



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Jill Bourne

**SUBJECT:** Report on Summer Learning Initiative

**DATE:** May 29, 2018

Approved

Date

6/6/18

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept the San José Public Library report on the 2018 Summer Learning and other planned programs like Summer Lunch that support youth and student learning during the summer months.

## OUTCOME

The Neighborhood Services and Education Committee will be informed about this year's newly redesigned Summer Learning Program including program planning, summer lunches, new software, learning programs/events, and partnerships with schools, Smart Start sites, Silicon Valley YMCA and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS).

## BACKGROUND

Summer Learning at San José Public Library ("SJPL," "Library") is the cornerstone of SJPL's summer initiatives. Summer Learning is an eight-week literacy initiative that offers participants incentives for reading and learning during the summer months. The program starts June 1, 2018 and ends July 31, 2018. In the past this program was called Summer Reading Challenge. This name change to Summer Learning emphasizes that the Library is a learning institution, and that all reading is learning, especially for youth.

The primary purpose of the program is to prevent summer learning loss in school-age children and teens. Research has shown that students may lose one to three months of academic growth over the summer, and these losses are cumulative and most pronounced for students from low-income households. A recent study from the National Summer Learning Association indicates that teachers spend at least three to six weeks in the beginning of each school year re-teaching skills learned in the previous year. The Library's program provides an opportunity for children

and teens to prevent summer learning loss and become more prepared for the following school year. The Summer Learning program goes beyond school age children to encompass the whole family, promoting early literacy skills for participants ages 0-5 and challenging parents, caregivers, and other adults to set an example by participating as well. As in previous years, the Library encourages San José residents to read, learn, explore and energize over the summer. Over the last five years, the Summer Learning program has attracted an average of 18,000 participants per year. In 2017, 67% of participants were 12 or younger, and 20% were adults. In a survey at the end of the 2017 Summer Reading Challenge, 32% of survey respondents stated that was the first year they participated in the program.

## **ANALYSIS**

### ***Overview***

This year, the SJPL Summer Learning program has been completely redesigned with a new name, logo, smartphone app, and website. The overarching goal of Summer Learning will continue to be one of ensuring that summertime is a period of growth and development, rather than a time for losing the skills that were hard-earned during the school year.

The primary focus of the program is reading. The goal for pre-readers (ages 0-5) is to read eight books over the summer. After reading four books and again after reading eight books, pre-readers will receive a free book as a prize (total of two books per customer). The goal for young readers (ages 5-12), teens (ages 12-17), and adults (18 and older) is to read for a total of eight hours over the summer. After reading for four hours and again after reading for eight hours, young readers and teens will receive a free book as a prize (total of two books per customer). After reading for four hours and again after reading for eight hours, adults will receive a book voucher from the SJPL Friends of the Library groups. All participants are encouraged to read beyond program completion, and will be entered into a drawing for prizes for every additional eight hours read.

For babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, reading fosters learning about the world and prepares these young learners for the challenges of entering school. For older children and teens, reading helps keep minds active and engaged, reinforcing and facilitating learning. SJPL invites readers of all ages to learn and grow over the summer. Families engaged in summer learning create new memories, have meaningful conversations, share adventures, and have new experiences to cherish, while also making an impact on learning.

### ***School and Community Partnerships***

This summer, SJPL will bring the Summer Learning program to approximately 1,500 students (K-8) at PRNS summer camps and 2,500 children ages 0-5 at Smart Start sites throughout the City. These programs will reach children who otherwise might not connect with the Library over

the summer, and allow SJPL staff to strengthen relationships with local PRNS sites and child care providers.

The Library is also launching a new pilot program with the Silicon Valley YMCA at four summer literacy program sites at Almaden Elementary, Del Roble Elementary, LUCHA Elementary, and Rocketship Mateo Sheedy. These programs will specifically target students in grades one to five who are identified by teachers or principals as struggling readers. Providing a platform to track summer reading and offer books as rewards is one step in helping these students become enthusiastic readers. This is also a great way to strengthen the existing relationship with the YMCA, a Summer Lunch partner, and reach out to more students struggling to read. "Learning by Grade Level Proficiency" is also a part of the City's Education Initiative.

### ***New software***

This year, SJPL is working with Beanstack as the online host of Summer Learning. Beanstack is an online tool used for facilitating reading programs, and SJPL currently uses it for the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. For Summer Learning, the software will allow readers to track books and minutes, read online, and earn badges along the way.

For families who may not have access to computers or internet at home, SJPL will continue to offer a paper log where participants may track activities, as well as designated computers for those who want to enter progress online.

### ***Programs and Events***

The self-directed activities of Summer Learning are complemented by an array of in-person events and activities for students and families. A variety of programs will be presented by partners and outside agencies like the Bay Area Discovery Museum, City of San José Department of Transportation, SJPL Works, and SaveNature.org. SJPL staff will present a range of STEAM programs, including String Art, coding without computers, kinetic sculptures, and Structural Engineering challenges for all age groups. The Library will be hosting many coding programs with the help of amazing volunteers as part of the Coding 5K Challenge, including two full-day coding camps at Joyce Ellington and Educational Park Libraries that will run for one week at each site.

In addition, the 10th annual Graphic Novel Making Contest will be held from June 1-July 3, 2018. Amateur authors/illustrators in four age groups are encouraged to create an eight-page comic book. A panel of Library staff and comic industry professionals will judge entries using a scoring rubric covering the following: overall story, originality, creativity, and illustrations. The awards ceremony will be held at the Seven Trees Branch Library on Saturday, August 25, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. This contest is sponsored by San José Public Library, San Jose Museum of Art, TRY Japan Culture Group, Sakura of America, Oni Press, and Action Lab Entertainment.

### ***Summer Lunch***

Studies have shown that nutrition is directly connected to the academic success of youth. 30% of young people in Santa Clara County are living in food insecure households. For the fifth year, SJPL will seek to address this need by offering free summer meals.

Public libraries throughout California (and the nation) have responded to community food insecurity by incorporating healthy food distribution into summer programs. In order to offer healthy food and nutrition education this summer, SJPL will be partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank, Silicon Valley YMCA, and Revolution Foods to provide healthy lunches to children five days per week from June 11- August 10, 2018. Lunches will be served at the following library branches:

- Biblioteca Latinoamericana
- Dr. Roberto Cruz–Alum Rock
- Educational Park
- Edenvale
- Hillview
- Joyce Ellington
- Tully Community

Locations for the program are selected based on percentage of low income residents and individuals eligible for the free and reduced-price meals program in their service area. In 2017, the summer meals program served 14,342 meals to children and adults at seven locations. This year, the goal is to reach 250 individuals per day across the seven locations. Additional partners for this project include Code for San José, the Stanford School of Medicine, and California Summer Meal Coalition.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

This is an informational Library report to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee, and updates about any aspect of the program will be provided upon request.

/s/  
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Director, Library Department

For questions, please contact Vidya Kilambi, Division Manager, at (408) 808-2151.