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San Francisco

Grade Level Reading Campaign

Our Story

City wide Initiatives

San Francisco has coalesced around the Grade Level Reading Campaign and has adopted Reading at Grade Level by Third Grade as a bench mark in many of our local city initiatives including Mission Promise Neighborhoods, PreK to Third Grade Partnership, Bridge to Success and Our Children, Our City: Renewing Public Investments in San Francisco's Future Campaign.

Summer Learning

In preparation for the Summer of 2013, The San Francisco Extended Learning Council's work group collected aggregate-level data from the public agencies in San Francisco that operate or fund out of school time programs for K-8 students and collected information from state-licensed providers. With this data, the group was able to work with the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families to create maps of programs operating in summer 2013 and in the 2013-14 school year. The maps indicate the type of program – including those funded by San Francisco Unified School District's afterschool office and early education department, the city's Department of Children Youth and Families, the city's Recreation and Parks Department and licensed, fee-based providers. The Council also developed several resources available to programs.

SAN FRANCISCO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

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- The Summer Quality Assessment tool and action plan template free and available for program and staff to use and improve programs.
<http://sfsummerlearningnetwork.blogspot.com/p/program-quality-resources.html>
- The Afterschool for All and Summer **Resource Guide** included a chapter on summer with program ideas and tools *specifically* for summer programs, and information about using the above assessment tool:
<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2m3fa5V7ggHUmKxVW01Rk9NYW8/edit>

San Francisco celebrated Summer Learning Day on June 21. Programs across the city hosted summer learning day activities. Activities included open houses, hosting guest speakers, or having a summer learning fair. More than 13,000 young people benefited from the city's summer learning opportunities

School Readiness

Reframing our school readiness work on the principles of the Grade Level Reading Campaign, San Francisco's investment in our city's Universal Preschool for All Program made a big difference for children. An independent evaluation of 1000 incoming kindergartners, showed that upon entering kindergarten, children from Preschool for All programs outperformed other children by large margins on academic and social-emotional skills critical to school success.

- Early literacy: PFA children had a 3-month advantage over children who had not participated in PFA in identifying letters and words – important precursors to reading.
- Early mathematics: PFA children had a 3-4-month advantage in counting and simple addition and subtraction.
- Self-regulation: PFA children had big advantages in their abilities to listen, follow directions, focus, and control their impulses. PFA children showed gains that were five times greater than gains observed in a study of kindergartners in Oregon.
- Spanish-speaking children: PFA appears to make an even bigger impact for children from Spanish-speaking backgrounds, especially on self-regulation skills.

School Attendance

Partnering with *Attendance Works*, San Francisco's city departments, School District, CBO's and families participated celebrating School Attendance Month at a forum on Chronic Absenteeism on September 9, 2013. The goals for the forum included:

- To focus the City's attention on Early Chronic Absence
- To kick off Attendance Awareness month
- To share out the most current info and data on attendance
- To share success stories of addressing attendance issues
- To provide a call to action for participants to address attendance issues

San Francisco Unified School District's Superintendent kicked off the meeting that was attended by over 80 people.

Attendance Works also worked with local San Francisco stakeholders in developing a training program for families. By the end of the training participants would be able to:

- Understand what chronic absence is and why it matters.
- Explain chronic absence and how it is different from truancy in at least 2-3 different ways to different audiences including parents/guardians, students, and school staff.
- Ask the right questions to identify reasons students are missing school.
- Demonstrate healthy responses for families with attendance challenges, including: responding with empathy, offering support, knowing how to find resources. Participants will develop skills to be ready to handle anger and defensiveness and to challenge in a calm and professional manner.
- Understand what happens around attendance in school sites and at the district level and be able to help families navigate processes and leverage in-school resources.
- Help families connect to out-of-school resources that can improve attendance.

Plans are being made to roll out these trainings in 2013-14 at the city's family resource centers and preschools.

The city of San Francisco has embraced the framework of the Grade Level Reading Campaign. We have 3 strong coalitions addressing the areas of School Readiness, Extended Learning and School Attendance. Partnerships include public and private funders, the Library, our school district, community based organizations and families. Data is being collected on the outcomes of these efforts. Our challenge has been connecting the three coalitions without a Grade Level Reading Campaign coordinator. Fortunately one of our local foundations is willing to accept a proposal to fund the effort. A proposal will be submitted this Fall.

Submitted by Laurel Kloomok
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 Grade Level Reading Campaign Lead