

# Benchmarking Summer Program Fee Structures

Prepared for Arlington Public Schools

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In the following report, Hanover Research examines summer school program fee structures at Arlington Public Schools' national and regional peer public school districts.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

This report examines summer school program structures at school districts similar to Arlington Public Schools. Specifically, we examine fee structures for summer remediation and enrichment courses, registration processes, and staffing makeup of summer school programs at each district. In conducting our research, Hanover Research contacted over 25 school districts through both phone and email over the course of two weeks. Ultimately, we were able administer the summer program survey to five school districts located in Virginia and in three school districts across the country. The following school districts are included in our analysis:

### Virginia Peers

- Henrico County Public Schools
- Chesterfield County Public Schools
- Norfolk Public Schools
- Portsmouth Public Schools
- Prince William County Schools

### National Peers

- Paradise Valley Unified School District (Phoenix, AZ)
- McKinney Independent School District (McKinney, TX)
- Racine Unified School District (Racine, WI)

Our report is divided into two sections. In the first section, we review survey responses provided by Virginia school districts, while in the second, we review survey responses provided by school districts located outside of Virginia. The key findings from our analysis are summarized below. Additionally, a summary table of key information collected through our primary research efforts is included on pages 6 and 7, following the key findings.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **School districts in Virginia generally do not charge students for elementary or middle school summer remediation courses**, since the state of Virginia reimburses for all remediation courses that do not award credit at these levels. Some Virginia districts indicated that the state reimbursement covers their costs entirely, while others noted that the state reimbursements were insufficient to completely recover costs associated with these programs.
- **Most examined districts charge high school students for remediation courses, with fees ranging from \$200 to \$450 per credit.** A majority of high school summer school programs are self-supporting, and generate adequate tuition revenues to recover costs. Only one examined school district (Portsmouth Public Schools) provides summer high school remediation courses free of cost.
- **A vast majority of reviewed school districts charge tuition fees for summer enrichment programs.** These fees are usually set to help offset the costs of other summer programs that may not be fully covered by tuition fees or state or district subsidies.

- **Four school districts offer tuition assistance for low-income students.** For the most part, these districts provide scholarship funds to low-income students on a discretionary basis. Only one reviewed district (McKinney ISD) offers a sliding payment scale based on income, and Henrico County Schools is the only district to offer a payment plan for summer program tuition. None of the reviewed districts charge a registration fee in addition to program fees.
- **In general, summer school programs are staffed by existing, regular, full-time teachers.** All examined districts are typically able to fill their summer school positions without relying on large numbers of outside, contracted staff. Summer school teachers are paid a standard hourly rate regardless of experience or tenure, which ranges from \$25 to \$39 among reviewed districts.
- **Registration for summer school programs is primarily conducted on a decentralized basis, as this option is generally the most convenient for students and parents.** However, a few districts choose to offer a central registration process in addition to the standard decentralized model.

## **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

The table on the following page provides a visual summary of the results contained in the following report. Comprehensive information for each school district can be found in the survey response analysis that comprises the remainder of this report.

**Figure 1: Summer Program Fee Structures**

DISTRICT NAME	SUMMER PROGRAMS	FEES	ENROLLMENT DEADLINE	TUITION ASSISTANCE	REIMBURSED BY STATE	REGISTRATION	STAFF	PAY RATE
<b>Arlington Public Schools (VA)</b>	Remediation: K-12; Enrichment: K-8 and High School New Work for credit	<b>Remediation:</b> \$100 (\$56, reduced) for residents; \$1,110 for K-5 non-residents; \$903-\$1806 for 6-8 non-residents; \$660-\$2638 for 9-12 non-residents <b>Enrichment:</b> \$546 (\$94, reduced) for K-8 residents; \$488 (\$70, reduced) for 9-12 residents; \$2,722 for non-residents (New Work for Credit only)	April for K-8 enrichment and HS New Work, May for Pre-K – 5 remedial, June for secondary remedial	Reduced fees for Arlington residents based on income	Yes for K-12 remedial programs (but reimbursement does not cover Arlington’s costs)	Mostly decentralized; however centralized secondary late registration and centralized for non-APS students	83% APS teachers, 17% contracted	Set hourly rate of \$32.50 (though APS teachers earn their individual hourly rate if higher than \$32.50)
<b>Henrico County Public Schools (VA)</b>	Remediation: 1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: K-8	<b>Remediation:</b> Generally no charge, though some programs cost \$180 for residents and \$430 for non-residents <b>Enrichment:</b> \$85-\$150	June	Yes, scholarship and payment plan	Yes	Decentralized	Almost all full-time staff	Set hourly rate
<b>Chesterfield County Public Schools (VA)</b>	Remediation: pre-k-12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: K-12	<b>Remediation:</b> \$250 for high school; all others free <b>Enrichment:</b> \$75-\$225	Late May – Mid June	Yes, scholarship	Yes	Decentralized	80% full-time staff, 15% contracted	Set hourly rate

