



STATE OF VERMONT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Appropriations
From: Senate Committee on Education
Date: February XX, 2021
Subject: Appropriations requested in the next round of appropriations

We are writing to request the following:

Support students and families so they have a safe, restorative summer, and one that assists students in transitioning back to school and addresses possible academic deficits

1. Direct \$500,000.00 to support a collaboration between the Agency of Education and the Department of Health to educate parents on the signs of depression and suicide and to provide information and resources for assistance.
2. Direct \$500,000.00 to the Agency of Education and the Department of Health to make certain that children and families have access to nutritious foods throughout the summer.
3. Direct the Agency of Education to instruct school districts and supervisory unions to address the needs of students who have been truant during the pandemic and integrate them into a supportive school culture.
4. Direct \$4 million for the universal afterschool grants to create new programs, enhance existing ones, and to provide grants for children to attend summer and afterschool programs.

150 Summer Connection Grants:

- 150 programs for kindergarten-grade 12, estimated 50 children/youth for each program.
- \$10,000.00 per program for 150 programs = \$1.5 million (grants of \$5,000.00-\$20,000.00).
- Grants targeted to existing afterschool and summer programs to collaborate with schools to support learning, behavioral health needs, and parent and family involvement of vulnerable student populations.

- Funding can be used for transportation, staffing, supplies, enrichment activities, and professional development.

Summer Partnership Expansion Grants:

- Build new programs where needed.
- 50 comprehensive summer programs in communities that do not currently have 21C funding or an established, low-cost summer program.
- \$50,000.00/program for 50 programs = \$2.5 million.

Proposed Requirements for 150 Summer Connection Grants and Summer Partnership Expansion Grants:

- must be a school, non-profit organization, town recreation center, or licensed childcare center closely partnered with a school;
- must offer programming at low or no-cost to parents/families;
- must run a minimum of five weeks full day (eight hours/day) for five days/week;
- must provide healthy snacks and meals;
- must integrate SEL and STEM programming;
- must include outdoor activities and enrichment; and
- should use qualified instructors to support at least two hours/day of math and literacy.

4. Address the shortage of teachers and mental health professionals by streamlining their licensure process and bringing retired teachers back into classrooms.

Improve access to higher education

Expand the McClure Foundation’s successful work last year with an investment of \$1 million to provide a free class this summer or fall at any of the Vermont State Colleges for high school seniors and any Vermont resident who is seeking to transition to a new career or to enhance their work or academic skills.

Improve literacy

The SBAC test is taken every year by Vermont students in grades three through eight. Only 50 percent of third graders were deemed proficient in the 2019 ELA SBAC, which measures student abilities in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research and inquiry. This proficiency percentage is between 50 and 57 percent for the remaining grades. We request an appropriation of \$500,000.00 for the Agency of Education to distribute funds to school districts and supervisory unions for literacy training for teachers.