

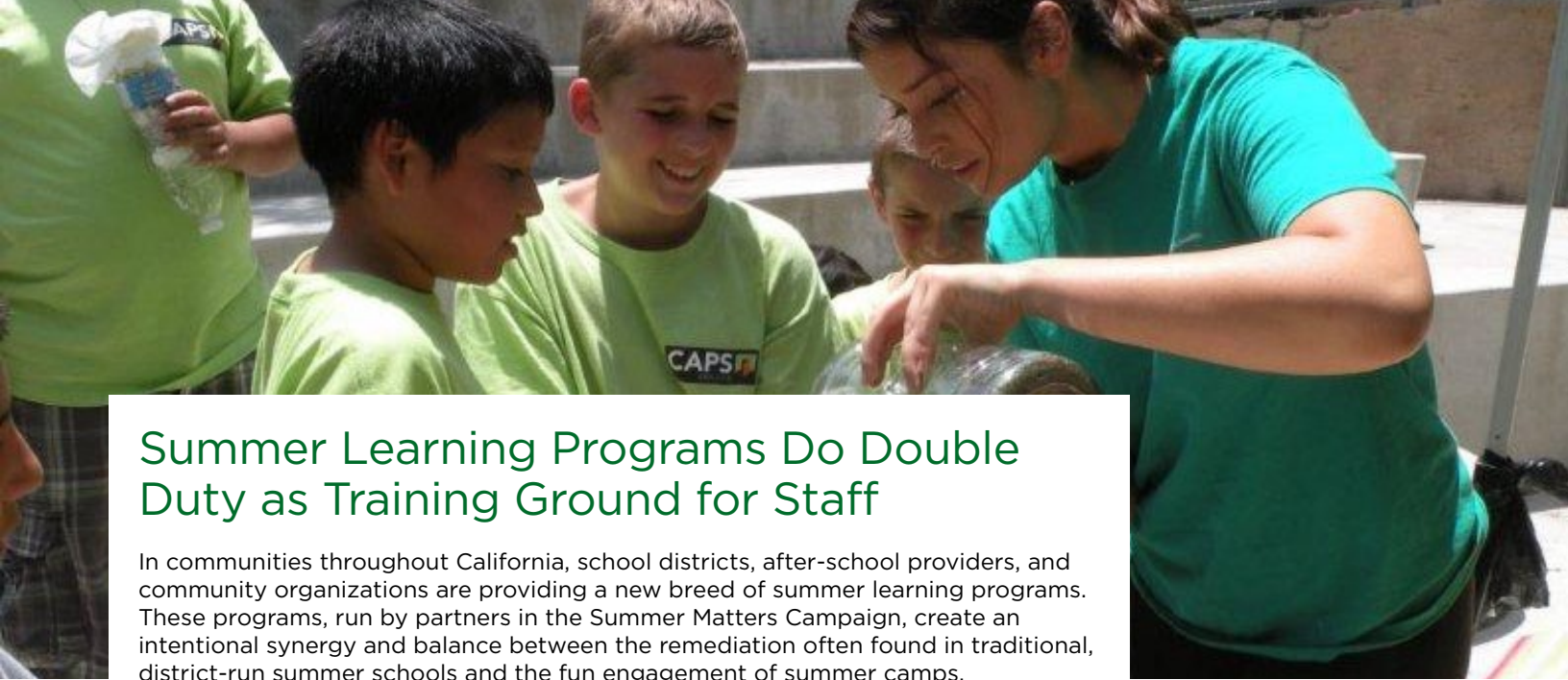
3

A High Impact Training Ground for Teachers and Staff

How education leaders can use summer programs to provide powerful professional learning opportunities in support of Common Core implementation and student-centered learning goals.

Partnership for Children & Youth
November 2013





Summer Learning Programs Do Double Duty as Training Ground for Staff

In communities throughout California, school districts, after-school providers, and community organizations are providing a new breed of summer learning programs. These programs, run by partners in the Summer Matters Campaign, create an intentional synergy and balance between the remediation often found in traditional, district-run summer schools and the fun engagement of summer camps.

The programs also provide a hands-on professional development opportunity that school districts can leverage to build the skills of both credentialed teachers and after-school staff and to support progress toward district learning goals.

