Moving Communities and Programs Forward for Summer Learning

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National Summer Learning Association

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NSLA's mission is to connect and equip schools, providers, communities and families to deliver high-quality summer learning opportunities to our nation's youth to help close the achievement gap and support healthy development.

NSLA seeks to:

- Improve the quality of summer learning opportunities
- Expand access to summer learning
- Increase demand for summer learning

WHY SUMMER MATTERS

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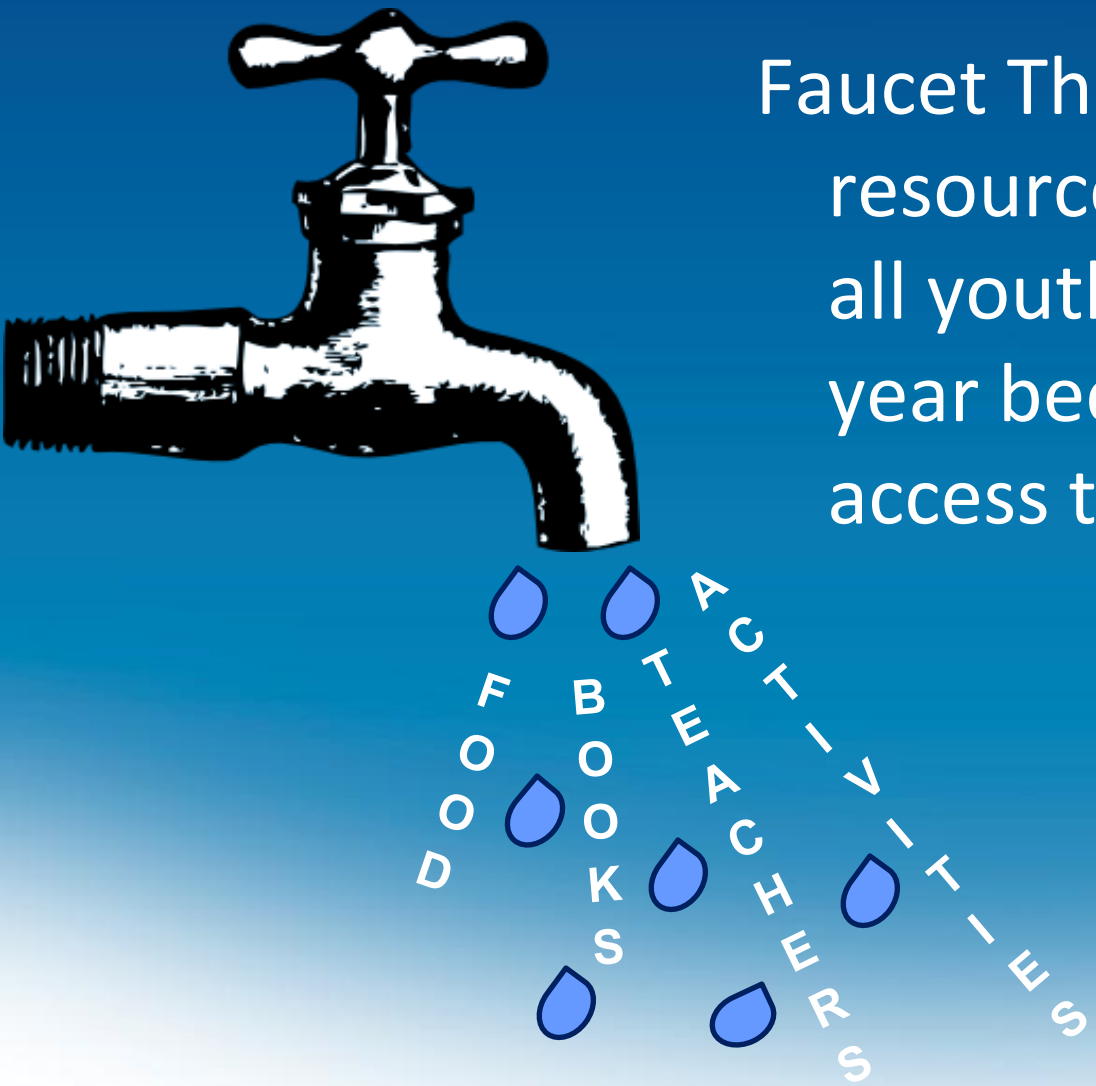
Afterschool and Summer



Faucet Theory: learning resources are turned *on* for all youth during the school year because of equal access to public education.

