

Submitter: Courtney Snead  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB531

On behalf of the families and youth we serve, as well as our elected board of directors, please accept this testimony supporting SB 531. We received \$120,000 in summer 2022 from this program and offered seven weeks of youth camps, including swim lessons, downtown teen scene programming in partnership with local businesses, and partnered with the 509J school district to offer K-5 swim lessons during their 3-week summer school program. Swimming is a critical skill in a rural community with ponds, irrigation canals, and lakes, and offering this program to all children across the school district can be a challenge, given the large geographic nature of the communities we serve. In addition to the programming offered, we were able to provide scholarships to families and communicate with many in their native language by having all of our summer program materials translated into Spanish. Our permanent tax rate is \$0.20/1,000, so it is difficult to expand services to meet the needs of the communities we serve without outside funding.

This grant program is critical for closing opportunity gaps for students who are traditionally underserved, particularly from a socio-economic standpoint, as it relates to recreation and healthy lifestyle-building activities. We are hopeful that the program will continue, and that collaboration between K-12 and community-based organizations, like our recreation district, can be supported by funding that is dedicated to the development of the whole child, of which recreation is a critical component, with the goal of impacting these students for the rest of their lives so they can be healthy, well-rounded, contributing members of our communities.