Evidence from programs evaluated in 2013 indicates that non-credentialed program staff benefitted professionally from the new challenges and expanded responsibilities they experienced in high-quality summer programs. At the same time, the summer programs gave credentialed teachers time and space to experiment with new instructional approaches, including project-based learning aligned with the Common Core. They also gained exposure to youth development practices that help strengthen students' social-emotional skills and school engagement.

Credentialed educators who work with these summer programs often serve their profession as well by mentoring staff members who are generally younger and often pursuing careers in education.

High-quality summer programs can give schools and districts an important chance to influence student learning consistent with larger district goals, particularly related to Common Core implementation, student engagement, and school climate. With support from credentialed teachers and administrators, the program staff create and/or implement lesson plans aligned with local learning objectives. They also improve their classroom management and ability to create positive learning environments.

This report focuses on how these opportunities played out in the programs of several Summer Matters Campaign partners in 2013 and offers predictions for their long-term effects. It describes how the work provided important learning opportunities to program staff and the ways that program managers used planning and staff development activities to align summer goals and district priorities. It also reports on staff perceptions regarding the effect these summer experiences will have on their professional practices during the regular school year.

The summer programs gave credentialed teachers time and space to experiment with new instructional approaches, including project-based learning aligned with the Common Core.



High-Quality Summer Learning Programs Supported by the Summer Matters Campaign

In 12 California communities, the Summer Matters Campaign has helped education leaders and their community partners create, operate, and refine a new breed of summer learning programs. The instructional strategies they use are strikingly similar to ones recommended for implementation of the Common Core. The programs focus on strengthening students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving ability, collaboration with their peers, and confidence in their own ability as learners.

The local education agencies offering these free summer learning programs depend heavily on their after-school providers to develop and operate the programs. This keeps operating costs down while building the skills and knowledge of after-school staff. In every community, credentialed teachers play important roles: coaching the program staff, reviewing curriculum, and/or teaching specific content. A variety of partners also contribute to the program, including local libraries, parks, and community-based organizations.

Evaluation and continuous improvement are integral to these programs, which serve elementary and middle-grade students. The programs set up specific student outcome goals such as improved reading fluency, stronger information-gathering skills, greater nutrition awareness, and practice at public speaking.

As partners in the Summer Matters Campaign, all of the programs also use a common tool to assess their quality. The Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs (CASP), created by the National Summer Learning Association, provides a set of metrics that program directors and evaluators use to continuously improve program planning and implementation. The programs work closely with a growing network of technical assistance providers around the state to get training and coaching to improve specific practices identified using the CASP.

With this intensive focus on quality, the Summer Matters partner communities have built model summer learning programs that are strongly supported by school leadership and community partners. Increasingly, statewide education organizations, superintendents, school board members, and the media point to these programs as the right way to do summer learning.



Summer Matters is an initiative of the Partnership for Children & Youth and its partners at The David & Lucile Packard Foundation, the National Summer Learning Association, ASAPconnect, FowlerHoffman, PR & Co. and Children Now.

Summer learning efforts are generously supported by funders including:

- The David & Lucile Packard Foundation
- Kaiser Permanente
- S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation
- Noyce Foundation
- PG&E
- Irene S. Scully Foundation
- The Fort Fund
- Give Something Back Office Supplies

Districts Take Advantage of Summer to Build Skills of Teachers and After-School Staff



Summer learning programs can represent a significant learning opportunity for after-school staff because of the additional responsibilities and “on-the-job” training they provide. In high-quality summer programs credentialed teachers are integral to the team as well, actively engaged in roles such as curriculum developers, mentors, and instructors in the summer program. The experience builds their capacity and gives them time and space for innovation. In the summer of 2013, that opportunity focused on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Teachers Use Summer to Work on Project-Based Lessons and Youth Facilitation Skills

Although the majority of staff positions were filled by after-school staff members, credentialed educators play active and important roles in high-quality summer programs. They are either directly involved in, or available for, consultation throughout the curriculum development and activity planning process. In some programs, they act as additional members of the summer staff with the same responsibilities. In others, they may teach a specific class or activity, and in still others they act as on-site mentors and coaches, interacting as much with staff as with students.

These kinds of activities clearly help create a bridge from what students do in the summer to what they will encounter in their classes in the fall. However, the involvement also provides a chance for the credentialed teachers to improve their own practice, try new approaches, or just gain new perspective on their work.

A teacher who participated as summer staff in Whittier City School District used the opportunity to prepare for an upcoming change in his regular teaching assignment. “This coming year, I’m changing back to an elementary grade level. This summer reintroduced me to the wide spectrum in ability you see in the younger grades. It was a reawakening for me personally.”