DISTRICT NAME	SUMMER PROGRAMS	FEES	ENROLLMENT DEADLINE	TUITION ASSISTANCE	REIMBURSED BY STATE	REGISTRATION	STAFF	PAY RATE
Norfolk Public Schools (VA)	Remediation: 3 <sup>rd</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: 3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> \$200 for regular high school courses, \$50 for high school credit recovery; free for elementary/middle <b>Enrichment:</b> \$120-\$175	Mid to late June	Yes, scholarship	Yes	Decentralized	All full-time	Set hourly rate, \$28.56
Portsmouth Public Schools (VA)	Remediation: pre-K-12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: pre-K-8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> Free <b>Enrichment:</b> \$35	Late May to early June	No	Yes	Decentralized and centralized	All full-time	Set hourly rate, \$25
Prince William County Schools (VA)	Remediation: K-12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: 2 <sup>nd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> \$450 for high school, free for elementary <b>Enrichment:</b> \$200	June	No, working on policy	Yes	High school: centralized Elementary: decentralized	All full-time	Set hourly rate, \$39
Paradise Valley Unified School District (AZ)	Remediation: 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: pre-k-8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> \$195 <b>Enrichment:</b> \$38 a day	May - June	No	No	Centralized	85% full time, 15% contracted	Set hourly rate
McKinney Independent School District (TX)	Remediation: 1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: 1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> \$50-\$220 for district students; \$500 for non-district students <b>Enrichment:</b> \$75-\$150	June	Yes, sliding scale based on income	No	Decentralized and centralized	All full-time	Set hourly rate, \$30
Racine Unified School District (WI)	Remediation: 1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Enrichment: 1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remediation:</b> Free <b>Enrichment:</b> Free	June	N/A	Yes	Decentralized and centralized	98% full time, 2% contracted	Set hourly rate

## SECTION I: VIRGINIA PEERS

### HENRICO COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) in central Virginia enrolls nearly 50,000 students, approximately 2,200 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 2,619 teachers in 80 schools across the county.<sup>1</sup>

Henrico County Public Schools offers remediation programs for students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, along with enrichment programs for students in pre-kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Enrichment programs are primarily geared toward elementary school students; however enrichment programs are offered to middle school students through the district's career and technical education programming. The district does not offer enrichment programs for high school students.<sup>2</sup>

#### *FEE STRUCTURE*

John Carrol, Educational Specialist for Student Activities and Summer Programs at Henrico County Public Schools, indicates that the district **sets its fees for summer programs using historical fee levels**. Since all summer school programs are self-supporting—meaning that the district does not subsidize the costs required to run summer school programming—program fees must be set high enough to cover all program-related costs. As such, the summer school budgets are based on actual program costs (as opposed to budgeted costs). The budget for each year is projected using the previous year's budget, and by making necessary adjustments based on the number of students predicted to enroll and the number of free programs offered.<sup>3</sup>

Carrol feels that the current fee levels are appropriate, and are neither too high nor too low. He also indicates that cost has historically not deterred students and families from participating in summer programming, pointing to the fact that over 8,000 students participated in a summer program in the summer of 2013. The current fee schedule meets the district's needs by providing both high quality and accessible programs to its students.<sup>4</sup>

