



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 02/18/2026
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Community Services Department

2026-68

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBJECT:

GRANT FUNDING FROM THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,600 FOR THE LUNCH AT THE LIBRARY SUMMER 2026 PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to accept and appropriate a grant from the California State Library for the Lunch at The Library Summer 2026 Program. Lunch at the Library helps libraries provide free summer meals and programming at library sites. The program provides free books to help children build home libraries while delivering summer reading and learning programs for children and teens. The total grant award is \$12,600.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Accept grant funding in the amount of \$12,600 from the California State Library for the 2026 Lunch at the Library Program.
- b. Authorize an appropriation and estimated revenue increase in the amount of \$12,600 to the Community Services Department's operating budget in the Library-Other Grants Fund 415.
- c. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to budget accordingly if the California State Library distributes additional funds to Lunch at The Library participants.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

Public libraries are natural spaces for serving summer meals to children and teens while school is out. Lunch at the Library was originally developed by the California Library Association and the California Summer Meal Coalition in 2013 as a program designed to keep California's kids healthy, fed, and engaged when school is out. The program creates partnerships between libraries and meal sponsors, providing children with free meals and literacy activities in the library during the summer months.

Now supported by the California State Library, Lunch at the Library has grown to 213 sites and served over 383,178 meals. In 2018, the Corona Public Library became a Lunch at the Library meal site in partnership with Corona-Norco Unified School District (CNUSD) Nutrition Services, serving 1,900 lunches and attracting over 2,700 participants. The Program grew significantly in 2019, serving 4,485 meals with over 5,000 program attendees. In 2021, 1,713 brown-bag lunches were provided to children and teens during COVID-19 restrictions. In the three years the program was active at the library, over 8,000 meals were served, and enrichment programs were provided to over 9,000 patrons. Following the pandemic, CNUSD expanded its brown bag lunch sites, eliminating the need for the Library's participation until 2025, when summer meal sites were significantly reduced by CNUSD. The Library therefore applied for the 2026 Lunch at the Library grant to bring an additional meal location back to the community.

ANALYSIS:

The Corona Public Library, in partnership with CNUSD Nutrition Services, has served more than 8,000 lunches to local children and teens through the Lunch at the Library Program. To reinstate the program at the library, staff pursued a grant from the California State Library to help offset meal service and related activity costs, and were awarded \$12,600. The funding will support the provision of lunches for children ages 18 and under twice per week during the summer months of June and July. Hot lunches will be prepared and delivered to the Library by CNUSD Nutrition Services and served by paid teen volunteers. The program will fund approximately 1,600 meals, including eight educational presentations focused on art, STEM, theater, music, or farm-to-table food education, and offer meaningful leadership and workforce readiness opportunities for teens ages 14–17.

Funds are to be used as follows:

- \$632 to support meal service;
- \$6,704 to support teens with leadership development and workforce readiness skills; and
- \$5,264 in funds for literacy and enrichment programs.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will result in an appropriation and estimated revenue increase in the amount of \$12,600 to the Library's Literacy and Community Engagement operating budget within the Library-Other Grants Fund 415 for the Lunch at The Library Summer 2026 project. These grant funds do not have a

matching requirement. Grant funds must be fully expended in accordance with the City's approved budget by January 31, 2027.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action is a financial transaction between the California State Library and the City of Corona, and there is not a possibility that adopting this resolution will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: KATHERINE BACKUS, MANAGEMENT ANALYST I

REVIEWED BY: DONNA FINCH, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

ATTACHMENT:

1. Exhibit 1 – Lunch at The Library Grant Award Letter