The same teacher also appreciated the chance to sharpen his skills through P.E. training provided to the summer staff by a community partner. “The main thing was the management systems he had and was sharing with us; how to get a large group of kids on track and doing the activities. Some of the things he came up with are not actually any different than what you would do in a



regular classroom. It was really good stuff I hadn't seen in a long time." In Sacramento City Unified School District, the district had identified Will C. Wood Junior High as a high-priority school where a turn-around in student performance was needed. The school principal and staff saw project-based learning as a crucial part of the improvement strategy. The approach is consistent with the Common Core, but represented a substantial challenge to the teaching staff.

Working as staff members in the summer program gave the school's credentialed teachers a chance to plan and implement project-based approaches that they could use during the regular school year and share with other teachers.

The theme for the district's summer program was Summer of Service, and a key objective was for students to give back to their community through a project aligned with an area of interest. One of the credentialed teachers taught a robotics class, and the students decided to write a "user's manual" for elementary students.

The integration of writing into a subject like robotics gave this teacher a learning opportunity she valued. "I tried incorporating writing into math last school year. This is really helping me push that further. It's nice to be able to work with a smaller number of students in the summer and see how it works."

Another teacher worked on integrating history, science, nutrition, writing, and art into a gardening project that had students translate what they learned into lesson plans for other students. The teacher talked about the value of being able to try out the lessons, including thinking outside specific subject matter boxes to provide an integrated lesson that engaged her students.

In the Summer Matters Campaign, summer program staff are actively involved in program planning

Another distinctive aspect of the summer program was putting more control over the activities into the hands of students. As one teacher explained, **"Letting kids work on their own is a huge thing. As teachers we need to train ourselves on those techniques. The problem is that we don't have time to experiment during the school year. This summer program is a nice way to get the kids used to less structure and a great way for me to try out new things, new ideas, and new projects."**

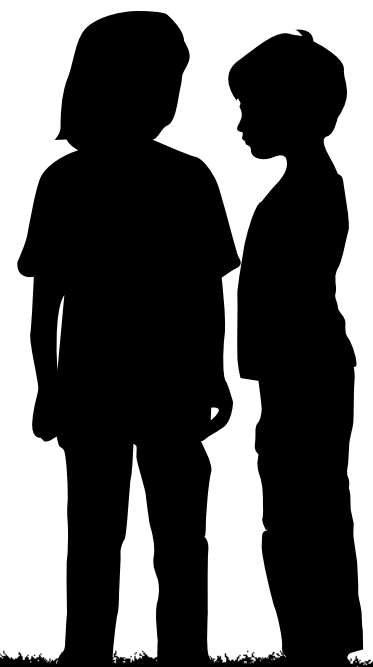
The Summer Schedule and Structure Provide After-School Staff with Rich Program Planning Experiences

On a typical day, in a typical after-school program, a staff member may spend three hours with 20 students who have already spent a full day in class. The limited time goes quickly and is usually taken up with a combination of enrichment activities and homework support. In some programs, the staff are given a prescribed schedule to follow and have a limited sense of their own ability to shape what occurs.

Summer programs offer a different opportunity. The specifics vary along with the approach each district takes to staffing and managing its program, training its staff, and planning its summer curriculum.

That said, in the Summer Matters campaign, summer program staff are actively involved in program planning and do so with intentional goals in mind and within the context of a program theme. A staff person might be called upon to adapt an activity or lesson for multiple age groups, implement a lesson the district has developed, or create a lesson plan to meet specified learning objectives. The programs operating in 2013 provided examples of all of these.

At Whittier City School District's Jump Start Program, the basic lesson plans were created during the regular school year. Hiring for the 2013 summer actually began in November 2012. Then, between January and June, summer staff were involved in the program planning. **The summer staff worked with credentialed staff in**







subject matter teams to align activities with district learning objectives and with the program theme, “Reading is Delicious.” For the literacy component of the program, for example, the planning team selected several additional reading books that complemented the main text chosen to set the theme for the program, *How to Eat Fried Worms*. For all the books the children read, the planning team created writing prompts.