Fees for remediation courses depend on the student's grade level and on the reason for taking the course. Henrico County School District receives reimbursements from the State of Virginia instead of charging for remediation courses, though Carrol **does not believe that the reimbursement covers all costs associated with the programs**.<sup>5</sup> Fees for remediation courses are set according to the following schedule:

<sup>1</sup> "Public School District Database." National Center for Education Science. <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/>

<sup>2</sup> Carrol, J. Educational Specialist for Student Activities and Summer Programs, Henrico County Public Schools. Telephone Interview. September 17, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



- **Elementary school** remediation programs are designed to improve struggling students' SOL scores. These programs are provided free of charge to students who have been identified as needing additional instruction in core skills including reading, writing, and mathematics.
- **Middle school** remediation programs are offered both for free and at a set cost, depending on the type or remediation required. Free programs are offered to eligible students (identified by each school) in the areas of study skills and math supports. However, if students need to retake a course because they failed it in the regular academic year, then they must pay a fee of \$180.00 per course (for Henrico County residents), or \$430.00 (for a non-resident).
- **High school** remediation courses follow a similar fee structure to middle school courses.

The district does not use a sliding scale to set fees based on income; however, the central office does disperse scholarship funds to each school, which are then distributed to high-need students at the principal's discretion. Parents may also elect to use a payment plan to reduce the financial burden of taking a course.<sup>6</sup>

HCPS charges a flat rate of \$85 for most of its enrichment programs, though selected programs offered through the Career and Technical Center charge a fee of \$150.00. Scholarships are not typically provided for enrichment programs, but school principals may choose to use their school's summer program scholarship funds to cover a student's cost in special cases. Carrol is unsure of the percentage of students receive scholarships for either remedial or enrichment programs.<sup>7</sup>

### *REGISTRATION*

Registration for summer school programs at HCPS is conducted on a decentralized basis, allowing parents to register their children for programs at their home schools instead of their district's central office. Parents typically have to register their children by the end of school in early June, though there are two late registration dates toward the end of the month. Carrol believes that a decentralized registration allows for an improved registration process; any issues or difficulties in the registration process are more easily handled since parents have an existing relationship with their child's school.<sup>8</sup>

### *STAFFING*

Approximately 98 percent of all summer school instructors are regular school year teachers. The remaining two percent are only employed when the district cannot fill positions with its academic-year staff. Summer school teachers are paid using the same hourly rate regardless of experience, which is calculated as the average hourly rate for all teachers in the district.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## CHESTERFIELD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS) in central Virginia enrolls nearly 40,000 students, approximately 2,600 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 3,116 teachers in 65 schools throughout the county.<sup>10</sup>

The district currently offers summer programs for students in pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The pre-K program, defined as “a school readiness program”, invites all children who score below a certain standard on the kindergarten readiness assessment to attend. The state of Virginia does not reimburse the district for this program.<sup>11</sup>

Chesterfield County Public Schools offers remediation and enrichment courses for students in all grade levels K-12. Remedial programs for elementary and middle school students focus on the four core subject areas (science, English, math, and social studies), while high school students have the additional option of taking health and P.E. courses. The enrichment program offers courses in music and fine arts.<sup>12</sup>

Ceal Donohue, the Summer Session Program Manager, indicates that most students are enrolled in remedial programs to recover credits for a failed course. Approximately one-third of students at the high school level have elected to take a summer course to accelerate their studies.<sup>13</sup>

### *FEE STRUCTURE*

The state of Virginia reimburses CCPS for all remediation programs for elementary and middle school students. The state does not reimburse for high school summer school remediation tuition, so fees for remedial programs at this level are set so as to recover program costs. High school summer school programs are generally self-supporting, but the district does subsidize any additional costs associated with educating special needs students. For instance, if a student with an IEP requires an aide, the district will cover the cost of the aide. Although IEPs are not enforced in the summer, the district further hires a special education consultant at each summer school location to implement limited accommodations for those students with special needs.<sup>14</sup>

Donahue reports that summer school program fees are set using both actual and budgeted costs, and refers to the process as an “inexact science.” Although most summer school courses are able to recover their costs only when 15 students per class are enrolled, CCPS will sometimes choose to offer a course to fewer students if those students are at risk of not graduating.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> “Public School District Database.” Op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> Donahue, C. Summer Session Program Manager, Chesterfield County Public Schools. Telephone Interview. September 16, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

