

CA3 Strategic Messaging

Revised March 2 2024

Main Message:

Preserve California's historic \$4B investment toward universal afterschool and summer school. It's fortifying expanded learning opportunities and transforming lives in our most underserved communities.

Supporting Message #1:

These aren't just programs; they're lifelines—boosting Average Daily Attendance and academics, tackling hunger, and providing essential care to help students and their families thrive. We must safeguard these resources to keep nurturing our future.

- [Expanded learning programs](#) boost students' reading and math performance, increase school day attendance and graduation rates, reduce childhood hunger, and provide social-emotional support.
 - Expanded learning programs include before school, after school, summer, and intersession learning and enrichment programs that are meant to complement, not replicate, learning activities in the regular school day and school year.
 - 80% of young people's waking [hours](#) are spent out of school.
 - These programs help give students access to a variety of academic and social enrichment, with a focus on including students that are furthest from opportunity.
- Participants of expanded learning/afterschool programs gain positive benefits in interrelated outcome areas — academic, social-emotional health, and wellness.
 - Students who participate in expanded learning programs average 7-8.5 more school days than non-participating elementary and middle school students and 14.5 more school days than non-participating high school students, [according to CDE](#).
 - Without this gain in attendance, grantee schools may have lost over \$183K in ADA funding from the state.
 - [A study](#) of California's expanded learning programs found 7th, 9th, and 11th grade participants outscored non-participants on protective factors —such as caring relationships, school connectedness, and meaningful opportunities to participate and contribute – that promote social-emotional health and wellness.
- As families struggle with the costs and logistics of child care, expanded learning programs make it easier for working families to access high-quality care when school is not in session.
 - For the average low-income family, child care [costs](#) consume 35% of their income — five times more than what is considered affordable.
 - Families are eager for these free, high-quality programs. After the influx in funding, the waitlist for San Diego Unified's afterschool program [dropped](#) from 4,600 to 1,000 in eight months.
- Expanded learning programs strengthens the talent pipeline for schools and fosters a diverse workforce, rooted in the communities they serve.
 - Prior to the pandemic, publicly funded expanded learning programs employed 30,000+ professionals statewide; with ELO-P implementation, exponentially more.

- Nationally, 78% of the staff identify as people of color, 72% identify as female, and most are under the age of 40.
- Of the largest publicly funded afterschool providers in California, 90% are bilingual in English and Spanish, and 78% live in the community they serve.
- The majority of expanded learning program staff are interested in careers in teaching, afterschool leadership, education administration, or school counseling; however when asked, 68% say they want improved pay and/or benefits at their current job.

Supporting Message #2:

State leaders, policymakers, and voters have sent a clear message: prioritize investments in expanded learning programs. These investments aren't just working; they're essential. Let's ensure it continues to uplift those who need it most.

- After the devastating effects of the pandemic on children and families, the Legislature and Governor championed the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) to help support students most impacted by the pandemic.
 - This historic and unprecedented \$4B investment was part of the state's most significant effort to transform education with community schools, universal pre-kindergarten, and universal free meals. It has already reduced disparities by giving more children access to high-quality expanded learning programs and parents greater financial freedom and employment opportunities.
 - It accounts for up to \$2,750 [per student](#) for expanded learning in underserved communities.
- Voters overwhelmingly support afterschool and summer learning programs.
 - 80% of voters [surveyed](#) said they wanted their newly elected federal, state and local leaders to provide MORE funding for afterschool programs.
 - 83% said that afterschool and summer programs are an absolute necessity for their community.

Supporting Message #3:

Every child deserves a chance to succeed. Expanded learning is that chance, especially for those facing the steepest obstacles. To close the opportunity gap, we need unwavering support and investment in these programs. The future of our children, and our state, depends on it.

- Even before the state's ELO-P expansion, schools with expanded learning funding have predominantly served economically disadvantaged students and students of color, [according to CDE](#).
 - This accounts for 1 in 4 homeless students, 84% who are socio-economically disadvantaged, 9/10 children of color, and 33% who are English language learners.
 - These programs extend the school calendar by more than 60%, giving low-income students more access to mentorship and learning time of which upper and middle class students have 6,000 more hours by the time they reach 6th grade — 4,000 of those hours are spent in expanded learning programs.
- It's essential that these funds are used to provide additional learning time and enrichment

programming in a safe place for kids after the school day ends, especially for those who would not otherwise have access.

- There's still a need for capacity building to ensure these programs are high-quality.
- In the face of increased inflation and cost of living, program providers are struggling to keep and find talented staff without being able to offer competitive wages.
- Nationally, for every 1 child in an afterschool program, [3 more](#) are waiting to get in.
- ELO-P is prioritized for students in Transitional Kindergarten through sixth grade. Less than two percent of total state funding for expanded learning is dedicated to high school students, which leaves middle and high school students with limited access to these crucial programs.
- Research shows that middle and high school students who participate in expanded learning are more likely to graduate, less likely to become involved in the justice system, and score better on standardized tests.
- Students in expanded learning also have better attendance than their peers who are not in programs. Given the chronic absenteeism crisis across this state, it is more important than ever that all students have access to enrichment opportunities outside of traditional school hours.