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Summer academic and enrichment programs to support children and families are being formulated to help mitigate the negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and address learning inequities.

Making Up for Lost School Time

Grants to support grass roots programs

The Oregon Community Foundation has laid out plans to administer \$40 million of state-funded grants for community organizations to provide summer enrichment activities for K-12 aged students, such as day camps and outdoor programs as well as \$1.2 million earmarked for parent-child summer programming for families with young children.

The move announced last week is part of a substantial investment by the State of Oregon to address learning inequities and help mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Oregon children and families.

“The pandemic has caused widespread learning loss and social-emotional setbacks with youth, while also amplifying learning

disparities across racial and socioeconomic lines,” says Lisa Bermudez of Bend Science Station. “The expertise, training and connections of OCF will help organizations to successfully re-engage youth, particularly marginalized youth, and make up for lost learning this summer.”

OCF will administer grants for two different allocations of state-funding for summer educational and enrichment programs:

The K-12 Summer Learning Grants will prioritize community-based programs for underserved youth and families that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The grants will be available to public and nonprofit organizations that provide community-based programming including: Support enrichment programs for learning outside of the classroom, support arts, sports, mentoring, workforce development, science, museum education and many other indoor and outdoor activ-

ities.

A priority to programs that serve K-12 aged youth from communities of color, youth from low-income families, and youth living in under-resourced rural communities.

“National and local data shows that this programming helps build a sense of belonging, develop critical social emotional skills, and promote greater school attendance and engagement,” says Belle Cantor, the Oregon Community Foundation’s senior program officer for education. “The trauma of school disruption as well as living with an elevated level of anxiety and uncertainty can have long-term negative impacts on children. This is magnified for children who already experience racial inequity.”

OCF will accept, review, and award grants on a rolling basis throughout the spring to ensure programs have funds in

hand to begin planning and implementation. OCF will seek the advice of a diverse, community-based advisory committee throughout the granting process to ensure that the program is meeting community priorities.

The Early Childhood Summer Support Grants will support enrichment programs for learning by providing services for approximately 600 children (from birth to 5 years of age) and families. These grants will help deliver 12 weeks of parent-child summer programming, including group classes and activities that offer social and learning opportunities for young children and their parents, play groups and kindergarten readiness programs.

Application forms and more information can be found on the OCF website at oregoncf.org/grants-and-scholarships/grants/k-12-summer-learning-grant-program