Afterschool and Summer Learning

Summer Implementation Guide

April 2021

The research shows simply being in the classroom over the summer is not enough. To experience the benefits of summer learning, students have to have access to engaging learning opportunities that support their academic success.

This Summer Implementation Guide was developed as a resource for Local Education Agency (LEAs) interested in creating a high-quality summer program. This guide includes overview information, specific steps for program design, and additional resources to explore.

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Why Summer?

The average student loses between 17 and 28 percent of school year gains in English/Language Arts (ELA) during the following summer. In math, the average student loses between 25 and 34 percent of each school year, gain during the following summer. [1]

"Summer learning is not summer school. In fact, the most successful summer experiences often feel as different from formal schooling as possible."

Matthew Boulay, Founder
National Summer Learning Association

Successful summer programs should incorporate nontraditional learning strategies and include things like project-based learning, physical education, college and career exposure, academic enrichment, art and music, service learning, and opportunities to develop interpersonal relationships with peers, mentors, and the community.

Click here to access the Summer Afterschool Standards!

The Indiana Afterschool Standards are statewide standards used to establish quality and drive consistency among afterschool and summer programs. In addition to the traditional standards, there are also several sets of specialty standards, including summer standards, outlining best practices and recommendations for summer programming, serving K-12 students.

[1] *National Summer Learning Association, "Summer Learning A Bridge to Student Success and America's Recovery." 2020*

Best Practices Overview

Summer programs should operate for five or six weeks of the summer, with three or four hours of academics every day. Outside of academic time, high-quality summer programs should incorporate opportunities that students might not otherwise have during the school year such as visual arts or swimming. In addition to helping close the opportunity gap, enrichment should make programs more impactful and engaging so students will attend consistently.

What can high-quality summer programs offer students?

- Address learning gaps
- Encourage cooperative learning
- Foster social and emotional skill development
- Exposure to new experiences
- Engage community partners
- Promote physical activity

High-Quality Summer Programs include:

- 5-6 weeks of total programming
- 3-4 hours of academic enrichment opportunities, per day
- 25 hours of math enrichment and 34 hours of ELA enrichment per week
- Schedule academic enrichment in the morning and life skills enrichment in the afternoon
- Provide opportunities for individual and small group instruction
- Instead of following the current school year, program content should lead students into the next school year

Support staff (non-instructional) don't need to be certified teachers. Consider employing youth workers, social workers, and community members.

Create recruitment and attendance policies that support higher attendance rates and celebrate participation.

Alignment and Sustainability

In addition to providing students with exposure to new experiences, successful summer programs can drastically impact academic outcomes and social emotional skill development.

The impact of a high-quality summer program shouldn't end as the fall semester begins. LEAs are encouraged to take lessons learned from a successful summer program, in addition to reviewing school year academic and enrichment needs, and continue out-of-school time efforts throughout the school year.

How can I align summer successes to the school year needs?

1. Review school year priorities and identify academic gaps. Determine how a summer program can impact school need.
2. Analyze data gathered from students and families. Consider what kind of programming would be most meaningful.
3. Share summer program successes with school administration and community partners. Highlight goals achieved and lessons learned.

What funding sources can support school year programming?

1. Title I can support afterschool and summer programming at an individual school or throughout the district.
2. Title III can be used to provide technology-based supports to English learners as part of an OST time program.
3. Title IV can be used to provide extended learning opportunities, including out-of-school time programs.

Interested in learning more about how Title funding can support out-of-school time efforts? Click here!

Implementation Guide

A successful summer program can not only address academic needs and gaps within life skills development, it can also help build relationships with students, families, and the community.

The research shows that high-quality summer programs positively impact academic outcomes and social emotional development. But what is the first step in the summer program planning process? This Implementation Guide is for LEAs interested in learning tips and tricks for developing a high-quality, high-impact summer program experience.

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Program Planning and Needs Assessment

Starting a summer program and don't know where to begin? The first few steps in planning a successful, high-quality summer program includes developing a timeline and assessing need.

Program Planning

- Develop a planning team comprised of program staff, organizational leadership, and community stakeholders.
- Create a timeline that includes tasks, deadlines, point persons, and task priority. Do your best to stick to the timeline created!
- Consider how tasks and deadlines may be interdependent and impact deadline timing and the order in which tasks can be completed.
- Determine individual and/or group S.M.A.R.T goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) to keep staff accountable and ensure program goals are measurable.

Looking for a simple summer planning template? Click here!

Looking for an in-depth summer planning template? Click here!

