

Federal Funding Guide

FISCAL YEAR 2020 AND COVID-19

Harnessing the Power of Summer
and Afterschool Programs to Keep Kids
Healthy, Safe, Learning and Earning



national summer
learning association



PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Since COVID-19 has forced an abrupt end to traditional learning for the year, there is serious concern about equity gaps being exacerbated at a faster rate throughout this unconventional extended summer. This summer promises to be an extraordinarily difficult but critical time for all students. In order to mitigate these gaps, it is critical that any federal funds provided by Congress to address education needs during this crisis be leveraged to support summer enrichment opportunities and to expand the safety net millions of students need during this global health pandemic and economic fallout.

We hope this guide will provide helpful resources about the federal funds that can be accessed now to support summer learning and enrichment as a critical bridge into a new school year during COVID and beyond.



Summer and Out of School Time Matter More Than Ever

Under normal circumstances, the school summer break is not an idyllic vacation for many low-income children and youth. It creates many challenges for students who often lack access to basic needs such as healthy meals, a safe, supervised place to be while their parents work, and meaningful, engaging learning experiences. NWEA's most recent student learning report, *The COVID-19 slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement*, confirms that "achievement typically slows or declines over the summer months with generally steeper declines for math than for reading, and the extent (proportionally) of loss increases in the upper grades." Their report projects that with the COVID crisis, students may return in Fall 2020 with roughly 70 percent of the learning gains in reading relative to a typical school year, less than 50 percent of the learning gains in math, and in some grades, nearly a full year behind what we would observe in normal conditions.

Research also shows that what happens out-of-school has a significant impact on what happens in-school for millions of students. A RAND Corporation [report](#) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) offers conclusive evidence that high-quality summer learning programs are proven to maintain and advance students' academic and social growth, keep children safe and healthy during the summer, and send young people back to school ready to learn. Additionally, summer youth employment programs engage older youth in meaningful activities that help them nurture new skills, take on new responsibilities, contribute to their community, and earn money for the future.

Although summer and out-of-school time (OST) experiences may look different this season, National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) encourages local leaders to invest in engaging virtual learning models, and support quality professional development for educators while exploring creative community partnerships that ensure millions of students continue to learn, stay healthy and have enriching experiences to support their social, emotional well-being and healthy development.

MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS:

Every Student Succeeds Act

Title I, Part A: Grants to Local Education Agencies

Fiscal Year 2020 Funding: \$16.31 billion

The purpose of Title I, Part A funding is to provide a high-quality education to all students by providing supplemental funds to high-poverty schools to raise the achievement of students from low-income families. The funding is allocated through formula grants to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). LEAs then allocate Title I funds to public schools with high percentages of children from low-income families.

Title I offers an important opportunity for those interested in providing summer learning to students in need. In addition to the significant flexibility in current law surrounding the use of funds for Title I-receiving schools, the law specifically references summer learning as an allowable activity in several places, which means that there is an explicit authorization to use Title I funds for summer learning. There are two basic types of Title I, Part A programs: school-wide programs and targeted assistance programs.

The law references summer learning in each of these programs:

- **School-wide Programs:** LEAs may consolidate and use Title I, Part A funds with other federal, state, and local funds to improve the entire educational program in a school for the benefit of all students in the school if low-income students make up 40 percent or more of the school population. School-wide programs may “increase the amount and quality of learning time,” such as providing summer programs and opportunities, among other strategies.
- **Targeted Assistance Programs:** Title I funds support activities focused on the lowest-achieving students in the school. Targeted assistance programs must use effective methods and instructional strategies that strengthen the core academic program of the school and that, among other things, use methods and instructional strategies that give primary consideration to providing expanded learning time, such as summer programs and opportunities.

A school district has some flexibility to use Title I funds to meet the educational needs of Title I students in both types of Title I programs. As such, there is an opportunity for school district officials, as they design their Title I programs for the year, to incorporate summer extended learning time for Title I students into their overall Title I application to their State.

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

Fiscal Year 2020 Funding: \$2.13 billion

The Title II, Part A program aims to improve student academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality through professional development and teacher training. Title II, Part A funds may be used to augment the number of qualified teachers in classrooms; expand the number of qualified principals and assistant principals in schools; and increase the effectiveness of teachers and principals. Professional development activities supported by Title II, Part A funds can take place during the school day, after school, in workshops, and during summer.

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

Fiscal Year 2020 Funding: \$1.21 billion

The Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grant is a flexible block grant program, authorized at \$1.6 billion. This grant supports activities in three broad areas:

1. Providing students with a well-rounded education (e.g., college and career counseling, STEM, arts and music, civics, advanced placement, summer learning);
2. Supporting safe and healthy students (e.g., comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, health and physical education); and
3. Supporting the effective use of technology. This broad and flexible program can be used to support summer learning programs.

