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For Immediate Release

July 29, 2010

Media Release

Senators Mark DeSaulnier and Gil Cedillo Visit Summer Enrichment Program to Bring Attention to Crucial Learning Opportunities for Low- Income Children

Legislators and Professor on State Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment to Visit LA's BEST Summer Programming

Los Angeles, CA: Senator Mark DeSaulnier (District 07-Concord) chairs the State Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment. Senator Gil Cedillo (District 22-Los Angeles) also sits on the Summer Task Force. On Friday, July 30, the legislators will tour the LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program to draw attention to the importance of summer programming's impact on child safety, health, education and enrichment.

This year, with state and local agencies across California facing dire budget cuts, innovative and resourceful summer programs such as LA's BEST fill a crucial gap in the absence of traditional summer school programs, which have been largely eliminated due to lack of funds. Community summer learning programs provide enriching experiences that help children avoid summer learning loss. LA's BEST and similar programs offer academics, literacy, nutrition and physical fitness, and outdoor activities during the summer.

The Long- term Effects of Summer Learning Loss on Low- income Children and Youth

All children need summer learning opportunities in order to stay on course academically. The debilitating effect of an absence of summer learning and enrichment is often referred to as *summer slide*. Summer slide is characterized by measurable learning loss and significant achievement gaps between lower- and higher-income children. Reading loss is a telling example. Research has shown low-income children to be nearly three grade equivalents behind their more affluent peers in reading by the end of the fifth grade as a result of summer learning loss. These gaps in achievement result in low-income youth being less likely to graduate high school, to enter college or to be successful later in life.

More

Summer learning loss is a timely and important issue with national scope and local consequences. The current August 2, 2010 edition of TIME Magazine features an insightful cover article on the topic, "The Case Against Summer Vacation," by David Von Drehle.

For more information on summer learning and enrichment please visit the Partnership website at www.partnerforchildren.org.

About the Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment

The State Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment was created in 2008 after the passing of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 134, authored by California Senator Mark DeSaulnier and sponsored by Partnership for Children and Youth.

The goal of the Task Force is to build awareness about the gap in structured learning and enrichment opportunities for low-income children in the summertime. Chaired by Senator DeSaulnier, the Task Force will deliver a set of recommendations in November 2010 to Governor Schwarzenegger, the Legislature and the State Superintendent of Education on what the state's role should be in addressing the summer gap. For more information about the Summer Task Force, please visit the Partnership website at www.partnerforchildren.org.

Details of the Friday, July 30 Site Visit

WHO:

Senator Mark DeSaulnier, California District 7; Senator Gil Cedillo, California District 22; Assemblymember Kevin DeLeon, California District 45; Richard Groper, Ph.D., California State University, Los Angeles; Jennifer Peck, Executive Director, Partnership for Children and Youth; Carla Sanger, President & CEO, LA's BEST; and LA's BEST students at Leo Politi Elementary School

WHEN:

July 30, 2010
2:30 p.m.

VISUAL:

Senators Mark DeSaulnier and Gil Cedillo, Assemblymember Kevin DeLeon and Dr. Richard Groper touring LA's BEST after school activities and interacting with LA's BEST students

WHERE:

Leo Politi Elementary School
2481 West 11th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90006
*parking available on the street

More

Critical Need for Summer Learning and Enrichment Opportunities in California

- California parents consistently cite summer as the most difficult time to ensure that their children have productive things to do (Public Agenda, 2010).
- The supply of low-cost summer programs in California is extremely limited relative to the number of low-income children (National Summer Learning Association, 2009).
- Summer school is currently the largest provider of summer programming in California, but budget cuts have had a devastating effect on program availability (NSLA, 2009).
- A study of five California cities revealed that nearly 75% of children and youth are not served by the most common providers of summer programming (NSLA, 2009).
- Research spanning 100 years shows that children experience learning loss when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer (White, 1906; Entwisle & Alexander, 1992; Cooper et al., 1996, Downey et al., 2004).
- The summer achievement gap affects low-income children disproportionately. Unequal summer learning opportunities during elementary school years are responsible for about two-thirds of the ninth-grade achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al., 2007).
- Most children gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school for summer. Summer gains are especially large for African American and Hispanic children (von Hippel et al., 2007). In California, nearly a third (32%) of 5th graders are overweight or obese (kidsdata.org; California Department of Education, 2009).

About LA's BEST

LA's BEST - Better Educated Students for Tomorrow - is a nationally recognized after school education, enrichment and recreation program serving 28,000 children with the greatest needs and fewest resources throughout the City of Los Angeles. LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program provides a safe haven for children ages 5 to 12 at 180 elementary school sites each day during the critical hours after school - at no cost to parents. Established in 1988, LA's BEST is a partnership including the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District and the private sector. For more information, please visit www.lasbest.org.

About 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 primary clients of our work are those institutions that provide critical support services to poor children - including schools and school districts, community-based agencies and local governments. The ultimate beneficiaries are the children and their families. For more information, please visit www.partnerforchildren.org.