Summer Learning Toolkit—A Deeper Dive: Creating Site Climate and Culture
Speakers

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- Goal of the National Summer Learning Project study and publications is to help establish and sustain effective programs.

- The Wallace Foundation, the RAND Corporation, and five urban school districts (Boston; Dallas, Duval County, Florida; Pittsburgh; and Rochester)

- Five published reports, including the most recent: “Getting to Work on Summer Learning: Recommended Practices for Success, 2nd Ed.”
Getting to Work on Summer Learning

The four factors related to effective summer learning programs.

- Sufficient duration
- Regular attendance
- Quality instruction
- Positive climate
Getting to Work on Summer Learning

Key takeaways:

- **Academic Curricula & Instruction**
- **Enrichment Activities & Their Implementation**
- **Teacher Selection & Professional Development**
- **Student Recruitment & Attendance**
- **Positive Summer Climate**
- **Planning & Management**
- **Program Costs & Revenue**
Getting to Work on Summer Learning

Key takeaways.

- Student Recruitment & Attendance
- Positive Summer Climate
- Planning & Management
- Teacher Selection & Professional Development
Summer Learning Toolkit

- Academic Curricula & Instruction
- Enrichment Activities & Their Implementation
- Student Recruitment & Attendance
- Academic & Enrichment
- Planning
- Staffing
- Site Climate
- Planning & Management
- Teacher Selection & Professional Development
- Program Costs & Revenue
- Positive Summer Climate

Academic Curricula & Instruction

Enrichment Activities & Their Implementation

Student Recruitment & Attendance

Academics & Enrichment

Planning

Staffing

Site Climate

Planning & Management

Teacher Selection & Professional Development

Program Costs & Revenue

Positive Summer Climate
Summer Learning Toolkit

Teacher Selection & Professional Development
Evidence-based tools and guidance for delivering effective programs

summerlearningtoolkit.org
Getting to Work on Summer Learning
Recommended Practices for Success, 2nd Ed.

Heather L. Schwartz, Jennifer Sloan McCombs, Catherine H. Augustine, Jennifer T. Leschitz

Customizable Tools | Tip Sheets | District Samples

SUMMER LEARNING TOOLKIT
- Academics & Enrichment
- Staffing
- Planning
- Site Climate
- Student Recruitment
During the summer, low-income students lose ground compared to their wealthier peers. But summer can also be a time to help level the playing field through high-quality, summer learning programs that research shows produce measurable benefits in math, reading and social and emotional learning.

With more than 50, evidence-based tools and resources—drawn from the work of five urban school districts and their partners, and aligned with research from RAND—the Summer Learning Toolkit helps educators deliver programs that make a real difference.

Watch the video to learn more.

Read RAND’s full set of recommendations in *Getting to Work on Summer Learning: Recommended Practices for Success, 2nd Edition*
Site Climate

Creating a warm and welcoming environment

Equipping staff to implement the mission

Planning for logistics that impact site climate

Site Climate

Site climate refers to the quality and character of the program, relationships, and teaching and learning practices that shape youth and staff experiences. It's the foundation for the shared norms, goals and values that define the program culture and environment. RAND found that sites with an inclusive friendly climate and engaged staff promote both positive youth experiences and regular attendance. Students benefit from programs marked by clarity of purpose, consistency, warmth and engagement. Positive site climates rarely develop on their own and instead require deliberate effort. Rather, program leaders should define goals for a positive site climate early in the planning process so it can inform key elements of staff planning, training and site logistics (see more in Staffing and Professional Development).
Creating a warm and welcoming environment

A warm and welcoming environment helps students feel safe, appreciated and bonded with staff and peers. In a positive site climate, students and staff know what to expect and what is expected of them.

- **Be consistent with behavior:** Develop and apply appropriate student behavior policies that are aligned with the climate you want to create at your site. Check out Rochester's approach in their staff handbook.

- **Break the ice:** Include “getting-to-know-you” activities in both staff training and the program's first week.

- **Have fun:** Plan daily and weekly rituals that lift up student voices in songs, chants and recognition. Showcase student work and program themes in décor. Pittsburgh’s site leadership handbook provides good examples.

**Related Resources**

- **Tip Sheet - Promoting Student Participation and Positive Experiences**
  - Best practices for attendance, family outreach and site climate
  - [Guidance](#)
  - [Tip Sheet](#)
  - [Download All (zip)](#)

**Creating consistent and clear expectations for staff and participants is vital to establishing a positive site climate.**
Equipping staff to implement the mission

Your program’s staff are important “culture keepers” and will benefit from clear guidance and opportunities to contribute to the site’s climate. Equip them with the resources and learning opportunities they need to be successful.