Needs Assessment

- Familiarize yourself with your school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) and/or School Improvement Plan (SIP). Consider aligning summer program efforts to address highlighted areas of needs.
- Survey students to determine what program content would be most helpful and most desirable to them -- this will help with student recruitment and retention.

Looking for a summer needs assessment template? Two options below!

IDOE Planning Worksheet

You for Youth Planning Worksheet

Student Recruitment and Transportation

Click here for a simple recruitment plan template

As you develop your recruitment plan, make sure it strategically targets the students who demonstrate the greatest need. While all eligible students should be invited to attend, it takes planning to engage and enroll those students who would likely benefit the most.

When students who specifically need your program attend, it's more likely you will see high rates of student retention and positive outcomes.

According to The Wallace Foundation, summer recruitment plans include:

1. Understanding Your Audience
2. Creating Engaging Messaging
3. Creating a Written Plan
4. Making Your Outreach Consistent and Assertive
5. Using Trusted Messengers
6. Building A Relationship with Parents and Students
7. Making Registration as Easy as Possible
8. Engaging Directly with Students

Retention

To foster student retention, consider:

1. Offering programs to multiple grade levels to address the needs of siblings.
2. Creating engaging academic and enrichment opportunities that excite students and actively market the programs as engaging camps rather than remedial academic work.
3. Recognizing and rewarding consistent attendance by offering raffles and small prizes (nominal in value) to students based on attendance (e.g., attending four out of five days of the week).

Transportation

To eliminate barriers, plan to provide transportation and consider that:

1. Student information should be given to transportation staff as early as possible—recommend at least one month in advance, particularly for any students that have specific needs related to transportation.
2. Your schedule and program locations should be at the same location as any traditional summer school classes to make the school bus routes as short as possible.
3. To maximize efficiency, last minute schedule changes should be limited.

Considerations for Special Populations

As you design your summer program model, student recruitment, family engagement, and program supports should be inclusive and create a sense of belonging among all students.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Students

The CLD term refers to students who come from multilingual and multicultural communities, including those who come from migrant family backgrounds.

Our interactions provide us context to successfully navigate words, situations, and norms, and help us learn to communicate in the English language. These same experiences for language development are no different for CLD students and families. Consider embedding the resource below into your program design.

The Prism Model

The Prism Model uses four dimensions to understanding CLD students' success in school.

- *Social and Cultural Processes*: What are the social and cultural experiences of my students? How might I find out more information about them?
- *Academic*: What are my students' school and/or academic experiences in their home language? In their English language?
- *Language:* Where are they in their English language development? In their first language development? How and in what context has the student's first language been valued and supported?
- *Cognitive*: How do my CLD students learn best? What experiences do they enjoy? How can I best leverage their naturally occurring processes to expand their understanding?

Students with Disabilities

Ensure program recruitment strategies are inclusive to students with disabilities.

Communicate with school day staff to access and review IEPs.

Review program curriculum and activities, as well as program space, to ensure inclusivity.

Staffing and Training

As you plan for summer, look beyond school personnel and think creatively about partners to bring to the table: community-based organizations, higher education, parks and recreation agencies, affordable housing organizations, libraries, and more. Ensure program staff is diverse in experience and representative of students and families to be served.

Recruiting Teachers

Recruit teachers with subject and grade-level experience who are often better able to connect the summer content to school year curriculum.

When hiring teachers and deciding on the rate of pay, consider the collective bargaining agreements and pay schedules set by your district, charter school, or non-public school.

<u>School day teachers can have a wide variety of roles in summer programs:</u>

- Advise and coach small groups of staff to lead instruction
- Serve as a site director, manage operations, and/or family communication
- Provide small group academic enrichment
- Develop curriculum and/or train paraprofessionals and community staff

Explore partnership with a local community-based organization (CBO) that has experience and demonstrated success in operating summer programs.

Several community-based organizations offer summer day camps and are experienced in providing “camp magic” -- key elements that make summer camp feel different than a typical school day. These elements can help with consistent attendance and stronger engagement from youth.

Recruiting CBOs

<u>Community-based organizations can play a variety of roles in summer programs:</u>

- Manage operations, provide staffing, and assist with student recruitment and enrollment
- Facilitate enrichment including field trips, service learning, and other community experiences
- Develop and/or assist with training summer staff
- Collaborate with schools and teachers to identify academic needs of students to ensure consistency and build upon academic activities

Recruiting H.S. Students

High school students benefit from engaging in a structured opportunity that builds skills and relationships over the summer months.

