



Executive Summary of Mid-Term Findings

*After-school & Summer Enrichment Subprogram
2011-16 Strategy Evaluation*

*Prepared for
David and Lucile Packard
Foundation*

*Prepared by
Informing Change*

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INTRODUCTION

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation’s (the Foundation) 2011–16 After-school and Summer Enrichment Subprogram (the Subprogram) investment strategy aims to make after-school and summer learning integral to a system of high-quality learning in California. The Foundation believes that raising the salience of summer learning and after-school programs among California’s K–12 leaders is the best way to build and integrate those programs into the larger educational system. This is part of a vision the Foundation shares with many education and youth development advocates to **narrow the achievement gap for California’s low-income children**.

In pursuit of this vision, the Subprogram’s current investment strategy aims at giving all California students access to quality after-school and summer programs that integrate with their school-day learning, build students’ fluency in twenty-first century knowledge and skills, and instill in students a lasting sense of themselves as life-long learners. Recognizing the magnitude of this goal, this strategy draws from and reinforces other state and national efforts to expand summer learning programs.

Subprogram grants build upon the Foundation’s previous after-school investments, and support projects in three areas: Quality Practice, Systems Building, and Policy Development and Stakeholder Engagement. Grants support statewide work as well as targeted program development in 10 California communities.

EVALUATION BACKGROUND

Since 2008, the Foundation has partnered with Informing Change, a strategic consulting firm, in an ongoing evaluation of the Subprogram strategy. For the 2011–16 strategy, Informing Change and the Foundation first determined the evaluation questions (see box), and then Informing Change conducted a baseline assessment of key grantees and target communities.

This document is an executive summary of Informing Change’s subsequent mid-term assessment of the Foundation’s strategy. It is informed by data collected in 2013 from program providers, K–12 education leaders, and other stakeholders. The evaluators also conducted site visits, observed meetings, and reviewed grant reports and other relevant materials.¹

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Overarching: How and to what extent has the combination of the Subprogram’s three funding investments influenced California’s K–12 leaders’ perceptions of the contributions of after-school and summer enrichment to a system of learning for children?

Sub-questions

1. How and to what extent have the Subprogram’s investments in quality practice improved quality indicators for summer enrichment programs and also produced summer enrichment programs that are linked to the school day, after-school, and their surrounding communities?
2. How and to what extent have the Subprogram’s targeted investments in after-school and summer enrichment systems building improved and integrated the technical assistance available to publicly-supported after-school and summer enrichment programs?
3. How and to what extent have the Subprogram’s investments in policy development and stakeholder engagement created more after-school and summer enrichment program resources, access, demand, and growth?

SALIENCE OF SUMMER LEARNING FOR K–12 LEADERS

Compared to 2011, program providers and most field leaders perceive K–12 education leaders as more aware of the contributions of summer learning and after-school programs to a system of learning for children.

- Based on evaluation data collected from stakeholders throughout the expanded learning system, there is greater evidence of the earlier stages of support (i.e., problem awareness) than on the later stages (i.e., taking action). However, the increased reporting of K–12 leaders’ awareness and understanding since 2011 is promising.
- Most program providers surveyed (86%) say California’s K–12 education leaders perceive summer learning programs as somewhat to very important for students’ overall learning. Half (51%) believe K–12 leaders’ perceptions of summer learning have become more positive in the past few years.
- In 2013, 40 school district superintendents signed the pledge *Summer Matters: Superintendents Stand Up for Summer Learning*.
- According to some informants, district leaders as a group are beginning to recognize how quality summer learning programs help districts meet their goals, citing benefits such as:
 - reducing achievement gaps among English language learners
 - improving the ability of students to see themselves as successful learners
 - increasing the leadership roles of students on campus
 - improving success rates for transition to middle school
 - increasing motivation among older students to stay in school
- In a survey of California School Boards Association members, most respondents say support for summer learning remains about the same for K–12 educators, school board members, parents, and administrators in their districts. Close to 40% believe support for summer learning has decreased at the state government level (Exhibit 1).