- **Put it in writing:** Develop a staff manual with the program’s mission, vision, policies and leadership structure.
- **Assign clear staff roles:** Identify who monitors meals, leads classes and helps transition students to and from classes.
- **Provide ample time for training and planning:** Develop a training schedule and agenda that include time for both program orientation and site-team collaborative planning (see more in Staffing and Professional Development).

**Related Resources**

- **Sample – Pittsburgh Site Leadership Handbook**
  
  Describes staff roles and includes staff training agendas

  [Guidance](pdf)
The toolkit also includes a Planning Calendar to keep track of the various factors that impact site climate.

Planning for logistics that impact site climate

While staffing and policies are important elements of a site’s climate, many other factors influence the experience for students and staff. These include the quality of the program’s physical space, meals, transportation and supplies.

- **Select sites thoughtfully**: Keep in mind the anticipated number of students, special facility or equipment needs, planned capital improvements and school feeder patterns.

- **Keep it together**: Confirm that meal and snack times do not break up instructional blocks.

- **Be an early bird**: Test your bus routes prior to the program’s first day. Ensure supplies are delivered at least one week prior to the start of the program.

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<th>12-MONTH SUMMARY</th>
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<td><strong>PLANNING CATEGORY</strong></td>
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<td>Planning and Management</td>
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<td>Continuous Improvement Process</td>
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The Summer Planning Calendar is also available in printed format.

**Related Resources**

**Tool - Summer Planning Calendar**
Comprehensive to-do list by month and topic paired with expert guidance

**Companion Guide** (pdf)
ROC Summer

-The Wallace Foundation Support
-Community Wide Collaboration

-Provide Safe, Engaging, and High Quality Summer Learning Opportunities for students in the Rochester City School District.
-Prevent Summer Learning Loss
Building Relationships Early On

- Meet & Greet
- Team Building/ Professional Learning
- Communication
Rituals and Routines

- Staff Handbook
- Establish School Wide Expectation
- Weekly Character Traits and Activities
- Student Acknowledgement System
- Discipline Policies
Student Supports

- Staffing Needs
  - Counselors
  - Social Workers
  - Behavior Intervention Specialists

- Professional Learning

- Curriculum
  - Morning Meetings
  - School-Wide Celebrations
  - Enrichment Opportunities
  - Student Voice and Choice
Summer Starts in September

A Comprehensive Planning Guide For Summer Learning Programs
Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment

SL PQA
UNIQUE PROGRAM CULTURE

- Program Principles
- Program Spirit
- Physical Environment
- Leadership Opportunities
- Rites of Passage
- Culminating & Special Events
Program has principles that set culture through continuous communication of key ideals, strengths or talents that describe participants and staff. Principles are integrated into most program activities and rituals.
Program creates a **spirit of community and pride** among all young people through:
- Weekly or daily shared traditions
- Group Identity
- Awards for positive actions or attitudes
Physical environment promotes **creative thinking and exploration**.

- Different
- Thematic
- Flexible workspace
Youth are empowered to take on increasing responsibility and leadership roles.

- Public speaking
- Facilitating activities
- Choosing projects
- Recognizing peers
Rites of passage recognize growth, skill-building, and transitions.
- Completing projects
- Years of participation
- Graduation ceremony
- Alumni
- Special roles
CULMINATING & SPECIAL EVENTS

Event rewards youth for their success and gives all youth an opportunity to **showcase their work or new skills** to invited guests. Special events are a way to involved **parents, families, and the community** in your program.
NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING DAY WEEK
JULY 8-13, 2019
Quality Summer Programs

Professional development is essential.

Plant the seeds now for summer program success.

Reflections on a civil rights learning journey.

Published by Steck-Vaughn Media, LLC, National School Association.
Tools to Build On: Creating constructive climates in out-of-school time

UNDERSTANDING HATE AND BIAS
When incidents of bias occur, your response is critical for maintaining the trust and respect of youth and their families.
More Info & Watch

SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY
Afterschool programs can create a safe and welcoming environment for immigrant students and families and cultivate a sense of belonging and overall wellbeing.
More Info & Watch

ENGAGING IN THE TOUGH CONVERSATION
Helping youth constructively address complicated issues in a safe space can enable them to engage more purposefully with one another and their communities.
More Info & Watch

BUILDING COMMUNITY BETWEEN POLICE AND YOUTH
Afterschool and summer learning programs can be an integral partner facilitating and building positive relationships between youth and law enforcement.
More Info & Watch
Summer planning webinar series

Part I – Getting to Work on Summer Learning & Summer Learning Toolkit

Part II – Summer Learning Toolkit, A Deeper Dive: Keys to Staffing & Professional Development

Part III – Summer Learning Toolkit, A Deeper Dive: Creating Site Climate and Culture
Thank you!