High-quality summer youth employment programs have been found to reduce crime and incarceration rates and increase academic engagement, all while providing students with the opportunity to earn income, develop employability skills and increase their ability to positively impact their communities.

Considerations for employing high school students:

- Prior to beginning employment, high school student employees will need increased training on key topics: workplace etiquette, communication, appropriate boundaries, basic youth development, and risk management.
- Youth employment programs are most effective when paired with a mentorship program. Consider having a staff person serve as the facilitator during regular opportunities for youth employees to develop skills and build a strong culture among the group.
- Consider pairing high school student employees in a classroom/group with more experienced staff to serve as a daily mentor. Programs should also help build these relationships during staff training sessions to ensure the high school student employees build confidence to begin employment.
- Community-based organizations may already offer a summer youth employment program. Consider these partnerships as an opportunity to leverage high school student employees.

Several resources are available to assist the development of youth employment programs:

Job Ready EmployIndy Benchmarks

220 Leadership

Youth.gov Employment Resources

Signal Success

Supporting Summer Staff

Strong summer programs organize around a unique theme and/or distinctive summer camp culture. One way to support summer staff is to anchor summer learning programs in evidence-based summer learning curricula. Play-based curriculum can be utilized for younger children, and student voice is essential to older youth programming.

Looking for a professional development plan template? Click here!

In addition, staff at summer programs should be trained in instructional methods and positive learning environments in order to garner positive outcomes.

Professional development should align with school year goals and provide innovative opportunities for staff development in the areas of group management, project-based learning, and culturally relevant curriculum.

- Survey program staff to determine their professional development needs. Incorporate specific skill-based opportunities as well as opportunities that build a team culture.
- Consider your initial needs assessment and provide training that connects to program needs. Also consider any professional development opportunities provided by community partners.
- Ensure professional development opportunities are relevant to the out-of-school time program design.

Resource Highlight

The Indiana Afterschool Network offers a variety of dynamic resources for summer programs looking for virtual professional development opportunities and program planning tools. Their 'My Afterschool Locker' tool provides programs with Lesson Plans, Team Tools, Activity Ideas, and connection to Community Collaborators. To learn more, click the link to the left!

Click here to access more information on My Afterschool Locker

Budget

Intentionally developing a thorough budget will ensure funds are being utilized efficiently and direct program costs are aligned with desired program outcomes.

As you develop your program budget, lean on your financial planning resources, including this simple budget planning worksheet or this more in-depth budget planning worksheet. You can also utilize the IDOE-style budget "cheat sheet," dictating typical program costs.

Initial Budget Planning Considerations

1. Determine estimated costs for program administration and overhead. Analyze estimated costs against any current or historical summer programming costs to ensure all planned administration and overhead are accurate and intentional.

2. Develop a budget management process and determine staff members who will oversee the process.

3. Consider the funding model you are using -- will there be one funding stream? Does the budget encompass blended and/or braided funds from several funding streams? Make sure to account for the needs of all funds used.

Budget Best Practices

1. Ensure funds dedicated to staffing provide a competitive, livable wage. As stated above, consider the collective bargaining agreements and pay schedules set by your district, charter school, or non-public school.

2. Plan for fluctuation with projected enrollment. This will allow you to more accurately plan for expenses. Use historic daily attendance rates to plan; if you don't have any, plan for 75% of projected enrollment.

3. Analyze expenditures and changes in staffing and/or roles, supply needs, partner contract needs, field trips, etc., regularly to ensure financial efficiency and to identify any future funding gaps.

Partners and Program Schedule

Programs that cultivate strong relationships with community partners, including community organizations, local schools, and government agencies, are more likely to have partners that are supportive of their mission and have a vested interest in overall program success.

Who?

- Local Schools--Public, Charter, and Nonpublic
- Community-Based Organizations
- Local Parks Departments
- Colleges and Universities
- Libraries
- Museums and Community Centers
- Faith-Based Organizations

How?

1. Identify Needs: Gather information and identify programming gaps that will help inform a partner recruitment plan.

2. Identify Roles: Determine what community partner roles will address program needs and ensure the roles are defined in program policies.

3. Identify Details: Collaborate to determine partnership details, including the frequency of the services provided.

Partnership Example

With the unprecedented impact of COVID-19, many cities across the country have developed local, cross-sector partnerships to address the critical academic needs of youth. One re-occurring approach that has emerged is "Community Learning Hubs." Check out the link to the right to learn more!

