

From: **National Summer Learning Association**

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Hundreds of Communities to Celebrate National Summer Learning Day on July 13
America gets schooled in turning summer slide into summer stride

BALTIMORE, MD, MAY 31, 2017 – What happens when learning takes a vacation during summer break? Research shows that summers without quality learning opportunities hold our nation’s youth back – year after year – in core subjects like math and reading, and in life experiences like college and career exposure. In fact, the math and reading skills low-income students lose each summer are cumulative and contribute significantly to the achievement gap between lower - and higher - income students. See *Summer by the Numbers* Infographic [here](#).

That’s why July 13 has been designated as **National Summer Learning Day** – an advocacy day aimed at elevating the importance of keeping all kids learning, safe and healthy during the summer. Led by the [National Summer Learning Association](#) (NSLA), National Summer Learning Day unites the country in advocacy efforts and celebrations hosted by hundreds of partner organizations from libraries to parks and recreation centers and civic and non-profit groups that intend to double last year’s goal and reach two million youth served. NSLA’s *Smarter Summers, Brighter Futures* [website](#) supports promotion of National Summer Learning Day with an events calendar, summer meals locator, and user-friendly resources for families, summer programs providers, and municipal leaders – all to help keep kids healthy and engaged during the summer break.

An [art and essay contest](#) on why summers matter kicks off the countdown to National Summer Learning Day for youth in grades K-12. NSLA will also announce the 2017 recipients of the New York Life Foundation ***Excellence in Summer Learning Awards*** and launch the *Smarter Summers, Brighter Futures* national awareness campaign.

From engaging poetry, dance and music programs in Houston, Texas and an integrated arts and STEM program in Charleston, South Carolina to computer and robotics classes in Middletown, Connecticut and comprehensive mathematics programs coupled with mentoring in Detroit, Michigan, the 2017 National Summer Learning Day will elevate the importance of summer learning as a solution to closing the achievement and opportunity gaps in our country.

This year, National Summer Learning Day falls in the midst of proposed federal budget cuts that could have detrimental effects on millions of young people in summer and afterschool programs. The Trump administration has proposed eliminating the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program—the only designated source of federal support, an annual \$1.1 billion, for summer and afterschool programs. Since the 1990s, the program has funded nearly 9,600 centers nationwide—most located in schools in high-poverty communities.

“On average, taxpayers invest \$10-12,000 per child during the school year -- then we walk away for two to three months of the summer. We essentially let 20 percent of students’ academic growth be lost over the summer and fall short in supporting the 13 million children in food insecure homes,” says Matthew Boulay, Ph.D., NSLA founder and CEO.

The proposed cuts would affect the more than 1 million children now enrolled in federally supported programs across the country. Bipartisan support for 21st CCLC in Congress is strong and to continue raising awareness, [NSLA has organized a Hill Day](#) for summer learning advocates on Wednesday, June 28 in Washington, DC. The event will host summer learning organizations and education experts from around the country to discuss funding, the need to support 21st CCLC, and offer opportunities to build relationships with relevant members of the offices of state and district representatives.

“Summer programming and summer meals for our youth must be recognized as an indispensable investment in the education and well-being of our 50 million public school students in America. Many summer programs across the country are producing remarkable outcomes for young people and that’s reason to invest in their future and celebrate on National Summer Learning Day,” Matthew Boulay adds.

While the “summer slide” is well documented as having significant consequences on the country’s most vulnerable students, the benefits of engaging children in summer learning opportunities are well documented too. Recently, the RAND Corporation published new findings from a Wallace Foundation [study](#), the largest-ever study of summer learning, which showed that students with high attendance in free, five to six-week, voluntary summer learning programs experienced educationally meaningful benefits in math and reading. This evidence, among other findings, will anchor national advocacy efforts to protect critical federal funding streams for summer and afterschool programs.

National Summer Learning Day is supported in part by the following corporate, media and program partners: *Allstate, Best Buy/Geek Squad Academy, EverFi, Carson-Dellosa Publishing, Scholastic Inc., Umpqua Bank, Afterschool Alliance, Campaign for Grade Level Reading, Encore.org's Generation to Generation Campaign, Learning Heroes, National League of Cities, No Kid Hungry and Urban Libraries Council.*

About the National Summer Learning Association

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works in summer learning, develops and delivers community capacity-building offerings and convenes and empowers key actors to embrace summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. For more information, visit www.summerlearning.org

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