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Afterschool and Summer

- During the summer, the faucet is turned *OFF* for low-income youth.
- A limited flow of resources in the summer has major implications for summer program quality.

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The Effects of Summer Learning Loss

- Since 1906, numerous studies have confirmed that children experience learning losses in math and reading without continued opportunities for skill building over the summer (White, Heyns, Cooper, Downey, Alexander)
- Elementary students lose most in reading and math skills. (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007)
- All youth lose an average of 2.6 months of math skills without practice over the summer.
- Average loss in reading is 2.3 months of grade level equivalency for low-income youth.

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Summer Learning & the Achievement Gap

- 2/3 of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities during the elementary school years (Alexander, Entwisle & Olson, 2007)

- Summer learning losses have later life consequences, including high school curriculum placement, high school dropout, and college attendance (ibid.)

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Summer Learning Loss Video

Google Search Term: Horizons National Brian Williams Summer Learning Video

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ahhj3wxxkdM

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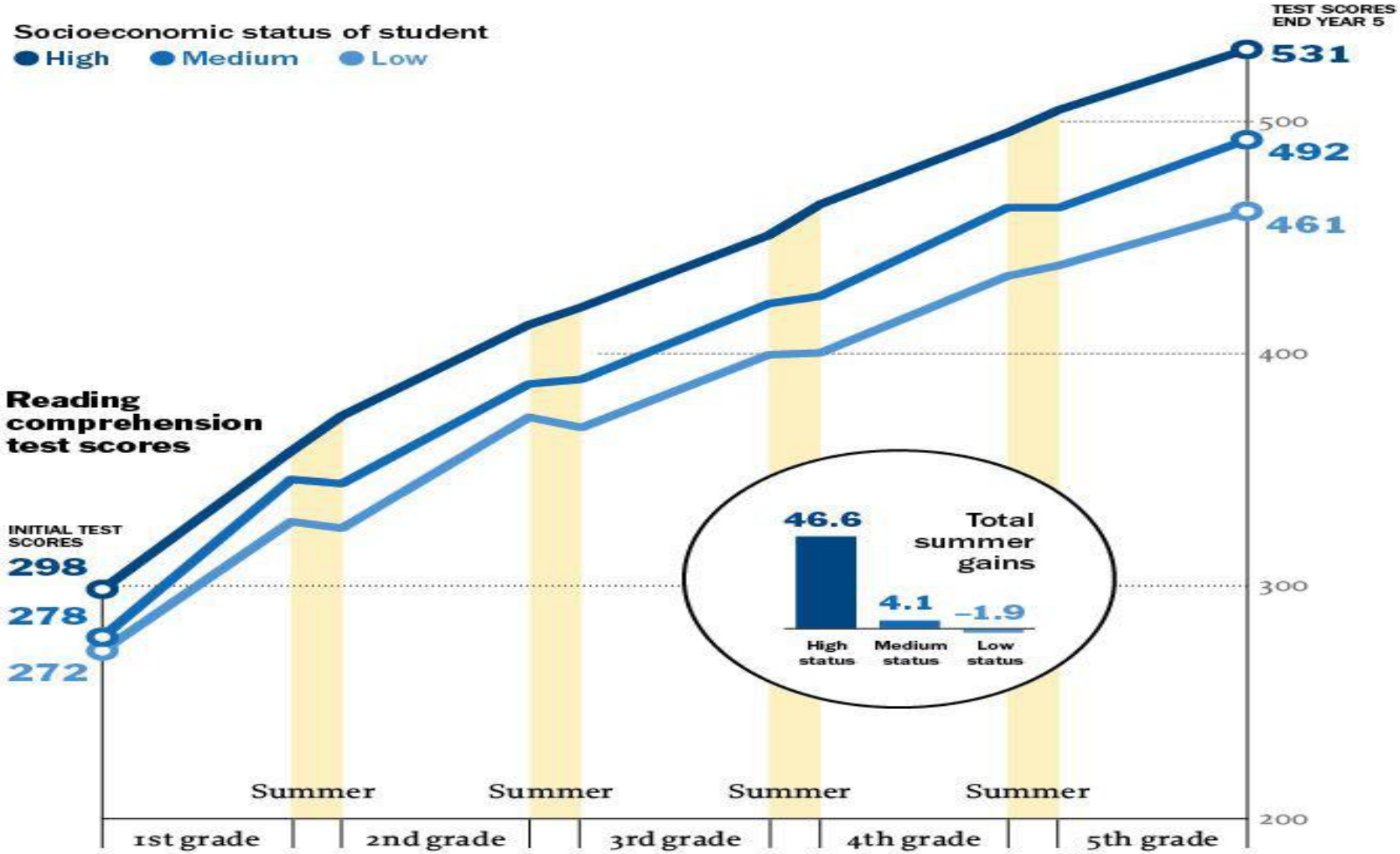
The Summer Slide