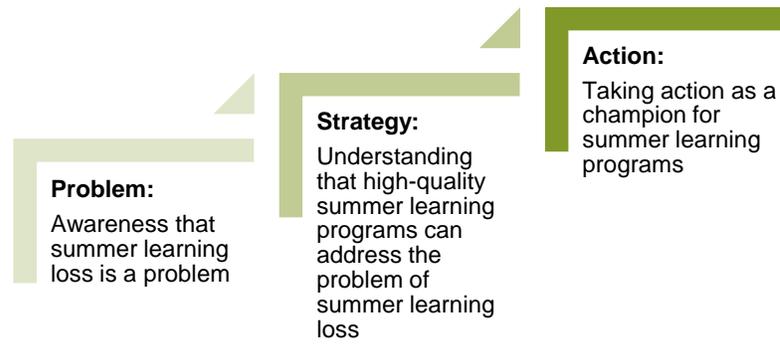
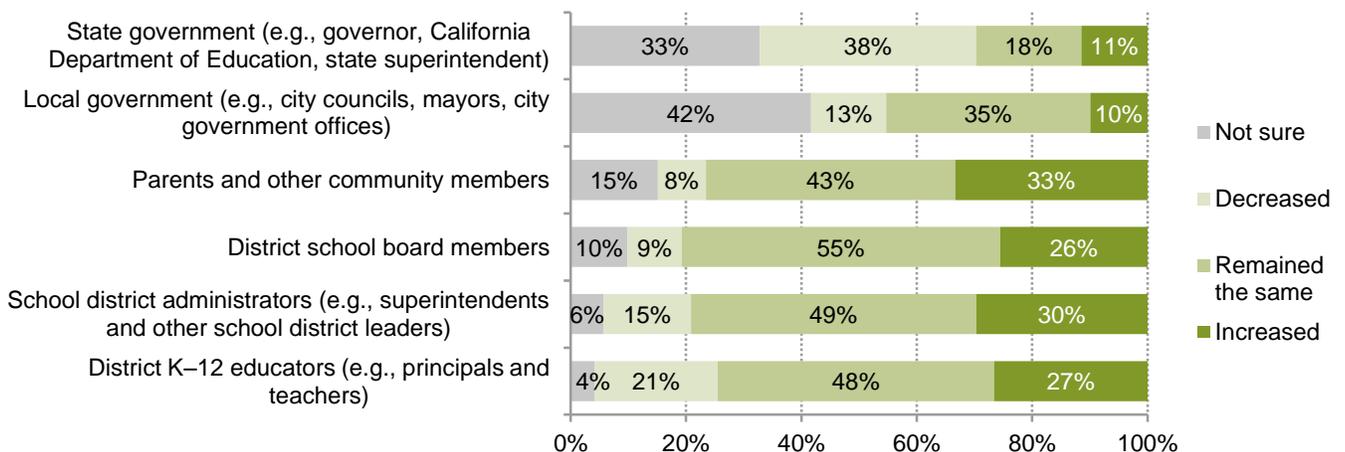


Exhibit 1
Changes in Support for Summer Learning Programs Among Stakeholder Groups in the Last 3 Years, as Reported by California School Boards Association Members

N=192



Publicly funded summer learning programs in California report a higher or steady number of enrolled students.

43% of program providers report **increased enrollment** in their summer learning program.

17% of program providers say their summer program added **new sites** in 2013.

- Of the program providers across the state who responded to Informing Change’s survey, 43% report that the number of students served in their 2013 summer learning programs increased over 2012, and 17% say the number of their program sites increased.
- The 10 Foundation-funded target communities report a combined summer learning program enrollment of 21,604. While this is only a small increase from the number of youth served in 2012, these programs report serving more students than they planned for in their budgets and program designs.

IMPROVING SUMMER QUALITY

Through the work of the Foundation’s grantees, more summer learning and after-school program providers are aware of and support using quality standards for summer learning programs.

- The network of Foundation-funded summer programs and technical assistance (TA) practitioners are all highly knowledgeable about indicators of quality summer programs. In the Foundation’s 10 target communities, programs regularly use the CASP to guide program improvement (see box).
- In their survey responses, non-Summer Matters program providers say they are aware of and interested in meeting specific standards for summer (i.e., standards that are different from after-school standards).² About half (52%) currently use an assessment tool for their summer programs. The most common tools used are their own locally developed assessments and the summer learning section of CDE’s After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (Section 12), which was strongly informed by the content of CASP.
- The CASP program assessment tool has been useful in building the field of summer learning as well as strengthening individual programs. The descriptions of quality indicators have prompted productive discussions among field leaders and helped identify the types and content of TA that programs need.

WHAT IS CASP?

The Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs (CASP) is a tool developed by the National Summer Learning Association to measure the quality of summer programs in nine domains. Research-based rubrics for each domain help trained professionals (either internal or external to the summer program) assess the quality of the program infrastructure as well as the program delivery. Following the assessment, the leaders of the summer program receive a comprehensive feedback report highlighting the program’s strengths and opportunities for improvement in each domain. The 10 Foundation-funded target communities have been using this national assessment tool, and some have begun developing modified versions to help encourage the tool’s use beyond their Foundation-funded sites.

Implementers of summer learning and after-school programs have increased expectations for a linked system of learning between the school day, after-school, and summer.