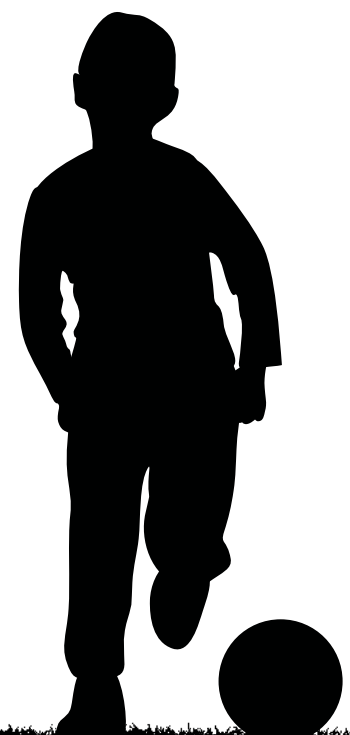
At Orange Grove Elementary, as at the other elementary school programs in the district, each staff member took charge of one subject area and the set of lessons they helped develop. “The staff get to go with their passions,” explained the program director. The kids stayed together in their age groups and rotated among the classes, staff members, and activities. The staff adapted the basic lessons to fit the age and ability levels of the students in each group.

The approach to lesson planning was different at the elementary programs run at LA’s BEST, where staff started with learning objectives and the site-specific theme, and then developed the content of their lesson plans themselves.

At each site, one segment of the day was devoted to “Explorations” based on a theme chosen from four possibilities the LA’s BEST office had developed. At Broad Avenue Elementary, the staff and students chose the “Exploring Countries of the World” theme. The final project was for the children to create their own countries, building on what they had learned.

The staff was given a scope and sequence that set out the stages of their project, ideas for student engagement, strategies to use, and some suggested resources. The actual content was left up to them. The stages included Introduce/Explore, Inquire/Imagine, Imagine/Create, and Create/Share. This table provides a sample of the guidance staff members had for the second stage.

<p>Stage of Project Inquire/Imagine </p>	<p>Student Engagement Led by Staff </p>
<p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instill curiosity about another country • Students recognize the ways that people in other countries define themselves, i.e. language, art, food, clothing, music • Students recognize the ways a country is affected by its geography and climate 	<p>Analyze the facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the countries • Play games native to these countries • Explore maps or brochures about these countries <p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a Pros and Cons brainstorm and discussion about the elements of each country researched <p>Brainstorm solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students think about what elements are important to develop their own country
<p>Strategies for Staff </p>	<p>Resources </p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think, Pair, Share • Graphic organizers • Pondering to invite reflection • Read alouds • Teamwork/small group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures • Images • Maps • BEST Fit • Kidzlit • Internet



Within this framework, the staff members developed the content and activities they would use. They chose the countries they would feature and had to prepare by building their own knowledge base. They also joined the children as explorers digging for information about their countries, following where their collective curiosity led them, and having a chance to apply their own creativity to the lesson plans they created each day.

For example, one component of the country information was language, and each room had a “word wall.” The original goal, according to one staff member, was for “kids to learn a few words from each country. But the kids got very excited about learning other languages and writing on the word walls. The staff had to keep up, so we moved on to phrases in each language.”

Another staff member added, “Kids are changed by having access to rich and real information. So is the staff.”

Results from the Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs

The summer program has a proactive planning process that is inclusive of all key stakeholders and connected to the district’s goals.



Combined Score
All Programs

Staff Collaborative Planning: Site coordinators and line staff have input into the selection and development of the summer curriculum and activities through collaborative planning sessions at least three months prior to the start of the program.



Backward Planning: Program staff and partners use youth outcome goals as the foundation for activities and curriculum. All programming is connected to measurable outcome goals.



Lesson Plan Framework: Site coordinators and line staff have a framework for unit and lesson planning that is connected to program goals and includes instructional strategies and support for benchmarking; they consistently use that framework.



These scores are based on intensive quality assessments done for each program that measure the extent to which programs are intentionally implementing these strategies. Staff use the data to identify specific practices that need to be improved for the next summer. Score definitions: 1 = Basic; 2 = Emerging; 3 = Proficient; 4 = Exemplary.

The Summer Experience Enhances Staff Beliefs about Learners and Strengthens Their Confidence as Instructors

Another major difference for after-school staff working in a summer program is having more time and flexibility. Building on their after-school experiences, they are able to really get to know the children and youth in their charge. In many settings, the staff members also work together more closely than they are able to during the school year. Based on these stronger relationships, staff learn how to better address student behavior issues and engage students. They also discover how professional collaboration can make everyone more effective.

