Direct program costs	= _____
Value of in-kind contributions (if applicable)	+ _____
<b>Total Program Costs</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

  

<b>Outside Revenues</b> <i>(that were only provided because of program)</i>	
Fees paid by families (if applicable)	_____
Grants received (if applicable)	+ _____
Special revenues (if applicable) (e.g. state/federal funds, summer food, etc.)	+ _____
<b>Total Outside Revenues</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

  

<b>Per-Student Cost</b>	
Total Program Costs – Total Outside Revenues = <b>Net Program Costs</b>	_____
Net Program Costs divided by Students Served = <b>Cost Per-Student</b>	_____
Net Program Costs divided by Student Hours = <b>Cost Per Student Hour</b>	_____



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## Opportunities for Additional Resources and Partnerships

Many community organizations with summer programs need help getting young people to participate in their programs. By conducting an environmental scan, district officials may discover opportunities for partnerships that might provide additional resources to offer summer learning to more students or identify programs run by other organizations (such as Boys and Girls Clubs or the local Parks and Recreation Department) that could serve more young people with district support.

- » What other local summer programs are available for students in your community (e.g. through community organizations, city agencies such as libraries or parks and recreation, or local colleges and universities)?
- » For each of the local summer programs available:
  - › What are its goals and are they complementary to your district goals?
  - › What is its quality and reputation?
  - › How many students are served? Could it serve more students? Is it serving students that your district has identified as needing additional support?
  - › What is the funding base to support the program (e.g. grants, fees, etc.)? If fees are charged, is there a sliding scale based on family income?
  - › What barriers keep students from participating?
  - › What family and student needs does it not address?
  - › How could your district partner with this program?
- » Even if they are not providing a formal summer program, how could your district partner with community agencies like the library, public pools, state parks, recreation facilities, universities, etc.?
- » Do nearby districts and/or the country office of education provide summer learning programs? Would partnerships with other districts or the county office of education make sense?
- » Are there organizations or businesses that could help with summer learning projects? Does your district already have some connection to them that it could leverage?