Each state receives an allocation based on the Title I funding formula, and, using the same Title I formula, states then allocate funds to local school districts. Any school district receiving an amount above \$30,000 must conduct a needs assessment and expend 20 percent of its grant on safe and healthy school activities and 20 percent on activities to provide a well-rounded education program. The district may spend the remaining 60 percent of funds on any of the three broad areas, but school districts must spend at least a portion of their grant on activities to support the effective use of technology. However, no more than 15 percent of a district’s funding may be spent on devices, equipment, software, and digital content. If a district receives an allocation below \$30,000, the law does not require a needs assessment or specific percentage set-asides for well-rounded and safe and healthy programs. The 15 percent technology purchase cap would continue to apply.



Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers Fiscal Year 2020 Funding: \$1.25 billion

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) formula grant program, authorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), provides grant funding for community partnerships that support afterschool, before-school, and summer learning programs serving students in low-performing schools. Programs are provided 3- to 5-year seed grants that support partnerships among community-based organizations, faith-based partners, private providers, and school partners. These flexible funds support a wide range of activities including: math and reading programs, physical activities, youth workforce preparedness programs, violence prevention and character development programs, and counseling for students.

Federal funding for summer learning programs that are enrichment based has its roots in the 21st CCLC program. 21st CCLC has played a key role in the growth of summer programming and includes a strong focus on school-community partnerships and hands-on enrichment activities. More states are prioritizing summer programs, in addition to after-school programs and extending the day or year, with at least 10 states requiring some summer programming for new grantees.

No matter what approach a state may take, one of the strengths of 21st CCLC funding is that it promotes innovative and exciting teaching and learning opportunities, rather than “more of the same” schooling. A number of states have also developed standards of quality for out-of-school time programs, raising the bar for program design and ensuring that students are engaged in activities with proven outcomes.

21st CCLC also encourages partnerships between schools and community-based organizations. Although 21st CCLC remains a valuable source of federal funding, it is not enough to meet the demand for summer programs nationally. Providers can, however, leverage the successes of summer learning programs funded by 21st CCLC by using outcome data as proof points for summer learning as a smart investment under any related funding stream.



Summer Youth Workforce Programs

There are resources across many federal agencies which can provide support toward the development of comprehensive summer programs for youth, including workforce development programs through the Department of Labor.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 enacted a comprehensive youth employment program that serves youth ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment. This formula program focuses primarily on out-of-school youth, requiring local areas to expend a minimum of 75 percent of WIOA youth funds on them and includes 14 program elements that are required to be made available to youth participants. Local programs provide youth services in partnership with American Job Centers and under the direction of local Workforce Development Boards.

Other programs include:

- **Youth Connections:** The Youth Connections Community is an online learning destination for public workforce system staff and partners who serve youth in the WIOA.
- **YouthBuild:** YouthBuild Community is a shared electronic space where grantees can share and review documents, exchange ideas, read and comment on blogs, and much more!
- **Reentry Employment Opportunities:** The Reentry Employment Opportunities program offers practitioners new ideas and tools to do the invaluable work of changing lives and renewing futures of formerly incarcerated offenders.
- **Career Pathways:** The Career Pathways Community helps workforce development leaders, practitioners, and policy makers expand state and local career pathways efforts currently underway or being planned.
- **Summer Jobs:** Connecting youth to summer jobs and opportunities can be a year-round process.

Federal Funds to Support Summer Programs During COVID-19
Funding: \$13.5 billion for LEAs, \$3.01 billion for Governors

In order to mitigate the widening learning gap, it is critical that the federal funds provided by Congress be used to support high-quality out-of-school time learning opportunities now and this fall, as well as support targeted interventions for the country's most vulnerable students. At the end of March, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to address the immediate economic fallout due to the pandemic.

Specifically, the CARES Act includes a \$30.75 billion Education Stabilization Fund that is administered through the Department of Education to states, with \$3.01 billion for a Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund, and \$13.5 billion for K-12 flowing directly to states and districts. In order to give states and locals enough flexibility to address the unique needs of their districts, the law includes a wide-range of allowable uses for these funds, including out-of-school time and summer learning opportunities.

LEAs may use funds for the following as it relates to summer learning:

- Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures, including how to provide meals to eligible students, and how to provide technology for online learning to all students.
- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the local educational agency that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
- Providing mental health services and supports.
- Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental after-school programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.
- Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in local educational agencies and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency.

Applying for the Funds:

Given the above mentioned programs receive federal funds appropriated each year by Congress that are directed to the states via formula, local education agencies and our summer partners should work with their state education agency to submit applications to be granted these funds. Note: The COVID-19 stimulus funds do not have an annual application process like the ESSA programs. States and districts can and should begin applying for those funds immediately.





**national summer
learning association**

summerlearning.org

575 South Charles Street, Suite 310 | Baltimore, MD 21201

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING ASSOCIATION

The National Summer Learning Association is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works, offers expertise and support for programs and communities, and advocates for summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. NSLA's work is driven by the belief that all children and youth deserve high-quality summer learning experiences that will help them succeed in college, career, and life.