During the summer of 2013, several of the Summer Matters partner programs were explicit in training staff around three youth engagement strategies: youth choice, youth voice, and youth facilitation. The approach may have been intended to empower young people, but it appears to have also opened the eyes of many summer staff members in regard to the capabilities children and youth possess.

The idea of turning to students to facilitate class discussions and activities was a new and at times challenging approach for the staff at Whittier City School District, as one Orange Grove Elementary staff person described. "It's hard to give up control. Letting students have the freedom to run the class is scary. But you tell them, 'Here is what we need to do, and here is what we have for getting it done.' Both of those things create structure. Then they get to solve the problem."

The staff members also reported that they became more comfortable in the approach and increasingly impressed with what their young charges were capable of, given the opportunity.

At Whittier's Katherine Edwards Middle School, two staff members gathered their 6th to 8th graders together for a discussion about loyalty based on the book *Catching Fire*, which all the students were reading. One of the students led a spirited and at times very emotional discussion in response to the question: "Would you stay behind if your friend was injured or go on and save yourself?" The staff members later said, with a measure of surprise, that they could not have led the discussion any better than he did.

The staff members became increasingly impressed with what their young charges were capable of, given the opportunity.

At Sam Brannan Junior High in Sacramento, the credentialed teachers saw students facilitating activities as a valuable departure from the regular school year. "During the school year you're completely directing everything as a teacher, running your show. This is more collaborative between staff and students, even to the point where students are directing 80% of it."

Practices that emphasize youth choice, voice, and facilitation have been shown to maximize student motivation, learning, and achievement. In staff surveys administered at the end of all the Summer Matters partner programs, both the program staff and credentialed teachers evaluated the change in their perspective regarding a variety of "learner-centered practices." Among the strongest findings of the survey was an improved perception of their own ability to work with challenging students. In particular, they cited:

- Improved ability to work with youth who refuse to learn;
- Decreased feelings of inadequacy when dealing with difficult youth; and
- Decreased perception that some youth are unreachable or cannot figure out their mistakes.

Surveys show a growth in staff skills and confidence.



The proportion who thought they could "craft good questions for youth" increased ten percentage points, from 86% to 96%.



Those who reported a strong confidence in being "able to provide an alternative explanation or example when youth are confused" increased from 89% to 96%.

The surveys also indicated similar gains in the proportion of staff who felt there was a lot they could do "to calm a disruptive youth" and who said that they could "get children to follow summer program rules."

In interviews, summer program staff members consistently said their experiences would have a lasting effect on how they see students' potential and on their ability to help them realize that potential. They reported learning about how to effectively engage children of different ages and with varying needs and abilities.

Some individual staff members described how their summer experience helped them see their students better, even those who can be the most difficult. That is in part due to the slower pace of summer and intentional youth development strategies that provide time for students and staff to reflect on their experience and learning at the end of an activity. This is sometimes done through student journals and sometimes in discussions. Either way, taking time to check in about how students were feeling was a new experience for many staff members. They predicted it would change how they interact with students during the regular school year.

"I've learned a lot by taking time to really connect with the kids," said one staff member at Sam Brannan Junior High. "I'm going to carry the idea of debriefing activities and student reflections into the regular school year. Things like asking them, 'What did you learn?' It will also change how I handle their homework time. During last school year, I would ask if they needed help, and if they said no, I'd just move on. With my experiences this summer, I've learned how to pull out the fact that they need help. You have to work with them to the point where they decide they want to ask for help."

Learning Experiences of Summer Staff Align with Larger District Goals



As school agencies work with their after-school and community partners to plan their summer learning programs, they often start by thinking about their larger district goals. At Sacramento's Summer of Service, the district wanted to strengthen students' exposure to civic education. Improved reading, including vocabulary development, was a goal of several elementary as well as middle-grade programs. Still others wanted to strengthen their STEM instruction and spark greater student interest in science specifically. All of the programs faced the necessity of preparing their students and both credentialed and non-credentialed staff for implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Training staff for a high-quality summer learning program can help further these kinds of learning goals and align both the summer and after-school programs with district priorities.



Strengthening the Abilities of After-School Staff Supports Student Learning

A pivotal strategy in the creation of high-quality summer programs is to consistently provide opportunities for staff to assess and improve their work.

One ingredient for doing so is continuity—the partners who manage the programs and the people they employ are not just in it for the summer. Rather, they extend into summer the work they do together throughout the school year in after-school programs.