As previously mentioned, elementary and middle school students from the district are not charged for summer school remediation courses as long as they qualify for the state reimbursement program. Qualified students are referred because they have either failed the state assessment or received a D or F average in a course. Elementary and middle school students who wish to take a remediation course and do not qualify for reimbursement are charged \$180 and \$225, respectively, although paying students constitute only a small portion of total enrollment. Since high school summer school tuition is not reimbursed by the state, those students are charged a tuition fee of \$250. Fees for enrichment programs can vary based on the length of the program and the number of hours per week the program is offered, and range from \$75 to \$225. There is **no registration fee** separate from tuition costs for any summer programs.<sup>16</sup>

The district does not adjust summer school prices based on family income, and does not offer a scholarship fund for low-income students. Donohue believes that with increased financial support, more students would participate in summer school programs. However, she still considers the fees to be too low, noting that the district summer programs currently operate at a loss.

#### *REGISTRATION*

Registration for summer school programs is held on a decentralized basis at 42 different program sites throughout the district. The approximate deadline for elementary and middle school is between late May and early June. Because high school students usually enroll in summer school when they learn they have failed a course, the deadline for high school student registration is the last day of school, which typically falls around mid-June. CCPS also offers two late registration days in the end of June when parents receive their students' report cards. Donohue believes that the current registration process generally works well, and notes that the most frequent issue occurs when parents forget to register their children before arriving for the first day of summer school. The registration process does not determine how the district determines its fee schedule.<sup>17</sup>

#### *STAFFING*

Regular teaching staff makes up approximately 80 to 85 percent of summer school teachers; the remaining positions are supplemented with short-term contracted staff. All teachers are paid the same hourly rate of \$25, which was determined several years ago based on the average market rate at the time.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## NORFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) in southeastern Virginia enrolls 33,787 students, approximately 600 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 2,081 teachers in 55 schools throughout the county.<sup>19</sup>

Norfolk Public Schools offers summer remedial programs for students in grades 3-12 and summer enrichment programs for students in grades 3-8. Elementary and middle school students are able to take remedial courses to assist with basic skill building. In addition, elementary and middle school students may also enroll in one of two enrichment programs: one for gifted and talented students and another for those wishing to study art. Programs for high school students include credit recovery, remediation, and an acceleration program for Advanced Placement courses.<sup>20</sup>

### *FEE STRUCTURE*

As with most other districts in Virginia, middle school and elementary school remediation programs are provided free of cost to students. High school students must pay a fee of \$200 for each traditional classroom course, and \$50 for credit recovery outside a traditional classroom setting. Debra Rocke, Summer School Coordinator at Norfolk Public Schools, feels that these fees are “just right,” and indicates that these fees are based on budgeted costs. The district also offers scholarship funds for high school summer school to assist to students in need, which are dispersed through the central office and are generally reserved for students at risk of not graduating. However, Rocke indicates that only around 1 percent of students receive the reduced rate. There are no separate registration fees for any summer programs, but the district does charge a late fee of \$50 for any students registering after the deadline. All high school summer school programs are self-supporting, as the district does not subsidize the cost.

The district receives reimbursement funds from the state of Virginia for its elementary and middle school remediation programs, which are typically enough to cover the costs of the program completely. Rocke indicates that the district chooses to receive reimbursement funds rather than charging for tuition because they do not wish to prohibit families from participating based on cost.

Fees for elementary and middle school enrichment courses are \$120 for the art program and \$175 for the gifted and talented camp. High school students are charged \$50 for the Advanced Placement acceleration program. These fees are not based on a sliding scale, and there are no scholarship funds available for enrichment courses.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> “Public School District Database.” Op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Rocke, D. Summer School Coordinator, Norfolk Public Schools. Telephone Interview. September 19, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

*REGISTRATION*

Summer school registration at Norfolk Public Schools is decentralized at individual schools in the district. The deadline for enrichment programs is typically in mid-June, while remedial deadline is extended until the first day of summer school (approximately mid to late June). The fee schedule does not impact the registration process, as the enrichment deadlines are designed primarily for organization and planning purposes. Rocke believes that the registration process works well, but notes that the district modified its registration process for elementary schools in the summer of 2012.<sup>22</sup> Previously, students were directed to register at each of their home schools, each of which hosted their own summer program. In 2012, however, the district limited its programs (and registration sites) to just 14 locations to streamline the registration process and decrease costs associated with transportation.<sup>23</sup>

*STAFFING*

The summer school staff at Norfolk consists entirely of existing regular school year teachers. All teachers are paid with the same hourly rate of \$28.56, which is often greater than the salary earned during the school year for many teachers.

**PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Portsmouth Public Schools (PPS) in southeastern Virginia enrolls over 15,000 students, approximately 51 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 768 teachers in 28 schools throughout the region.<sup>24</sup>

Portsmouth Public Schools offers summer school programs from prekindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Elementary and middle school students have access to both remediation and enrichment courses, while the high school program is limited to remediation.<sup>25</sup>

*FEE STRUCTURE*

At Portsmouth Public Schools, nearly all remediation courses are provided to students free of charge. High school summer school is free for repeat subjects, but the district does charge a nominal fee for credit acceleration (students taking new subjects in the summer). Since the state of Virginia does not reimburse for credit-awarding classes at the high school level,<sup>26</sup> **the district subsidizes almost all of the costs associated with high school summer school.** Judith Eure, Adult Education coordinator at Portsmouth Public Schools, indicates that that district has chosen to subsidize the high school summer school costs to encourage students to participate in summer school and to improve graduation rates. The state of Virginia does reimburse the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "Public School District Database." Op. cit.

<sup>25</sup> Eure, J. Adult Education Coordinator, Portsmouth Public Schools. Telephone Interview. September 30, 2013.

<sup>26</sup> Eure clarifies that, by Portsmouth's interpretation of state regulations, neither "new" or "repeat" courses would be considered remedial "because if a student passes the class, they are awarded a unit of credit." Eure further notes that by her understanding of state regulations, "the state does not reimburse local divisions for any class that carries credit. Therefore, none of the high school classes we offer in Portsmouth receives state reimbursement."

district for elementary and middle school remediation. However, Eure indicates that the **reimbursements do not cover the total costs associated with running the program.**

The district charges students a nominal fee of \$35 for participation in its enrichment program in art and music. These fees are not set on either budgeted or actual costs. Instead, Eure chooses these costs based on a “gut feeling” of what she believes is affordable for the families in the district. The tuition fees do not completely cover the cost of the programs, which are also subsidized by the district.

There are no registration fees for any summer school course at Portsmouth County Schools, and there are no sliding scales for low-income students.<sup>27</sup>

### *REGISTRATION*

Registration for summer school programs is decentralized and held at individual schools. For elementary and middle school summer school, the district allocates a certain number of summer school spaces to each school. Schools then select the students from their school that qualify for and will attend summer school. This process typically takes place around the end of May through early in June.

High school registration consists of an early registration day in May at each high school, in addition to a one-day centralized registration day in June. Eure does not believe that the registration process impacts how it determines its fee schedule.<sup>28</sup>

### *STAFFING*

All summer school teachers at Portsmouth County Schools are regular full-time staff members who receive the same hourly pay rate of approximately \$25.

## **PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOLS**

Prince William County Schools (PWCS) in northern Virginia enrolls nearly 80,000 students, approximately 13,447 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 4,141 teachers in 86 schools throughout the county.<sup>29</sup>

Prince William County Schools offers remediation courses to students in grades K-12. In addition to remediation and credit recovery courses for all grade levels, the district also provides art enrichment courses for elementary and middle school students. Pre-kindergarten programs are not provided centrally through a district office; however, Renee Lacey, Director of Non-Traditional Education at Prince William County Schools, reports that a handful of schools have implemented their own pre-kindergarten programs.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> “Public School District Database.” Op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> Lacey, R. Director of Non-Traditional Education, Prince William County Schools. Telephone Interview. September 27, 2013.

