

Case Studies: Funding Summer Programs

Just over a decade ago, most school districts in California offered summer school programs for at least some of their students. A state categorical program provided funds for summer with specific requirements that emphasized remediation approaches. Those earmarked funds and the accompanying requirements are long gone, replaced by the flexibility of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). That has opened the door for summer learning programs, with their emphasis on student engagement and enrichment activities aligned with district goals. It has also challenged school districts and county offices of education to be creative about how to pay for programs. Supplemental and concentration grants through LCFF are one natural source when programs are provided for high-need students.

In order to cover program costs, many districts combine funding from:

- » After School Education and Safety (ASES) supplemental grants,
- » Federal 21st Century Community Learning Center grants,
- » Federal Title I funds,
- » Summer food programs, and
- » Migrant Education Program.

Stories from school districts and county offices of education throughout the state, however, demonstrate that the creativity goes further. To make summer learning programs possible, some districts and county offices of education are combining the sources listed above with resources from external groups. Others are pooling their resources and achieving economies of scale.

Leveraging external sources

Mountain View Elementary School District began with a commitment to provide summer learning to as many students as it could. According to Superintendent Lillian Maldonado-French, that takes “a little bit of imagination and a lot of willingness to look at what you can do. Maybe you don’t have the resources to have recreational programs but maybe parks and rec in your city does. So why not partner with them? Maybe there are clubs and groups willing to work with you. It’s about being open to other ideas and then saying, ‘We can do it!’”

Her district found some philanthropic support, including from WalMart and the Weingart Foundation. They also worked with the local libraries. Combining all of this with their LCFF funds enabled them to plan an expansion of their program from serving 2,300 students in 2015 to 2,700 students in 2016. The latter represented more than a third of the students enrolled in the district that year.

Fee-based programs make it possible for the **Ocean View School District**, in Huntington Beach, Orange County, to offer its students a number of different summer camp options. Two of the programs operate for 10 weeks and offer families full day care. The fees are quite low compared to other options in the area, particularly given that they run full day. In addition, families that qualify can use state and federal assistance dollars for child care to cover the fees.

The **Yolo County Office of Education** turned to multiple partners to orchestrate summer learning and internship programs for local students in this rural area. The programs, which focus on STEAM topics, began with seed money from an SB-70 partnership grant in order to develop Career Technical Education (CTE). The next year, funding

came through a partnership with SunPower, related to their Project Solar. After that, the local community college stepped in to make it part of their summer offerings. Another critical partner for the county office is the Center for Land-Based Learning, which is focused on agriculture and runs some summer programs. They created an internship program and were able to expand and strengthen it through cooperation with the county office. In this far flung and sparsely populated area, the partnership helps with recruiting enough students to make the program viable.

“Nobody has enough funding to do it all alone, but when we all pool our resources, we can pay for it and everyone gets more bang for their buck,” said Deborah Bruns, a coordinator for the Yolo County Office of Education Educational Services division. “We put solar energy and agriculture together because we are an agricultural area. The right program might be right there sitting in front of you.”

Working together to create economies of scale

The **Fresno County Office of Education**, in concert with the California Teaching Fellows Foundation (CTFF), created a summer learning program. The program is provided to local school districts, many of which are relatively small. In 2015, each district paid \$17.50 per student, per day, to the CTFF to cover instructional materials and staffing costs. The county office provided staff development, training, and covered some extra material costs.

Fowler Unified School District and **Kerman Unified School District**, for example, each paid \$42,000 to CTFF for the basic program service and staff needed to run a five-week program for 100 middle school students. In addition to that fee, the districts allocated a portion of their LCFF funds to underwrite operational costs. At Fowler USD, the district paid for transportation, on-site supports such as a library aide, and provided the facility, covering the maintenance and utility expenses. Kerman USD realized some savings by operating both its middle school and high school summer programs at the same site. The site administration and transportation costs were shared over two programs and more students.

Getting enough students to attend the summer learning program, and getting the right students, can be a particular challenge in the sparsely populated communities of Northern California. The **Tehama County Office of Education** provides the base funding for a regional summer

program through its ASES grant. Three local districts also have federal 21st Century Learning Center grants. The school districts and Migrant Education Program pitch in to cover the rest of the program costs, which were about \$10 per student, per day in 2015. There was also a \$60 program fee charged to families. Some of the local school districts provide scholarships to help encourage and support participation among high-priority students. Even though not every school site receives ASES funds, the programs are open to students throughout Tehama County.

Survey Provides Estimate for the Cost of Quality Summer Programs

A survey conducted by the Partnership for Children and Youth in 2015 asked 10 organizations with high-quality programs about their costs. Key findings from the survey include:

- » On average, the cost per student was \$37.15 per day or \$185.77 per week. This was for a program operating eight hours per day, five days per week. It is substantially lower than the average amount parents report paying in fees for summer programs.
- » After adjusting for variations such as costly fundraising strategies or year-round programming, the hourly cost per child ranged from \$2.23 to \$7.14. The most significant driver of cost was the number of students served.
- » Program staff wages were reported as the largest portion of spending among all programs surveyed.

Survey participants included Aim High, Collective Impact, East Bay Asian Youth Center, Gilroy Unified School District, Glenn County Office of Education, LA’s BEST, Oakland Unified School District, United Way of Santa Barbara County, Whittier City School District, and YMCA of Silicon Valley. The report, *The Cost of Summer*, which is based on the survey, can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2K9013m>

For more examples of powerful summer programs throughout California and additional resources, visit www.csba.org/summerlearning.

About the Featured School Districts and County Offices of Education

<p>Mountain View Elementary School District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Located in El Monte in the San Gabriel Valley area of Los Angeles County. » A K-8 district with 6,773 students served in 12 schools. » Student demographics: 57.9% English learners, 91.4% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic group is Hispanic/Latino (93.8%). » Per-pupil revenues (based on ADA of 6,451): \$14,239. 	<p>Ocean View School District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Located in Huntington Beach in Orange County. » A K-8 district with 8,263 students served in 15 schools. » Student demographics: 24.4% English learners, 46.7% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic groups are Hispanic/Latino (39.8%) and White (37.4%). » Per pupil revenues (based on ADA of 7,987): \$10,899.
<p>Fowler Unified School District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Located in Fowler in Fresno County. » A K-12 district with 2,609 students served in 9 schools. » Student demographics: 22.3% English learners, 75.7% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic group is Hispanic/Latino (79.8%). » Per pupil revenue (based on ADA of 2,499): \$12,144. 	<p>Kerman Unified School District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Located in Kerman in Fresno County. » A K-12 district with 5,148 students served in 7 schools. » Student demographics: 34.1% English learners, 83.1% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic group is Hispanic/Latino (85%). » Per-pupil revenues (based on ADA of 4,927): \$12,536.
<p>Yolo County Office of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Countywide enrollment: 30,067 students served in 5 school districts and the county office of education. » Student demographics: 20.2% English learners, 52.4% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic groups are Hispanic/Latino (47.4%) and White (33.5%). 	<p>Fresno County Office of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Countywide enrollment: 204,418 students served in 32 school districts and the county office of education. » Student demographics: 19.9% English learners, 74.2% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic groups is Hispanic/Latino (64.9%).
<p>Tehama County Office of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Countywide enrollment: 10,958 students served in 14 school districts and the county office of education. » Student demographics: 17.5% English learners, 70.8% eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and largest ethnic groups are White (51.6%) and Hispanic/Latino (40.3%). 	

Data based on 2017-18 school year. Reported by the Education Data Partnership at www.ed-data.org.