That said, summer provides a special opportunity to invest intensely in both training and experiences that can increase the competency of staff throughout the school year, develop a management cadre devoted to expanded learning time, and strengthen inter-agency partnerships. The types of training provided in different programs depend on a variety of factors, including whether the program is managed at a regional level, in a district, or at an individual school site.

A pivotal strategy in the creation of high-quality summer programs is to consistently provide opportunities for staff to assess and improve their work.

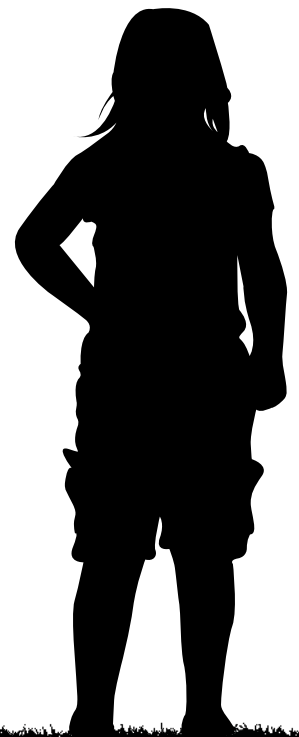


The Central Enrichment Summer Adventures (CESA) program has served the Fresno region for five years. It draws participants from throughout the Central Unified School District, and in 2013, it served over 400 middle-grade students at a single site. Its staff is recruited from throughout the region.

Thanks to a record of success and a strong management team, the summer jobs at CESA are highly coveted. That makes it possible for the operating partner, the Fresno County Office of Education, to be highly selective in its hiring and demand staff commitments for summer nearly six months in advance. The program starts by hiring administrative staff who meet weekly from January to June. This summer program leadership team develops a plan for the summer activities. They also work together to create a professional development strategy for the 28 “heroes” who will make up the classroom or line staff. The heroes in turn attend a team-building and program-planning session one Saturday a month.

The program works closely with its staffing partner, California Teaching Fellows Foundation, a local non-profit organization that hires and provides professional development for about 1,200 after-school staff members throughout Fresno and Madera Counties. All of the summer staff in 2013 were local college students, many of them pursuing degrees in education and all experienced as after-school staff.

The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) has included summer learning programs in its strategic plan. That commitment includes the district providing a regular schedule of professional development sessions open to both summer and after-school staff. Typical sessions cover such topics as inquiry-based facilitation,



planning and reflection, family engagement, youth voice, and restorative justice. In addition, the district used its summer program at East Oakland Pride Elementary to support a continued emphasis on the improvement of science instruction. To that end, the summer staff at East Oakland Pride along with staff at other sites received training on a hands-on elementary curriculum.

The fusion of summer and science in Oakland Unified combined the resources and experiences of the Summer Matters Campaign with an informal science education curriculum provided by TechBridge. One objective was to build the staff's capacity to lead hands-on summer and science programming for 3rd to 5th grade youth. Through this initiative, the staff members received 16 hours of professional development and about 80 hours of coaching around best practices to engage youth in high-quality programming.

The summer staff at East Oakland Pride and other OUSD schools were also matched with a certificated teacher who served as a STEM Coach to support the implementation and delivery of science instruction during the summer session. The effort resulted in heightened awareness of science topics and experiences that can be transferred to the school year's after-school program. The staff members across the district reported increased confidence in facilitating science and other content areas of programming offered in summer and after school. They also said they used the training to hone their ability to plan a program and deliver a quality lesson.

By contrast, Hillcrest Elementary in San Francisco plans its summer program and its professional development at the site level. Its efforts reflect a conscious and concerted effort to connect the summer program to the school's year-round goals for student learning and behavior. For example, during the 2012-13 school year the site was working with a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model as a new approach to managing student behavior.

The summer staff, most of whom worked in Hillcrest's after-school program, used their summer experience to deepen their use of these techniques and tools, but in a setting where they held greater responsibility.

The school principal also leveraged the summer program to pilot a new set of behavior standards for the school. The summer staff introduced to students the concepts behind the acronym "HAWK," which stood for "Healthy, Accountable, Wise and Kind."

Hillcrest is a Community School and, as such, has a wealth of outside partners that provide services, staff training, and support during the regular school year and throughout the summer. The operation of a high-quality summer program helps sustain that community school structure because the school can keep its relationships and programs going year-round. For example, the summer staff participated in weekly consultations with Instituto Familiar De La Raza, a local health and wellness program provider. The meetings were conducted by the same mental health consultant who is at the school throughout the year.

