

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Grants Totaling \$3.2 Million Target Student Learning Loss, Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Redwood City — The County of San Mateo today announced that a fresh wave of awarded grant funds will allow more than 2,500 local students to attend enrichment programs this summer.

“This is a huge victory for a group that after two years of COVID really needs a win: students from families with low incomes,” said Don Horsley, president of the Board of Supervisors. “These grants will provide urgently needed opportunities for students whose families were typically hit the hardest financially during the pandemic.”

The \$3,217,500 in new grants comes from the federal American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, a stimulus package to help state and local governments overcome issues caused by the pandemic. Locally, the Board of Supervisors set support for children and families as a priority for ARPA funds.

In all, the County is funding 42 providers that operate 72 programs.

Chosen providers were selected to ensure all areas of the county were represented (north, central, south and coast) and met criteria that included consideration of equity, program services and the ability to provide hands-on learning experiences, among other factors.

“In conversations with educators, early learning providers and after-school program directors, staff heard that many students, especially those in kindergarten through second grade, are behind in the development of their social and emotional skills due to isolation and distance learning during the pandemic,” said Assistant County Executive Officer Peggy Jensen, who is helping to lead the County’s pandemic recovery effort.

“When asked what could be done, there was unanimous agreement that summer camps and other supervised group activities would be the fastest and best way to address this issue,” Jensen said.

This theme was echoed by grant recipients.

In addition to summer enrichment, “We’ll also be able to provide counseling and mental health supports during the summer, which is so important for students who have gone through 2 years of pandemic-related challenges and trauma,” said Ann Waterman Roy from the Ravenswood City School District.

Shell Cleave, founder of [Sea Hugger](#), a nonprofit organization based in Half Moon Bay, said, “During the shutdown period, we developed Camp Sea Hugger to help families who were struggling with distance learning and working from home. It was a big success and we loved seeing kids learn about our coastal ecosystem and how to protect it by being outside in the element and through playful activities.”

Following the selection process, recipients received the funds this past week. Other grant recipients include Casa Circulo Cultural, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, the City of Pacifica, San Francisco 49ers Academy, Live In Peace, Inc. and the City of South San Francisco Parks and Recreation Department.

A full list of grant recipients is available at on the [County’s website](#) and those interested in enrollment should contact programs directly for more information.

The Board of Supervisors on Feb. 8, 2022, directed \$10 million in ARPA funding toward programs and services aimed at helping the most vulnerable residents whose health or finances or both were impacted by COVID-19.

The \$3.2 million in grants is among the \$10 million package that also includes funds toward economic recovery, housing and other services. [View the staff report](#).

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