- Compared to 2011, program providers now have higher expectations for integrating their after-school and summer learning programs with each other and with the school day, although survey data also show that at this point in time, such close integration with the school day is more aspirational than actual.
- Similar to 2011, after-school programs tend to have a stronger connection to the school day than do summer learning programs.

Programs active in the Summer Matters campaign have a wider range of program partnerships than other programs.

- Nearly all after-school (97%) and summer learning programs (93%) report having at least one type of partnership (e.g., community-based organization, city agency, hospital, business) for their program. Most report multiple partnership types.
- Programs that are part of the Summer Matters campaign report more types of partnerships than other summer programs, particularly more partnerships with libraries, state parks, municipal recreation departments, and other city and county agencies.

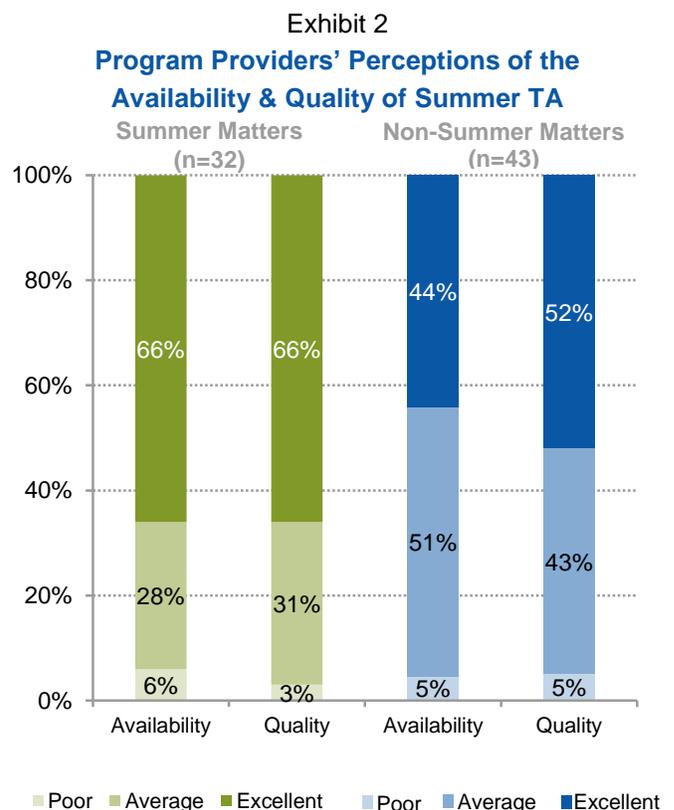
BUILDING TARGETED SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT EXPANDED LEARNING

Since 2009, Foundation grantees have built up a summer learning TA system that emphasizes program quality, continuous program improvement, and peer support and learning.

- In contrast to the limited TA available to publicly-funded summer learning programs at the start of the Foundation’s investments in summer learning (2009), the state now has an expanded set of knowledgeable summer learning TA providers.
- These providers say they are able to provide better support to summer learning programs because of the knowledge and experience gained by working with the CASP and with Foundation grantees, ASAPconnect and Partnership for Children and Youth.
- In addition to building their own individual professional knowledge, the target communities’ summer learning TA providers have worked as a team to contribute to a system of summer program support that can benefit programs throughout the state.
- Staffs of CDE’s Regional Technical Assistance Centers (known in the field as “Regional Leads”) now have greater knowledge about summer learning loss, summer learning quality indicators, and available resources for program support. Five of the 11 Regional Centers actively participate in the Summer Matters TA provider network through Foundation grant support.

Program providers report that the quality of TA and availability of TA for summer learning and after-school have improved in recent years.

- Summer and after-school program providers are utilizing TA at similar rates in 2013 as in 2011. Since 2011, 80% of program providers have used TA for their after-school programs and 68% for their summer learning programs. Of those not using TA, about half report that is because they did not identify areas needing TA.
- Summer Matters programs use more types of TA than other programs, and the focus of their TA is more related to sustainability (e.g., developing program vision, community collaborations, resource development, linkages with after-school) than other providers.



- Summer Matters program providers rate the availability and quality of summer TA higher than other programs (Exhibit 2) and report being more satisfied with the TA they received than other programs.
- With new grant support from the Foundation, two intermediary organizations and another Regional Lead team began planning future delivery of summer learning TA to programs in underserved geographic areas.

TA providers find that summer learning TA is becoming more integrated with the larger, more established after-school TA system.

- Despite the distinctions between after-school and summer, both types of program providers frequently request similar help: assistance with program planning, implementation, and capacity building.
- TA providers report that the training and support they provide in program planning and some content areas (e.g., STEM, healthy eating) are equally applicable to after-school and summer programs.
- Frequently, after-school staff members also work in summer programs, which further facilitates the integration of summer learning TA with after-school TA.

