

Sunflower Summer



Synopsis

The Center for Public Partnerships and Research (CPPR) employs change makers who translate ideas into action. The Sunflower Summer program started as an idea shared in a committee meeting, and then very quickly—with CPPR connecting and working with state agencies and organizations—the program came to life just two months later. With CPPR’s involvement, Kansas students and their families were able to participate in enrichment activities and visited 70 attractions at no cost.

The Challenge *Wonderful idea, short timeframe!*

In the spring, a standing advisory committee comprised of Kansas Teacher of the Year candidates was tasked by Kansas Commissioner of Education Randy Watson to identify ways to utilize national relief funding, including stimulation of summertime education enrichment. The group proposed using these resources to pay admission for students to visit venues and participate in enrichment activities across the state.

Though everyone embraced the concept, defining the program, engaging with venues, developing an app required for program performance tracking, and sharing the program with Kansans would be a massive effort in the six-week timeframe.

“The whole program went very smoothly and drew families to our venue who might not have traveled here otherwise.”

- Venue Participant



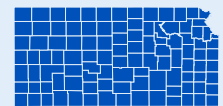
July 1-August 15, 2021

Addressing issues of accessibility was integral and necessary for Sunflower Summer. All Kansas families were eligible to participate in enriching summertime, hands-on learning experiences. There were no requirements concerning a family’s financial situation, or location in the state.

More than

71,000 visits

by Kansas children and families



Provided interactive and widely varied learning opportunities for children in all Kansas counties.

70+

Participating venues resulting in

\$780,421

summer tourism revenue

The Solution *Employ CPPR to put ideas into action*

Bringing Sunflower Summer to fruition was a natural fit. CPPR specializes in helping dream and implement big ideas, conduct research, and create programs that improve the lives of children and families.

The CPPR team coordinated closely with Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), The Governor's Office, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, app developer SLCKET, Kansas Department of Tourism, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Greenbush Education Service Center, and 70+ venues to create this two-for-one success: stimulating summer learning and sparking tourism.



"The Sunflower Summer program was a home run for the state of Kansas. The program did what we wanted it to do. It created rich opportunities for summer learning between students and caring adults, while helping to support these amazing Kansas attractions."

- Denise Kahler, Director of Communications and Recognition Programs, KSDE

About CPPR

CPPR partners with thought leaders and change makers in communities, government, academics, and organizations across the country to advance the well-being of children and families.

With experience and expertise steeped in applied research and a ventures approach, CPPR both accelerates the impact of partner organizations and develops its own innovative solutions to meet the systemic challenges in areas like early childhood care and education, public health, youth development, child neglect and abuse prevention, and adaptive leadership.

CPPR is a center within the Achievement and Assessment Institute at the University of Kansas.

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Partner Acceleration

CPPR moves projects forward in measurable ways. CPPR's partner acceleration supports and empowers a wide array of partners in many sectors.

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