The consultant provides targeted professional development for the staff as needed and also follows up on specific issues regarding student behavior and classroom management.

The success of summer programs in terms of student engagement has prompted several program directors and staff to reflect on what happens after school during the regular year. They expect to make changes so the after-school programs take advantage of the concept of camp themes and instructional techniques like student facilitation.

As one director asked, "It makes kids engaged, so why wouldn't you?"

*"It makes kids engaged,
so why wouldn't you?"*



Results from the Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs

The summer program approaches staff recruitment and training in a way that yields culturally competent staff with relevant skills, and provides extensive opportunities for staff development.



Combined Score
All Programs

Staff Interview and Selection: The recruitment process is designed to reach potential staff who are knowledgeable of the community's demographics and have skills connected to program goals.



Staff Recruitment Timeline: Staff recruitment begins at least six months prior to the session, with job offers made three months prior.



Alignment of Staff Needs and Training: Program formally assesses staff abilities upon hire based on specific competencies and sets training objectives accordingly.



Staff Training Timeline: Program requires staff training, connected to student needs, at least two weeks before the program, and includes additional paid time for individual or group preparation.



These scores are based on intensive quality assessments done for each program that measure the extent to which programs are intentionally implementing these strategies. Staff use the data to identify specific practices that need to be improved for the next summer. Score definitions: 1 = Basic; 2 = Emerging; 3 = Proficient; 4 = Exemplary.

Building Staff Stability and Developing Next Generation Teachers

For some staff members, employment in expanded learning programs—both after school and in the summer—provides authentic experiences relevant to long-term career goals in teaching or other helping professions. For others who have made a career or long-term commitment to expanded learning, the summer provides income, experiences, and training that help them want to stay in their present positions.

Most jobs in after-school programs are part-time, relatively low-paid, and only available during the school year. That makes them a particularly good choice for college students and sometimes for young parents. Inherent in that kind of staffing structure is the probability that many staff will only work for a few years, resulting in a relatively high amount of staff turnover. Maintaining program quality, given that reality, demands that programs cultivate a stable leadership core committed to expanded learning as a permanent career choice.

High-quality summer programs contribute to meeting that goal in part by making it possible for staff to work in their programs year-round. The summer also provides the more intense experiences and training, including leadership opportunities, described above.

In addition, the programs provide an ideal “on the job” experience for aspiring teachers who need summer work and for college students who decide to make teaching a career after serving in a staff role.

When summer program staff are aspiring teachers, their experiences better prepare them for the classroom. In a time of transition, as 2013 was with the impending implementation of the Common Core State Standards, on-the-ground experience can be particularly valuable for districts as they prepare their teachers for new expectations.



As one summer staff member and teacher candidate at CESA described it, “At CESA, one strategy we’ve used that aligns with the Common Core is youth facilitation, having students lead in the classroom. As a future teacher, I’m serving my own professional growth by learning how to do this. If the student is leading a discussion and gets stuck, we’ve learned how to ask open-ended questions. I might say to that student, ‘What do students need to learn from this lesson? Go back to our objectives and look at them.’ It’s a teachable moment when you have a kid leading the class, and you can help that leader. It happens in front of all of the students, and they all learn from it.”

Summer Learning is a Cost-effective Way to Achieve Multiple Benefits



The learning strategies, such as project-based learning and the emphasis on social-emotional development, are consistent with the Common Core State Standards. The programs work to stem summer learning loss and engage children and youth in positive summer activities. They also contribute to professional learning for credentialed educators and after-school staff. Yet the cost of the programs compares favorably to a traditional summer school approach, thanks to the staffing mix and the contribution of resources from outside agencies and partners.

As the program director at Fresno’s CESA program put it, “Our program data demonstrate that participants in the CESA program benefit socially and academically. CESA supports the hard work that experienced certificated staff do during the year. A typical summer school budget covers about two hours of remediation for a couple of weeks. With CESA, hiring college students experienced in after-school programming, we are able to stretch the summer budget to cover additional days and hours of engaging instruction.”

As schools and districts think anew about their use of resources in this era of greater local control and flexibility, it makes sense to put summer learning programs on the short list of possible options. The work of the partner organizations in the Summer Matters Campaign can provide a head start for thinking about alternatives that make sense in terms of both the economics and the learning results.

