Summer Learning: Promising Practices and Innovation Strategies

June 2, 2016
The broad goal of NCASE is to ensure that school-age children in families of low-income have increased access to afterschool and summer learning experiences that contribute to children’s overall development and academic achievement.
Agenda

- Why Summer Matters
- What is Program Quality?
- What Does High Quality Programming Look Like?
- Summer Learning Resources
  - Program Quality and Improvement
  - Policy and Funding
- Reflection and Questions
Rose, Bud, Thorn Activity

Please share…

• **Rose**: Positive, proud, liked about summer 2015

• **Bud**: New idea or hope for summer 2016

• **Thorn**: Challenge, want to change from summer 2015
What happens to children when they are not engaged in positive, supportive activities in the summer?
Why Summer Matters

✓ Compelling research base
✓ Laboratory for innovation in teaching and learning
✓ Support for working families
✓ Spans transition periods
✓ Growing importance in the education reform/time and learning debate
✓ Significant opportunities for partnerships
Why Summer Matters

• Summer learning loss in the elementary school years alone accounts for at least half of the ninth-grade reading achievement gap.

• Research suggests that three to four consecutive summers of high-quality learning beginning in pre-kindergarten can get kids reading on grade level by third grade, making them four times more likely to graduate from high school.
Why Summer Matters

• Only 1 in 8 children who qualify for free or reduced-price meals access them in the summer months.

• High-quality summer learning programs have been shown to also improve school attachment, motivation, and relationships with adults and peers.

• The average number of hours children ages 6-12 are left alone triples during the summer to 4-12 hours.
Why Summer Matters
The Achievement Gap Walk

- Two volunteers representing one low-income youth (LI) and one middle (MI) income youth
- Have them stand side by side, with the LI youth taking one step back
- For each cycle (complete 3 times):
  - Both youth take 9 heel-to-toe steps forward
  - LI youth takes 3 steps back
  - MI youth takes $\frac{1}{2}$ forward
“Virtually all of the advantage that wealthy students have over poor students is the result of differences in the way privileged kids learn when they are not in school….America doesn’t have a school problem. It has a summer vacation problem …”

Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers*, pp. 258-260
Why Summer Matters

How is this happening in YOUR community?
Regular attendance in high-quality summer programs is associated with a range of positive academic and social development outcomes:

- Improved skills in literacy (Chaplin & Capizzano 2006) and math (Roderick & Nagaoka 2003)
- Improved self-esteem and leadership skills (Bialeschki, Henderson and James 2007)
- Increased attachment to the labor market and increased likelihood of future employment (Sum, 2006)
What is Program Quality?

While summer learning programs have the potential to help close the achievement gap and provide valuable opportunities for children, **not all summer programs are created equal:**

- Program attendance alone is not sufficient to make a difference for young people.
- As many as half of existing programs show no positive youth outcomes (Granger, Durlak, Yohalem and Reisner 2007).
What Does High Quality Programming Look Like?

- Highly-qualified and specially-trained staff, along with early planning that engages partners with clearly delineated roles.

- Smaller class sizes, individualized instruction, and sufficient time on task (operating the program for at least five weeks, with three to four hours of academics per day).
What Does High Quality Programming Look Like?

• Involving families and maximizing student attendance with firm enrollment deadlines, clear attendance policies, and electronic student records.
• Strategic use of partnerships.
• Using evidence-based, commercially available curricula, and standardizing its use across sites.
• Providing carefully planned, engaging enrichment activities.
Building a Unique Program Culture

• Creates a spirit of community and pride among all youth.

• Has principles that set culture through continuous communications of key ideals, strengths, or talents that describe youth and staff.

• A culminating event rewards youth for their success and gives them an opportunity to showcase their work or new skills that they have developed.
Building a Unique Program Culture

• The physical environment promotes creative thinking and exploration.

• Staff provide a flexible workspace to accommodate different learning styles.

• Arrival, departure, transition, and meal times are positive experiences that incorporate themes of the program culture.
Children’s Defense Fund
Freedom Schools® Program
Harambee at Freedom School Partners
Quality Self-Check

1. We need to further define what quality looks like within our state or network.

2. We have started implementing program practices that reflect high quality standards.

3. Most of the programs represented by our state or network understand and have fully implemented quality practices.
Upcoming Events

National Summer Learning Day is July 14, 2016!

Post your summer learning program or event at www.summerlearningdaymap.org.

Follow the story with #KeepKidsLearning.
Find NSLA on social media to keep updated on #summerlearning:

Follow us at Twitter.com/SummerLearning
Like us on Facebook.com/SmarterSummers
Subscribe to us at Youtube.com/SummerLearning

DARE TO DISRUPT!
THE PATHWAY TO EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER LEARNING

OCTOBER 24-26, 2016
THE WESTIN SEATTLE
summerlearning.org/conference
The *Making Summer Count* report examines the need for summer learning programs and the existing evidence on effective, viable, and sustainable summer learning programs in urban districts.

www.wallacefoundation.org
The *Summer Starts in September* planning guide supports NSLA’s vision that summer learning programs are designed, planned, and implemented to intentionally promote skill-appropriate learning and healthy development.

www.summerlearning.org/summer-opportunity-project/resources-communities
The Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention was designed to advance the science and practice of continuous improvement by focusing on qualities of the learner experience that optimize skill building in specific domains, active-participatory, and academic.

http://cypq.org/SummerLearningPQI
The Summer Learning Day tip sheets are available in both English and Spanish and are geared toward parents of early learners, tweens and teens.

www.summerlearning.org/summer-learning-day/summer-learning-day-resources-families
The 2016 Summer Opportunities Funding Guide helps state and local leaders identify the most promising funding streams to support summer learning and shows how innovative states, districts, and communities have creatively blended public and private funding to develop programs, services and opportunities to meet the needs of young people during the critical summer months.

www.summerlearning.org/summer-opportunity-project
NSLA’s Research in Brief series profiles key studies about summer learning and highlights the findings in easy-to-understand language.

www.summerlearning.org/summer-opportunity-project/resources-communities
Reflection

• Red light = Stop

• Yellow light = Continue

• Green light = Start
Questions
Contact Information

Visit the NCASE website at:

https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/national-center-afterschool-summer-enrichment

To contact NCASE, please email us at:

ncase@ecetta.info

Please let us know who we should connect with in your state, including contact information.

Thank You!

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