Reading Comprehension Gains, School Year and Summer, Over the Five Years of Elementary School: Lower-Income Children in Baltimore Fall Behind



Summer Learning & the Achievement Gap

What's the reading gap look like in grade 9?

- 3.4 grade equivalents difference on average
- 6.6 grade equivalents difference between low-income youth who eventually drop out vs. higher-income who eventually enter college

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The achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families is roughly

30 TO 40 PERCENT LARGER

among children born in 2001 than among those born twenty-five years earlier.[1]

New York Times, Feb 9, 2012, Education Gap Grows Between Rich and Poor, Studies Say, Sean F. Reardon, Stanford University, Whther Opportunity Rising Inequality and the Uncertain Life Chances of Low-Income Children.

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Summer Reading

Kim – 2004, 2006, 2008 – READS Program

Key Finding: Reading 3-4 books over the summer produced the same summer gain as attending a summer program, but certain supports were necessary to make such gains.

- Three factors must be present in order to improve reading:
  1. Access to books
  2. Books that match readers' ability levels and interests
  3. Comprehension, as monitored and guided by an adult, teacher or parent

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Books to match interests	-Matched books -Oral reading scaffolding	-Matched books -Scaffolding -Parent help	-Control group -Received books at end of summer

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There are two sides to the summer health coin:

On one side, many young people are gaining weight at an alarming rate. On the other side, food insecurity rates increase and many young people are hungry.

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Summer Health & Nutrition

von Hippel, Powell, Downey & Rowland – 2007

- K and 1st graders gained BMI nearly twice as fast during the summer as during the school year
- Children who were already overweight or minority were most at risk for unhealthy weight gain

FRAC, Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

- In July 2011, 14.6 children received Summer Nutrition for every 100 low-income students who received free and reduced lunch in the 2010-2011 school year.
- If every state had reached the Summer Nutrition goal of serving 40 children for every 100 served during the school year, an additional 4.9 million children would have been fed each day.

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Summer Health & Nutrition

New Jersey – Summer Nutrition Program 2011

- Ranks 13th in the country
- Served 75,064 youth in Summer 2011, out of the 393,306 children served during the school year (19.1 youth per 100)
- Increased number of children served by 9.5%
- 89 sponsors and 1,026 summer food sites in 2011
- If NJ served 40 out of 100 eligible youth, the state would reach 82,000 more youth and receive an additional $5,326,247 in federal reimbursement

Food Research and Action Center. 2012.

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Why Sports in the Summer?

