

## FEED YOUR BRAIN 2011: Executive Summary

***“This program has a very positive impact on our children. Reading levels have been maintained, tummies have been fed, and social needs have been met.” - Boistfort School District***

### **Fundraising and Budget**

This year, School’s Out Washington leveraged generous funding from the Discuren Charitable Foundation to raise a total of \$124,476 to support the 2011 Feed Your Brain project. We awarded 13 grants to programs totaling \$60,000. Our budget breakdown is as follows: 32% operating expenses; 11% to support technical assistance and training to programs; 2% to Children’s Alliance; and 55% supporting grants to programs. We awarded 13 grants of \$5,000 each to the following communities:

Other private funders this year include Medina Foundation, Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund, Bank of America Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Pacific Power Foundation and individual contributors who together raised the most funds to date from our annual Feed Your Brain fundraiser. We also completed the second year of funding through a U.S. Department of Education grant to support rural capacity building efforts around youth programs and funded our multi-year sites through this funding stream.

### **Summer Literacy Program Impact**

The 13 Feed Your Brain programs impacted a total of 1,211 children and youth through both the literacy and meal programs. Of this total number, 797 young people were involved in the literacy and enrichment activities. While we served fewer children this year due to a slimmer budget, almost all the programs ended up serving more children than proposed in their original application. Children and youth recorded a total of nearly 720 hours spent reading during the summer program and 459 of the children kept reading logs. This year, we again partnered with Page Ahead, a Washington State non-profit organization that provides new books and develops reading activities that empower at-risk children. Page Ahead provided each Feed Your Brain program with four new books per student served that were age-appropriate and available in Spanish as requested by the program. The Feed Your Brain programs were incredibly grateful for the books, to which they attributed much of the academic success and enjoyment of reading experienced by students to the addition of books.

For the 6th year, we required programs to administer the San Diego Quick Assessment evaluation tool which assesses the change in children’s reading levels over time. Results from this assessment again showed compelling data on the importance of summer programs in helping children and youth stay engaged and learning during the summer months. The evaluation results showed similar results from the independent, instructional and frustrated reading levels of 93-94% of students either maintaining or improving by at least one grade level in reading. The evaluation data combined with narrative reports demonstrate that the Feed Your Brain project plays an instrumental role in funneling needed resources into rural communities that ultimately help kids return to school in the fall ready to learn.

*“I think by the end of the program, they all saw themselves as readers and writers. They read with confidence and shared their learning with joy. Their writing was amazing. Not only what they did with the literacy activities, but what they wrote in their journaling activities and seed ideas they turned into stories. The last week of the summer program I had kids that were asking me to please keep summer school going, they loved being there, they loved the learning and they loved seeing themselves as readers and writers.” – White Salmon Valley School District*

*“We have seen kids that have been with us for several years become very good confident readers. And I believe that since we put a focus on reading during the summer and send home books with them to read that the parents are also putting importance on reading in their homes, because the increased proficiency in reading seems to be with all the children in the household.”*  
– Yakama Christian Mission

We continue to see an increase in the percentage of Latino and Native American students served through the Feed Your Brain project. This year, the demographic breakdown of kids served is: 42% Latino, 15% Native American; 38% Caucasian; and 5% other. Thirty percent of children served by Feed Your Brain programs are English Language Learners and 30% from migrant or immigrant families.

### **Summer Meals**

The Feed Your Brain project also aims to address hunger in high-poverty rural communities of our state by requiring all grantees to run the Summer Feeding Service Program through USDA. Children and youth in the 13 funded communities had access to at least two free meals four days/week for a minimum of four weeks that programs were required to operate. The 13 programs served a total combined daily average of 838 meals per day and approximately 29,000 total meals over the entire summer. School's Out Washington has been participating as a member of a statewide summer meals workgroup. Through this partnership led by the Children's Alliance, WithinReach has developed a summer meals toolkit and resource page on their [parenthelp123.org](http://parenthelp123.org) website. Their Summer Meals Outreach staff attended the Feed Your Brain grantee orientations to share the tool and more information about the meal program.

### **Training & Technical Assistance**

Feedback from grantees tells us that the Feed Your Brain project is critical to these communities struggling for resources to make ends meet and provide a safe, enriching, and healthy place for young people to go during the summer months. As in years past, we required all grantees to attend an orientation prior to the start of their program. The orientation provided a venue to come together and receive training on literacy enrichment programming, outreach strategies to increase participation in the summer meal program, learn more about the grant requirements and network with other educators living in rural communities. Both returning and new grantees expressed appreciation for the opportunity to access free training and learn from one another new techniques and ideas to engage young people and develop a fun, enriching environment with limited resources.

### **Multi-Year Funding Pilot Project**

This year, the five multi-year funded programs received their 3<sup>rd</sup> and last year of funding. Each program had at least one staff attend School's Out Washington's *Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back* conference and two providers participated in a panel discussion on best practices in providing afterschool and summer programs in rural communities. All the sites also had at least one staff person attend a summer learning mini-conference in the spring.

The multi-year funded sites reported that this model provided them with the ability to focus less on fundraising and more on making improvements in other areas of their programming. Some areas of focus included professional development for staff, curriculum development and identifying new or strengthening existing community partners. Each site received technical assistance to work on identified goals and areas to improve program quality. Due to the current economic climate, we will not be able to continue with the multi-year funding model in the future. However, we plan to continue providing a select number of sites with enhanced technical assistance and training based on feedback that the extra support makes a difference in supporting quality improvement efforts.

## 2011 Feed Your Brain Sites

Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County - Blaine	Blaine
Nespelem Elementary School	Nespelem
Deer Park School District	Deer Park
Boistfort School District	Boisfort
Paterson School District	Paterson
Northwest Community Action Center - Safe Haven Center	Toppenish
WSU Extension - Mason County	Shelton
Whitson Elementary School - White Salmon	White Salmon
Children's Home Society - Walla Walla	Walla Walla
Grand Coulee Dam School District	Coulee Dam
ROOF Community Services	Rochester
Yakama Christian Mission	White Swan
Youth and Family Link	Longview