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Lunch @ the Library Collaboration Expands to More California Communities
Contra Costa, Kern, Alameda, and Riverside Join Effort to Combat Summer Hunger, Learning Loss

San Mateo, CA, June 9, 2014 – The California Library Association (CLA) and California Summer Meal Coalition announced today the addition of more libraries to *Lunch @ the Library*, a collaborative effort to provide summer meals and literacy opportunities in California’s libraries. County library systems in Alameda, Contra Costa and Kern, along with Riverside Public Library, will join over 50 other California library sites engaged in collaborations that combat summer learning loss and hunger.

In many communities, the summer break can mean an end to learning and enrichment opportunities, and limited access to healthy food, particularly for California’s low-income children. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers summer nutrition programs to enable school districts, municipalities, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations to serve free, healthy meals to children and teens in low-income neighborhoods when school is out.

“Now in our second year of partnership with CLA, we’ve seen the creative ways in which libraries and summer meal providers can collaborate to support the wellbeing of kids when school is out” said Patrice Chamberlain, director of the California Summer Meal Coalition. “Summer meal programs provide an opportunity to leverage existing resources and galvanize partners to make our communities better. Leaders from these four communities are among those paving the way.”

“We’ve seen growing interest among libraries in serving summer meals to meet the needs of their communities,” said Deborah Doyle, CLA President. “The addition of the lunch enables libraries to have greater impact with their programs, introduce new families to the library and its vast array of services, and combat learning loss by connecting children and teens with summer reading programs.”

Partners:

Alameda County Library (REACH Ashland Youth Center – Satellite branch)	Hayward Unified School District
Contra Costa County Library (San Pablo and Pittsburg Branches)	West Contra Costa Unified School District / Pittsburg Unified School District
Kern County Library (Beale Memorial Branch - Bakersfield)	Kern County Superintendent of Schools
Riverside Public Library (Main branch)	Riverside Unified School District

The California Library Association provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services and librarianship. For more information about CLA or the Lunch @ the Library program, visit www.cla-net.org. The California Summer Meal Coalition, a program of the Public Health Institute, is a statewide network united to combat hunger and obesity by helping California’s children in need gain access to free and healthy meals through the USDA’s summer nutrition programs. For more information visit www.summermealcoalition.org. Support for this project is provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.