Another practice that is common among all the Summer Matters partners is the development of partnerships with community-based organizations, public agencies, and youth service providers.

In summer and during the school year, expanded learning time can directly contribute to the district’s goals for its students. Engaging students in fun activities that support academic and social-emotional learning can keep them positively involved in school for up to three hours more each day during the regular year and for as many as six extra weeks during the summer.

School agencies differ in the configuration and operation of their summer programs

The Summer Matters programs vary significantly in terms of their structure and operation. The differences reflect existing structures related to after-school staffing and also the needs of their respective communities, including the preferences of local school agencies. The Oakland Unified School District and the Central Unified School District in Fresno provide two very different examples.



Lion's Pride Summer Academy

District: Oakland Unified School District

Program management: ASPIRAnet/EBAC at East Oakland Pride Elementary

The children who attended the Lion's PRIDE Summer Academy at East Oakland Pride Elementary School were selected for the program by the school district based on identified academic needs. The district provided an academically-focused morning program to help students at the school strengthen specific skills. The children and their families then chose whether they would stay on campus for the afternoon to also participate in the summer learning program through the Summer Matters Campaign.

Oakland USD has an active after-school program office that uses a number of different contractors, including ASPIRAnet and the East Bay Agency for Children (EBAC), to provide its school-year and summer programs.

The district's after-school office provides numerous staff training opportunities that summer program staff are encouraged to attend. When they take advantage of this opportunity, they get specific training on such things as building lesson plans and aligning activities with long-term educational goals. For the purposes of the science learning pilot, summer staff members participated in both professional development and coaching with a certificated teacher from the district.

The Summer Matters Campaign also provided a day of professional development for the summer program that emphasized the creation of a camp culture and theme. The staff at Lion's Pride Summer Academy embraced the opportunity, choosing and implementing a Dr. Seuss theme to help create a fun, engaging atmosphere for their 65 young participants.

Community partnerships enrich program offerings. The 2013 program at East Oakland Pride had a dance instructor and a karate instructor who each came to the site two days a week for 90 minutes to work with the kids.

Field trips each week were also a high point. Students in the program, who rarely get out of their own neighborhood, travelled to museums and other sites throughout the Bay Area.

Contact: Reka Lal, EBAC
info@summermatters2you.net

CESA - Central Enrichment Summer Adventures

District: Central Unified School District

Program management: Fresno County Office of Education / staffing by the California Teaching Fellows Foundation

The CESA program is a collaborative partnership with a strong working relationship among several partners. Multiple funders support the program, and the staff works to coordinate and satisfy a wide range of grant requirements.

The Fresno County Office of Education (FCOE) is the fiscal agent for the majority of after-school programs in the county. They manage CESA with the full participation of the California Teaching Fellows Foundation (CTFF). The latter, a local non-profit organization, hires and provides professional development to more than 1,200 local college students (most from CSU Fresno) who work in more than 200 after-school programs throughout Fresno and Madera counties. For the CESA program specifically, the two organizations recruit from these after-school employees in a rigorous process, looking for the “cream of the crop.”

The county office provides the instructional guidance for the program, including a curriculum structure for the reading and leadership segments plus classes

taught by county personnel on fitness and nutrition. The camp theme is based on a book students read together. FCOE consults with the school district regarding the book selection and the reading curriculum.

The five-week program serves 400 middle grade students on the Central High School campus. The staff includes seven administrators, employees of the county office, who together operate the program and supervise the 28 line staff hired through California Teaching Fellows. The staff are selected by February and, between then and June, spend one Saturday a month preparing for CESA, in place of the normal CTFF monthly academy they would otherwise attend. All line staff develop and teach a “fun” or “fitness” class based on their personal interests, but remain connected to the camp theme.

Contact: Randy Mehrten, Fresno County Office of Education, info@summermatters2you.net



The Putting Summer To Work report series includes:

- Getting a Head Start on the Common Core
 - Teaching Kids How to Succeed in School
 - A High Impact Training Ground for Teachers and Staff
-

All are available for download at <http://summermatters2you.net/putting-summer-to-work>

At <http://summermatters2you.net> you will find a wealth of resources for school district leaders and program providers wanting more information about the Summer Matters Campaign and assistance in planning a high-quality summer learning program. Those resources include information about:

- Program design
- Funding and sustainability
- Assessment and evaluation
- Numerous research reports on summer learning loss and programs that address it

Author: Mary Perry, Consultant
Partnership for Children & Youth

