



SCSF COVID-19 Relief Fund Grant Outcomes

The SCSF awarded \$204,000 in grants to state charter schools in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Awards were given to 14 schools to purchase portable electronic devices to loan to students during school closures, pay for Internet access for low-income students, and provide remote tutoring services for at-risk students.

Schools were instructed to expend all funds by July 1, 2020.

| Devices Purchased | Students Receiving Internet Access | Students Receiving Remote Tutoring Services |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 265 | 698 | 484 |

Successes and Challenges

- Vendors faced shortages of laptops, Chromebooks, and tablets. Devices were on back-order, and some vendors were unable to fulfill device orders.
- After facing initial hotspot shortages, schools were able to find providers for cellular Internet service. Data plans were updated to provide more favorable terms.
- Schools used a combination of remote tutoring services provided by a vendor, FEV Tutor, and their own teachers.
 - All schools reported an increase in student academic progress, although results varied.
 - Participation rates were not as high as schools hoped, which limited progress. Schools attributed lack of participation to a loss of interest in online learning, general fatigue, and stress.
 - All performed some kind of assessment, but some schools reported difficulty in having students complete summative assessments.
 - Some schools had measurable gains, including the following: 100-point increase in Lexile for reading, 70% rate of improvement in standards for middle school, 90% pass rate for course originally failed, and 80% average grade for weekly assessments.
 - Comments from students and tutors were overall positive, and students who participated in regular tutoring sessions expressed greater confidence in content mastery.

Lessons Learned

- Students need regular access to electronic devices and Internet access. It is challenging for schools to loan devices and provide ongoing technical support. Families need assistance with learning how to use devices and applications.

- Regularly-scheduled, one-on-one instruction for at-risk students yields results and greater outcomes during distance learning.
- Participation in remote tutoring was higher when led by known teachers and staff and/or the same tutor.