### *FEE STRUCTURE*

Prince William County Schools does not charge for elementary and middle school remedial courses, as these programs are supported by the state of Virginia. Fees for the high school courses are set entirely to recover costs, since this program is entirely self-supporting and does not receive financial subsidies from the district or state. Lacey indicates that the budgets for these programs are based on actual costs, meaning that she shapes the summer school program based on her anticipated revenue, which takes into account both the program fees and the total number of students.<sup>31</sup>

Although the high school programs are relatively expensive compared to other reviewed districts at \$450 per credit, Lacey still believes that the fees are slightly too low, and describes the current program as “bare bones.” However, Lacey also hesitates to tax her community by increasing costs. As an aside, Lacey also notes that **transportation expenses constitute a significant portion of the summer school budget.**

There are no scholarship funds available for high school summer school courses, and the district does not have a sliding payment scale based on income. However, the PWCS plans to offer support for low-income students in the future and is currently writing a policy to that effect.<sup>32</sup>

Tuition fees for the art enrichment courses, which cover the cost of class and materials entirely, are \$200 for two weeks of instruction. No registration fees are charged in addition to program fees. These fees are not offered on a sliding scale based on income, nor does the district set aside scholarship funds from the central office to assist students in need. Instead, schools wishing to provide scholarships to low-income students must set aside funds from their own school budget. Although Lacey is unsure of the exact number of students on scholarships, she indicates that the number is likely below 5 percent.<sup>33</sup>

### *REGISTRATION*

Registration for high school summer school at Prince William County Schools is centralized at the district office, while elementary and middle school registration is decentralized. The deadline for summer school registration is typically the last day of school (usually in mid-June) for high school students, and in the beginning of June for elementary and middle school students. The office also offers a late registration day in the end of June for all students. Lacey does not believe that the registration process affects how the district determines its fee schedule, and believes that the current system works well because it is both organized and methodical.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

*STAFFING*

Summer school staff at Prince William County Schools is composed entirely of existing regular school year teachers. All teachers receive the same hourly rate of approximately \$39 an hour. All teachers are certified in the subject area and must have favorable evaluations to work in the summer school program.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



## SECTION II: NATIONAL PEERS

### PARADISE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Paradise Valley Unified School District (PVUSD) in Phoenix, Arizona enrolls over 33,100 students, approximately 1,898 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 1,771 teachers in 48 schools across Phoenix and Scottsdale.<sup>35</sup>

Summer programs at Paradise Valley are available for students at the pre-Kindergarten level through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Summer enrichment courses are provided for elementary and middle school students, but only high school students receive remediation courses. Pre-K programs include a summer camp in addition to more academically-oriented jump start program for Kindergarten.<sup>36</sup>

#### *FEE STRUCTURE*

Fees for enrichment programs are heavily influenced by local competition, as the district attempts to match its prices to area summer camps and classes. LeEllen Jordan, Community Education Tech III at Paradise Valley, indicates that the district is reluctant to raise prices, and tries to keep them consistent between years. Arizona does not allow districts the choice to be reimbursed for summer school. Although there is no sliding fee scale for families, parents do receive a reduced rate for any additional children they choose to enroll in summer school. There are no registration fees for either the enrichment or remedial summer school programs.<sup>37</sup>

When asked whether the fees are determined using actual program costs or budgeted program costs, Jordan noted that the district's priority is to keep fees consistent; therefore, the budget is actually determined based on program fees. She generally feels the fees are fair; the enrichment programs cost around \$38 a day and provide up to 12 hours a day of childcare.

High school remediation courses cost \$195 for each course, whether students are taking the course voluntarily or to recover credit for a failed class. Certain courses may charge an additional fee for specialty equipment or laboratory expenses. The district does not offer scholarships, a sliding scale based on income, or a discount for additional children for remediation courses.

<sup>35</sup> "Public School District Database." Op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Jordan, LeEllen. Community Education Tech III, Paradise Valley School District. Telephone Interview. September 17, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

## REGISTRATION

Summer registration for all programs is **centralized through the district’s Community Education office**. Registration for enrichment opens the week before spring break and lasts until the first day of the program. Registration for high school summer school begins in February and continues through late May for (the first session) or late June (for the second session.)<sup>38</sup> The office also allows late registration for high school as long as there are available spaces.

