Principals and school leaders play a critical role in helping to curb summer learning loss and close achievement and opportunity gaps. Here are some ideas to keep kids learning, safe, and healthy this summer:

**KEEP YOUR SCHOOL’S LIBRARY OPEN DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS.** Even if it is just for a few hours a day once a week.

**Hunger takes no vacation during the summer, keep your cafeteria open.** TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT’S SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM. Visit [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/how-become-sponsor](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/how-become-sponsor) to find out how your school can become a summer feeding site.

**CONSIDER OPENING YOUR GYM AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK** to give children a safe place in the neighborhood to run around and play games.

**EXPLORE GIVING SOME TEACHERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LOOP** — where teachers advance to the next grade level along with their students.

**SUMMER IS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE STUDENTS.**

Three groups of students are particularly vulnerable to summer learning loss:

**THOSE WHO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES, THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY, AND THOSE WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.**

Schools and districts typically devote extra resources to these students, but summer learning loss undercut those efforts.

**GET MORE GREAT IDEAS FOR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS FROM THE NEW BOOK, SUMMERS MATTER, WRITTEN BY NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING ASSOCIATION BOARD CHAIR, MATTHEW BOULAY, PHD.**

Visit [www.summers-matter.com](http://www.summers-matter.com) to learn more.
HELP YOUR STUDENTS’ PARENTS THINK ABOUT THE RESOURCES IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITY that might be available during the summer. Some schools schedule parent-teacher conversations in May as a way to set goals for summer reading and learning activities.

MAKE SURE THAT EVERY CHILD HAS A LIBRARY CARD and help parents think about transportation options to and from the local public library.

Many schools SUBSCRIBE TO ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS during the school year. Programs like IXL, First in Math, Bedtime Math, RAZ Readers, and many more. These subscriptions are often 12 months long but teachers and parents are frequently unaware that they are available during the summer. Check to see if your online learning program is available during the summer and, if so make sure your parents know about it.

GIVE READING LISTS. Some schools have parents sign “Summer Reading Contracts” to commit to supporting summer reading.

USE DATA TO TRACK YOUR STUDENTS’ SUMMER LEARNING. Talk with your principal to see what data can be easily collected. And help parents track their own children’s activities: if they are not enrolled in an organized summer learning program, students or parents may be able to get a summer reading log from their public library to keep track of the time they spend reading during the summer.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER. Some teachers email their students, some use interactive programs like Google Docs to share stories or poems, some send their students a postcard or two to check in throughout the summer. Just a simple reminder that says, “Hi there, thinking of you. Hope you’re reading.”

JOIN THE SCHOLASTIC SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Principals, Teachers and Parents!
Have your school take the Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge, a free online reading program dedicated to encouraging kids to read every day this summer. This year’s Summer Reading Challenge focuses on helping kids achieve the “Summer Leap” — the learning or reading skills gained during the summer months that help students prepare to tackle the upcoming school year.

This year’s theme: “BE A READING SUPERHERO”
It’s all about believing in kids and encouraging them to be the best independent readers they can be. Encourage kids to read more books, log more reading minutes, earn rewards, and become a reading superhero. Visit www.scholastic.com/summer to learn more.

Get more great ideas for principals, teachers and parents from the new book, Summers Matter, written by National Summer Learning Association Board Chair, Matthew Boulay, PhD. Visit www.summers-matter.com to learn more.