

Year 2000 Summer School in South Carolina Program Description and Costs

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Summary of Major Findings

This summary presents the major findings of a recently completed study of the state's year 2000 elementary and middle school summer programs conducted by the South Carolina Educational Policy Center in collaboration with the Education Oversight Committee, the South Carolina State Department of Education, and the Instructional Leaders' Roundtable. A summer school survey sent to all 86 instructional leaders resulted in responses from 79 districts (92%). Of the 79 districts, 74 provided a summer school program in 2000. The major findings include the following:

- Summer school was provided for 59,509 students in grades K-8. Students in grades K-2 represented 17% of the total students served.
- Students served in grades 3-8 represent approximately 36% of the students scoring below basic on the 1999 PACT.
- The total number of days and the number of hours per day varied considerably for summer school programs. The average program length was 18.9 days (range of 10 to 31 days). The average number of hours per day was 4.5 (range of 3 to 7 hours).
- The cost per student (including instruction and transportation) was \$345.87 as an average for the districts reporting cost data. If all 86 districts had conducted summer school programs, the cost would have been approximately \$21.3 million.
 - The 69 districts reporting instructional cost data spent \$16.2 million, an average district cost of \$306.41 per student.
 - Transportation costs averaged \$39.46 per student for the 62 districts reporting transportation costs. The 62 districts spent a total of \$1.8 million for transportation.
- The FY 2000 allocation for EAA summer school and comprehensive remediation funded only one-third of the districts' summer school costs.
- To meet their FY 2000 summer school costs, districts also used other sources of funding including Academic Assistance (20%), General Funds (16%), Title I (12%), and 17 other sources including Goals 2000, Century 21 Learning grants, and School Innovation.
- The FY 2000 appropriation for EAA summer school and comprehensive remediation totaled \$18 million or \$69.25 for each student in grades 3-8 scoring below basic on the 1999 PACT. The current FY 2001 recommendation of \$21 million from the House Ways and Means Committee represents \$149.41 for each student below basic on the 2000 PACT.
- The projected cost for a 4 week program in 2001 would be \$21.5 million based on the 2000 summer school cost data (grades 3-8 only). Funding a 6 week program similar to those offered in Chicago and New York would require \$31.2 million.
- Almost 80% of the instructional leaders indicated that additional funding was needed to implement strategies to improve the effectiveness of summer school. Funding was requested to expand the program, reduce class size, provide appropriate salary to attract the best teachers, conduct pre and post testing of students, acquire effective curriculum, purchase manipulatives and instructional supplies, and conduct professional development for teachers.