The registration process at Paradise Valley **does impact when fees are assessed for enrichment courses**, as the district generally looks to set a similar timeline to local summer programs. When asked to rate the district’s summer program registration process, Jordan responded that the process works well, but notes that they always look to make improvements. In the past, these improvement efforts have mostly been focused on simplifying the experience for parents, including making paperwork available online and opening their offices on a Saturday.<sup>39</sup>

## STAFFING

For summer camp, half of the staff consists 12-month employees (staff members who are not certified teachers and work in the district or at schools 12 months out of the year), and the other half consists of 9-month contracted employees (including graduated high school seniors and classroom aides). Regular school year teachers make up 85 percent of the staff for all other enrichment courses, while the remainder consists of externally-contracted staff. All teachers for enrichment courses get the same pay rate, regardless of experience or status as a contracted or full-time district employee. High school summer school teachers are all regular, full-time teaching staff members who receive a standard hourly rate.<sup>40</sup>

## MCKINNEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

McKinney Independent School District (MISD) enrolls over 24,422 students, approximately 2,084 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 1,688 teachers in 34 schools in McKinney, Texas.<sup>41</sup>

McKinney ISD offers remediation summer school programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, the district offers specialized summer camps for students ages 5-12. Optional academic courses are available for high school students and focus on standardized test preparation. In accordance with Texas state policy, McKinney is required to offer a remediation course for any student that does not meet the minimum standard on the standardized state exam. In addition to standards-related remediation, the district also provides opportunities for credit recovery and advancement.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> “2007 High School Summer School Registration Guide.” Paradise Valley School District. <http://www.pvschools.net/phs/Counseling/Summer%20School%20Registration%20Guide.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Jordan, Op. cit.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> “Public School District Database.” Op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Oaxaca, H. Program Director of Student Support Services, McKinney ISD. Telephone Interview. September 16, 2013.

### *FEE STRUCTURE*

At the elementary level, summer school students are selected for participation in remedial courses by their school principals; these students are not charged for their remediation courses. Secondary students are charged for remedial courses, but Oaxaca notes that the fees are assessed on a sliding scale: any student receiving free or reduced lunch or participating in the district's AVID college readiness program pays \$50 per credit, while all other students are charged \$220. Students from outside the school district are charged \$500 per credit. The elementary and middle school remediation programs are free and are available by invitation only for struggling students. There are no additional registration fees for any summer school courses.

Oaxaca indicates that **the district currently subsidizes approximately 30 percent of the total cost of remedial summer school** and that the fees for remediation are based on budgeted costs. Oaxaca feels that the fees are generally fair; however, he believes that the low-income fees are too low, while the traditional students are overcharged. Since the majority of students attending summer school are low-income students who pay a drastically reduced rate, the district is unable to sustain its summer programs without financial support from the central office. For this reason, **the district is moving toward a single flat rate in the coming years**. Finally, it should be noted that Texas does not reimburse districts for remedial summer school programs.

Enrichment summer camps generally cost a minimum of \$75, though longer camps can cost as much as \$150. These fees are the same for all students regardless of socio-economic status. There is no separate registration fee assessed for enrichment programs.<sup>43</sup>

### *REGISTRATION*

Registration at MISD is conducted on both a decentralized and centralized basis. Elementary and middle school students are selected for summer school through their home school, so registration for those groups is conducted using a decentralized model. High school students typically register for summer school at their home campus, however, the district also holds three registration days during the summer where students may register at the central program site. Parents must register their students for summer school prior to their child's arrival on the first day. Oaxaca believes that the registration process does not impact the fee schedule.

Oaxaca is content with the current registration process, but notes that there are some issues with the current system. For instance, parents occasionally complain that they aren't notified that their child has to take summer school until they have already made summer plans, expressing a need for earlier communication from the district. Moving forward, Oaxaca would like to see a better communication process with parents in addition to a more clearly defined registration process.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

*STAFFING*

Only full-time teaching staff are permitted to teach in McKinney ISD’s summer programs; the district does not hire additional staff for summer school. All teachers receive the same hourly rate of \$30 per hour, regardless of experience.

**RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Racine Unified School District (RUSD) in Racine County, Wisconsin enrolls 21,100 students, approximately 2,106 of whom are English Language Learners. The district employs 1,394 teachers in 35 schools throughout the county.<sup>45</sup>

RUSD primarily offers remedial summer programs for students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Enrichment courses are somewhat limited and consist of algebra acceleration courses for the elementary and middle school level. The district also has a pre-K program which looks to acclimate these students to the classroom environment.<sup>46</sup>

*FEE STRUCTURE*

State policy in Wisconsin states that, in order to receive state funding for a summer school program, the summer school course in question must be part of the regular education program. In accordance with the policy, RUSD does not charge fees for any of its summer school programs, as nearly the entire cost of each remedial program is reimbursed by the state. The school district is responsible for any “above and beyond” services for which the state does not reimburse (e.g. school librarians). Racine does not charge tuition for students to recover additional costs, but Jeff Blaga, Director of Student Achievement & School Improvement, indicates that some other districts in Wisconsin may do so.<sup>47</sup>

*REGISTRATION*

Summer school registration is conducted both at individual schools and in the central district office. Although the approximate deadline for all programs is in early June, Blaga notes that the district will accept late registration through the first day of summer school. In the future, Blaga hopes to move the district’s registration system online to increase the efficiency and convenience of the registration program.<sup>48</sup>

*STAFFING*

Approximately 98 percent of summer school teachers at RUSD are regular staff members, and the remaining two percent are contracted staff. All teachers receive the same set hourly pay rate, regardless of experience or tenure.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>45</sup> “Public School District Database.” Op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> Blaga, J. Director of Student Achievement & School Improvement, Racine Unified School District. Telephone Interview. September 27, 2013.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

## APPENDIX

Hanover instructed all participants to complete a brief budget form outlining the summer school budgets for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. The appendix contains budget information for two examined districts that chose to share their budget information: McKinney ISD and Portsmouth Public Schools.

**Figure A1: Portsmouth Public Schools Summer School Budget**

SUMMER PROGRAMS EXPENSE CATEGORY	FY 2012 ADOPTED BUDGET*	FY 2012 ACTUAL BUDGET*	FY 2013 ADOPTED BUDGET*
All Salaries ( <i>includes hourly employees</i> )	\$ 491,800	\$ 452,172	\$ 91,800
Employee Benefits ( <i>includes health, other insurance, retirement, etc.</i> )	\$ 37,625	\$ 33,803	\$ 37,625
Materials & Supplies ( <i>includes instructional materials, supplies, meals/snacks, etc.</i> )	\$ 37,500	\$ 28,111	\$ 25,937
Contractual Services ( <i>if applicable</i> )	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment ( <i>if applicable</i> )	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Staff Development ( <i>if applicable</i> )	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Operating Costs ( <i>if applicable</i> )	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Summer Programs Budget</b>	<b>\$ 566,925</b>	<b>\$ 514,086</b>	<b>\$ 555,362</b>

Source: Portsmouth Public Schools.<sup>50</sup>

\*Figures do not include transportation expenses.

<sup>50</sup> Eure, Op. cit.

**Figure A2: McKinney ISD Summer School Budget**

SUMMER PROGRAMS EXPENSE CATEGORY	FY 2012 ADOPTED BUDGET*	FY 2012 ACTUAL BUDGET*	FY 2013 ADOPTED BUDGET*
All Salaries <i>(includes hourly employees)</i> <sup>^</sup>	\$90,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$90,000.00
Employee Benefits <i>(includes health, other insurance, retirement, etc.)</i>	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Materials & Supplies <i>(includes instructional materials, supplies, meals/snacks, etc.)</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Contractual Services <i>(if applicable)</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
Equipment <i>(if applicable)</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
Staff Development <i>(if applicable)</i>	\$21,600	\$21,600	\$21,600
Other Operating Costs <i>(if applicable)</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total Summer Programs Budget</b>	<b>\$ 124,100</b>	<b>\$ 124,100</b>	<b>\$ 124,100</b>

Source: McKinney ISD.<sup>51</sup>

\*Numbers reflect only the high school summer school programs.

<sup>^</sup> This figure reflects only teacher salaries and does not include support staff such as bookkeepers, librarians, and technology support.

<sup>51</sup> Oaxaca, Op. cit.

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