



A New Vision for Summer Learning in California

CALIFORNIA STUDENTS PUT LAWMAKERS ON THE RECORD ABOUT SUMMER LEARNING

Students to Interview State Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Lawmakers About Importance of Summertime Learning Programs; Learn Science Lesson From State Superintendent Torlakson

Sacramento, CA – June 21, 2011 – Video cameras in hand, low-income students from Northern California will descend on the California State Capitol on Tuesday, June 21 to mark National Summer Learning Day by putting California lawmakers on the record about the vital importance of summer learning programs.

The nonprofit Partnership for Children and Youth (www.partnerforchildren.org) is spearheading California's flagship National Summer Learning Day event by organizing middle school students enrolled in summer learning programs to interview state lawmakers including State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, State Senators Mark DeSaulnier, Kevin de León, Loni Hancock, Carol Liu and Michael J. Rubio, and Assemblymembers Susan Bonilla, Connie Conway, Roger Dickinson, Curt Hagman, Holly Mitchell and Nancy Skinner, as well as other state and local community leaders, about the importance of summertime learning.

By putting lawmakers on the record about summer learning programs – which help prevent “summer learning loss” and combat child obesity – and broadcasting their video interviews through social media, the student news crews will learn how to be their own best advocates on behalf of a critical education issue.

Students' video interviews will be featured on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/SummerMatters2You>.

“Students can make the best case for why summertime learning is vital to their academic achievement, health and well-being” said Jennifer Peck, Executive Director of the Partnership for Children and Youth, the Bay Area-based nonprofit that is spearheading statewide initiatives to expand summer learning programs for low-income children. “By engaging California lawmakers on this key education issue and raising awareness through social media, these young advocates are helping advance efforts to expand summer learning opportunities for children across California.”

Following their interviews, students will picnic in Capitol Park with lawmakers, teachers, parents, media and local business, civic and nonprofit leaders. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, who is also a former science teacher, will conduct a science experiment and talk to students about the importance of summer learning.

“As a classroom teacher, I know that students need to remain engaged and motivated to learn all year around,” said Superintendent Torlakson. “Summer is a great time of year for fun and relaxation, but I encourage all students to take advantage of the learning opportunities that come along with summer fun.”



National Summer Learning Day is a nationwide celebration of the importance of summer learning programs and their effectiveness in preventing student “summer learning loss” and engaging low-income students in meaningful educational enrichment activities during the summer months.

Summer learning programs contribute substantially to children’s education, with a vast body of research showing that children’s participation in summer learning programs is a major factor in their academic success.

A lack of summer learning and enrichment opportunities leads to “summer learning loss” – a loss in students’ academic skills and knowledge during the summer months. Summer learning loss, which is cumulative over time, contributes directly to a widening of the achievement gap between low-income and middle-income students. A lack of summer learning opportunities also contributes to increased student drop-out rates.

Children from low-income households who lack access to summer learning programs also disproportionately gain weight in summer because they lack access to the recreational programs and meal programs available during the school year and spend more time watching TV and being sedentary, thus increasing their risk of childhood obesity.

More information about the SummerMatters2You campaign is at <http://www.facebook.com/SummerMatters2You>

More information about summer learning in California is available at www.partnerforchildren.org

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ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Partnership for Children and Youth (formerly the Bay Area Partnership) was formed in 1997 by government, philanthropy and business leaders who were concerned about the persistent poverty and ongoing difficulties faced by children and youth in specific Bay Area communities. The Partnership was created to connect schools and their community partners in these underserved communities with available public and private resources, and to improve the effectiveness of funding streams serving poor children. The ultimate beneficiaries of our work are children and families in California’s low-income communities. Our primary clients are those institutions that provide critical support services to poor children – including schools and school districts, community-based agencies and local governments. For more information, please visit www.partnerforchildren.org.