MOST FREQUENTLY UTILIZED TYPES OF TA

As reported by after-school programs:

- Program planning and design (66%)
- Staff development plans and strategies (63%)
- Lesson plans and aligning to content standards (56%)

As reported by summer programs:

- Program planning and design (65%)
- Lesson plans and aligning to content standards (54%)
- Program accountability, including evaluation and research (51%)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Foundation’s pilot investments in summer learning—that is, prior to 2011—set the groundwork for creating Summer Matters, a statewide campaign dedicated to building awareness and support of high-quality publicly-funded summer learning programs. The growing Summer Matters network, now with more than 80 member organizations and school districts, grew out of the Foundation’s early strategy of identifying leadership grantees and engaging them as a group in decisions about how to assess and support the target communities’ summer learning programs.

The Summer Matters campaign has expanded the base of support for summer learning.

- The campaign has expanded awareness of summer learning loss and the role of summer learning programs to an ever-widening circle of stakeholders, including school district leaders, state agencies, state legislators and their staff, and youth development organizations.
- Through strategic activities and relationship building, including the Summer Matters Roundtable and Summer Learning Day, the campaign has attained brand recognition and good credibility.
- Summer learning is being included more frequently in discussions and activities of statewide organizations doing work related to education and youth development (e.g., CAN, CDE After School Division Advisory group, CalSAC), including some organizations which previously focused only on after-school.

Champions for summer learning are now visible and active within state education agencies.

- State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson actively encourages school district superintendents to offer high-quality after-school and summer learning programs.

- In 2012, CDE elevated the after-school and summer learning unit to a department division, which is helping both types of programs get increased visibility and influence within CDE. After-school and summer learning field leaders commend Michael Funk, the Division Director, for building relationships and sharing information with other CDE department leaders.

Although the overall funding climate for schools in California may be more positive than in 2011, after-school and summer learning program providers report no increases in available funding.

- Overall, program providers say after-school funding from state and federal sources has declined or stayed the same since 2011. Only 9% of survey respondents report increases in after-school funding from public sources between 2011 and 2013. This paints a bleaker picture than in 2011, when 16% of survey respondents said that state and federal funding had increased over 2009 levels.
- Informants generally believe summer program funding is less stable than after-school funding.
- Similar to 2011, program providers and their district leaders appreciate that After School Education Safety Program (ASES) funding is dependable, but note that ASES covers only the minimal budget for after-school and summer program operations, and that funding to provide high quality and/or to increase access must come from other sources.³
- Since 2011, there has been a sharp reduction in the number and frequency of attacks by state legislators on ASES funding. Overall, field leaders and policy specialists say that legislators have positive regard for both summer learning and after-school programs and would hesitate to remove available funding from them.
- Half (51%) of all program providers surveyed say that funding for after-school and summer learning from foundations, businesses, and other private sources has declined since 2011.
- Program leaders in the 10 Foundation-funded target communities are more aggressively seeking new funding, including soliciting grants from foundations, corporations, and city or county youth services funds; developing annual fundraising events; and charging parent fees, where relevant. At this time, however, their projected future program budgets still show funding deficits.

State leaders say the best hope for new funding for after-school and summer learning programs is through districts' Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP).

- Given the new rules of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and required process for creating district LCAPs, some program providers see the possibility of new or additional funding for after-school and summer learning programs. Spring 2014 will be the first time districts will use the new process and rules.
- In the 10 Foundation-funded target communities, summer learning programs have developed and are implementing sustainability plans. These plans include tactics for expanding community awareness and support, which may boost the relative position of summer learning in LCAPs.

¹ Data analyzed for the mid-term assessment include a survey of California after-school and summer learning program providers (n=464), a survey of members of the California School Boards Association (n=215), program enrollment and funding data from the Foundation's 10 target community grantees, 62 key informant interviews, and observations of grantee program sites and gatherings. Evaluators also reviewed grant reports, sustainability reports, summaries of legislative action, and other materials relevant to the Foundation's investments.

² The term **Summer Matters programs** comprises the summer learning programs in the 10 target communities receiving Packard Foundation summer enrichment grants plus two additional communities receiving Summer Science grants from S.D. Bechtel Foundation and other sources. **Summer Matters TA providers** are those that work regularly with one or more Summer Matters programs. **Non-Summer Matters programs** are all other California after-school and summer learning programs that provided evaluation data.

³ California's ASES Program annually provides \$550 million in state funding for before-school, after-school, and summer learning programs. ASES resulted from the 2002 voter-approved initiative, Proposition 49.



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