Municipal Leadership to Support Education Requires Collective Action

Oct. 2020

Creating a site schedule

After establishing the program parameters, including number of weeks and hours per day, focus the next steps on creating a detailed, site-specific program schedule.

Creating an effective program schedule will create a routine and ensure academic and enrichment times are maximized throughout the day. In addition, a strong program schedule will allow staff to focus efforts on direct programming and, in the event of an emergency, locate students quickly.

Don't forget to build in times for transitions between program spaces, bathroom breaks (if needed), and meal time!

Planning

To better prepare for all scenarios, consider creating more than one version of your program schedule.

Consider the distance between program spaces to make transition times easier and limit disruptions.

Schedule Planning Tool

Templates

High quality summer programs operate on a weekly program schedule.

If your program will be serving multiple grade levels, consider creating a separate weekly schedule for each grade group. This will maximize program space and ensure programming is age appropriate.

Sample Summer Schedule by Age Group

Examples

The strongest program schedules are unique to program specifics, including staff capacity and program space.

Make sure to share the final, weekly schedule with families and community partners.

Example Program Schedule

Activities and Meals

Engaging activities directly impact student recruitment and retention. By offering a wide variety of academic and enrichment activities, students gain access to increased learning opportunities, exposure to new experiences, and foster stronger relationships to their peers.

Below are sample activities, separated by suggested categories. While planning specific activities, consider programming needs identified through your needs assessment as well as conversations with students, families, and community partners.

STEM

1. Makerspace Projects
2. PBS Kids Design Squad
3. Y4Y STEM Activities
4. STEM Playground

Math and ELA

1. Youth For Youth
2. PBS Learning
3. Khan Academy

SEL

1. Y4Y SEL Activities
2. IDOE SEL lesson plans PK-12
3. Random Acts of Kindness Lesson Plans

College and Career

1. Roadtrip Nation
2. CareerOneStop Toolkit
3. My Future
4. K-12 US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Global Curriculum

1. Learning for Justice Lesson Plans
2. PBS Global Learning and Awareness
3. AFS-USA Global Learning Toolkit
4. Facing History's Educator Resources

Restorative Practices

1. Peace Learning Center Resources
2. PBIS Resources
3. IDOE SEL lesson plans PK-12

Snacks and Meals

During the summer, far too many students experience food insecurity, weight gain, and learning loss, compromising their health and ability to thrive during summer break and beyond. A key strategy to address these issues is to connect more students, especially low-income students, to high-quality summer meal and enrichment programs.

Rates of food insecurity and food insufficiency among children are higher in the summer — at a time when students do not have access to the school nutrition programs available during the academic year. Students who receive a free or reduced-price school lunch during the school year are especially at risk in the summer. Research shows these students are more likely to experience increases in food insecurity and food insufficiency in summer months when compared to their eligible, non-participating peers.

To learn more about the food and nutrition options in our state, visit the Indiana Department of Education-School Nutrition Programs website.

School districts should:

1. Communicate with your food service staff to ensure they complete the required training modules in CNPweb.
2. Ensure your district is following USDA meal pattern requirements, meeting all recordkeeping requirements, and have been pre-approved in advance of the start date of their summer program.
3. Consider partnering with local foundations, food relief organizations, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations to provide meals and snacks for your students.

Including enrichment activities that promote a healthy lifestyle help students build life skills and healthy habits. The Food & Fun curriculum is free of charge and supports the skills and development set forth by the Common Core State Standards. Curriculum materials were designed based on qualitative research conducted through a national partnership with YMCA of the USA and target grades K-6.

Click here to access Food & Fun materials

Form Templates, Resources, and Research

Form Templates

1. Registration Forms, Program Surveys, and more!
2. Human Resources Packet: Job Descriptions, Evaluations, Time Certification, and more!

Resources

1. Communication and Collaboration Checklist
2. Mapping Needs to Activities Summer Reflection Tool
3. Summer Planning Calendar
4. Y4Y Intentional Activity Design
5. Everfi
6. IDOE Continuous Learning Resources - Weekly Challenges
7. National Summer Learning Association
8. My Afterschool Locker
9. Title Funding Options to Support Out-of-School Time Programs
10. National Afterschool Association

Research

1. Indiana Afterschool Network Summer Programming
2. Summer Learning Toolkit - Wallace Foundation
3. Knowledge Center Resources Archive - Summer Learning
4. The COVID Slide: How to Help Students Recover Learning Losses
5. Edweek: “5 Tips for Measuring and Responding to COVID-19 Learning Loss”
6. IDOE Accelerated Learning Guidance
7. You for Youth Summer Programming