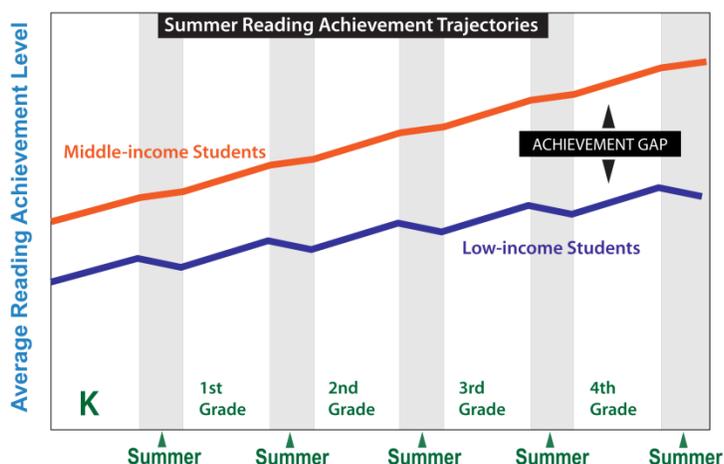




A child’s need for meaningful learning and enrichment experiences does not end in June when the school doors close for summer vacation. All children need to be engaged and actively learning during the summer months in order to be on track when they return to school in the fall. They also need to continue to be physically active and eat a balanced diet. Whether these needs are being met may boil down to a child’s neighborhood or family income level. Without ongoing summer opportunities to reinforce and learn skills, children—especially children in low-income communities—fall behind dramatically in many areas of academic achievement. They also risk inordinate weight gain from too much sedentary time indoors and poor nutrition.

### THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF SUMMER LEARNING LOSS

**Summer learning loss** is the debilitating result of an absence of summer learning and enrichment. Research has shown summer learning loss to be measurable and quantifiable. The cumulative effects of summer learning loss contribute directly to a widening of the achievement gap between low-income and middle-income students.



### THE CRITICAL NEED FOR SUMMER LEARNING AND ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN CALIFORNIA

- Research spanning 100 years shows that children experience learning loss when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer (White, 1906; Entwisle & Alexander, 1992; Cooper et al., 1996, Downey et al., 2004).
- Research has shown low-income children to be nearly three grade equivalents behind their more affluent peers in reading by the end of the fifth grade as a result of summer learning loss (National Summer Learning Association (NSLA), 2009).
- Unequal summer learning opportunities during elementary school years are responsible for about two-thirds of the ninth-grade achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al., 2007).
- A study of five California cities revealed that nearly 75% of children and youth are not served by the most common providers of summer programming (NSLA, 2009).
- California parents consistently cite summer as the most difficult time to ensure that their children have productive things to do (Public Agenda, 2010).
- Furthermore, most children gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school for summer. Summer gains are especially large for African American and Hispanic children (von Hippel et al., 2007). In California, nearly a third (32%) of 5<sup>th</sup> graders are overweight or obese (kidsdata.org; California Department of Education, 2009).



### SUMMER MATTERS CAMPAIGN — INFORMING POLICY AND PRACTICE

**Summer Matters** is a statewide initiative to promote quality summer-learning opportunities that support year-round learning and well-being for children across California. This work is based on a vision of summer learning that boosts student achievement through fun, experiential and relevant programming that includes a mix of academics and enrichment, and also keeps children active and well-fed throughout the summer. The summer strategy builds on California's statewide system of more than 4,000 publicly-funded after-school programs. Over the past four years, the initiative has engaged in the following activities:

- **Developing and advocating for legislation to increase public funding for summer programming** — Senate Bill 798, passed in 2010, allocates a portion of any increase in federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers funds to summer programming. In 2011, Senate Bill 429 was signed into law to provide more flexibility in the use of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and After School Education Safety Program funding for summer programming, including the option to provide more hours of programming per day.
- **Piloting innovative summer programming and technical assistance** in a growing number of low-income communities to serve as high-quality models for future replication. In 2012, these programs reached more than 6,000 students in Concord, Fresno, Gilroy, Glenn County, Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, Santa Ana, and Whittier. Program evaluations document significant positive results in grade level vocabulary, program quality and parent satisfaction.
- **Implementing a communications strategy to raise awareness and support for summer programming** — In the summer of 2012, more than 160 stories appeared online, in print, and on TV and radio across California as a result of this communications work.
- **Identifying and engaging statewide champions**, including educators, businesspeople, advocates, policymakers, researchers, and program providers, all working together to expand summer learning opportunities across the state.
- **Staffing and informing the State Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment** — Led by State Senator Mark DeSaulnier, the Task Force submitted recommendations in 2010 to the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Legislature about the state's role in addressing the lack of access to summer programs.
- **Partnering with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson and the California Department of Education** to build statewide systems of support for summer learning.

**Partnership for Children and Youth** brings together government, education, philanthropic, nonprofit, business and community leaders to realize a simple but powerful vision: All children and youth will enjoy an equal opportunity for a healthy, happy and successful future. For more information about the Partnership, please visit [www.partnerforchildren.org](http://www.partnerforchildren.org). Learn more about Summer Matters at [www.SummerMatters2You.net](http://www.SummerMatters2You.net).