Rosewater (2009)

- Youth who participate in organized sports are higher achievers (grades, dropout rates, homework completion, educational aspirations)
- Sports help youth feel more connected to school, attend school regularly, and connect with a positive peer network
- The effects on academics are more pronounced for low-income youth
- More affluent youth are more likely to participate
- Opportunities dwindle as kids move from elementary to middle, then middle to high, with boys having more opportunities than girls

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QUALITY PRACTICES

Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs

Set of quality indicators that form the foundation for the tools and strategies that help you PLAN, TRAIN, ASSESS and REFLECT to improve your program.

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CASP Development

- Research from the fields of summer learning, afterschool, youth development, non-profit management and K-12 education
- NSLA's database of site visit reports
- Excellence Award applications
- In-depth interviews with program staff

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Comprehensive Assessment of Summer Programs

Program Infrastructure

PURPOSE

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

PLANNING

STAFF

PARTNERSHIPS

Point-of-Service

INDIVIDUALIZED

INTENTIONAL

INTEGRATED

UNIQUE PROGRAM CULTURE

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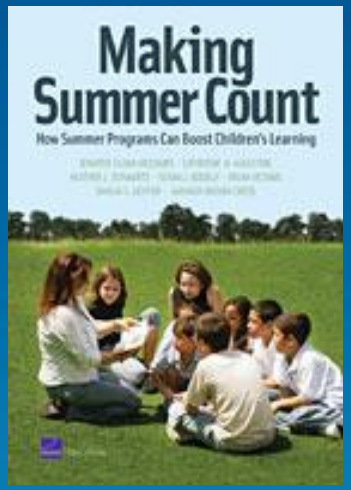
Comprehensive Research



Making Summer Count: *How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning*

RAND Corp. (2011)

www.rand.org

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Keys to Success

- Students must attend to reap benefits (80-85% ADA)
- Research indicates certain program characteristics are linked to student achievement gains
  - Smaller class sizes (1:5- 1:8)
  - ~150 hours per summer, at least two consecutive summers
  - Providing individualized instruction
  - Involving parents

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Keys to Success

- Best program practices
  - High-quality instructors (credentialed teachers)
  - Aligning the school year and summer curricula
  - Including content beyond remediation
  - Tracking effectiveness

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Keys to Success

- Remove structural barriers
  - Provide transportation
  - Offer full-day programming
- Entice students
  - Food (breakfast, lunch, snacks)
  - Engaging enrichment activities
  - Camp-like atmosphere
  - Experiential learning

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COMMUNITY STRATEGIES FOR SUMMER LEARNING

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Moving the Needle in Summer

Strengthening community systems and programs will:

- connect more children to opportunities
- improve outcomes for those children

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Moving the Needle in Summer

Coordinated civic action can lead to:

- Increased awareness and action
- Better understanding of quality and what works
- Better practices that support more kids
- Ability to track progress and show impact

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Moving the Needle in Summer

Long-term impact: Improved youth outcomes

Indicators of Progress:

Program Level	Community Level
• More programs tracking targeted specific youth outcomes • More programs focusing on improvement and quality • Improved quality of programs	• Increased partnerships • More slots in existing programs • More programs targeting specific youth outcomes • Development of new programs • Increase in targeted youth participating in summer learning programs

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System Indicators

1. Shared Vision and Citywide Coordination
2. Engaged Leadership
3. Data Management System
4. Quality Improvement System
5. Sustainable Resources
6. Marketing and Communications Strategy

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Newark Summer Learning Initiative

Summer Learning Initiative 2010 - 2012

- Community Assessment
  - Scan of resources and opportunities 2010 – 2011
  - Focus groups with program providers
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Program Quality
  - Training and professional development
  - Professional Learning Community
  - Quality Assessment

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Newark Summer Learning Initiative

Next Steps for Summer in Newark

- Capacity Building with United Way
- Victoria Foundation Summer Challenge Project
- Community Planning and System Building

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Thank You!

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www.summerlearning.org

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