

The end of the school year marks the start of summer slide in math and reading for millions of young people across of the country. Many school districts, communities, and states across the country are undertaking major steps to keep kids learning throughout the summer. In 2015, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) tracked 172 state bills affecting summer learning.



State of Summer Learning

2015 State Policy Snapshot



Research shows that summer learning loss is a significant contributor to the achievement gap — a gap which remains constant during the school year but widens during summer break.

Every summer, low-income youth lose two to three months in reading achievement while their higher-income peers make slight gains. And, most youth lose about two months of grade-level equivalency in math skills in the summer.

Year after year, these losses accumulate. By the end of third grade, four out of every five low-income students fail to read proficiently, making them four times more likely to drop out of high school, according to a report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

By fifth grade, cumulative years of summer learning loss can leave low-income students 2.5 to three years behind their peers.

Summer nutrition is also a significant issue. Six out of every seven school children who qualify for federally funded meals during the school year do not have access to those meals during the summer, according to the Food Research Action Center.

KEY THEMES

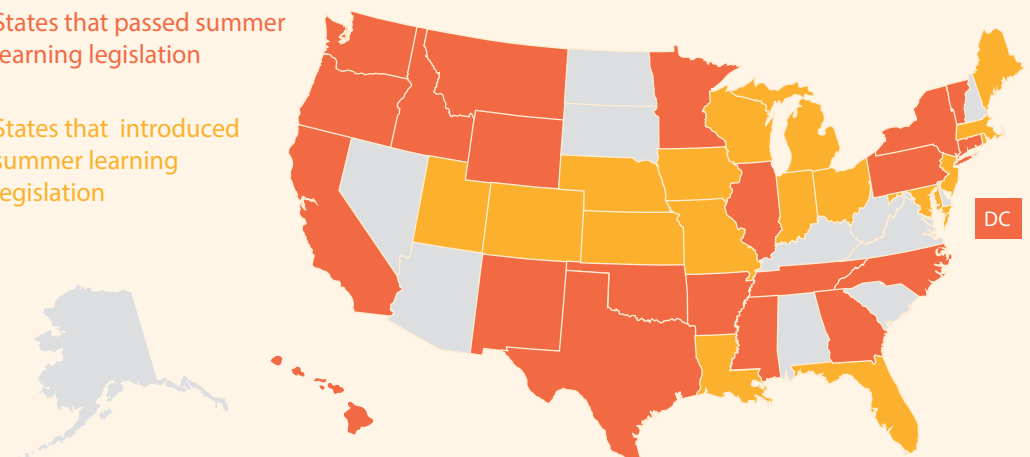
- Incorporating/promoting summer learning within connected education movements like afterschool, community schools, community investment initiatives, and expanded learning time
- Boosting summer learning in public libraries
- Sponsoring programs that focus on middle school, high school, girls, low-income students, and gifted students
- Engaging students in career exploration and skill development through educational and jobs programs
- Improving staffing and safety standards for summer child care and programs
- Promoting summer as a time for students to explore topics of interest, such as STEM, STEAM, digital learning, arts, and recreational activities
- Establishing and expanding commissions and councils to study, develop, and implement strategic plans for learning outside of the traditional school day
- Proclamations and resolutions commemorating National Summer Learning Day and other out-of-school time educational activities

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia passed 40 pieces of legislation affecting summer learning

(not including appropriations bills funding existing programs)

■ States that passed summer learning legislation

■ States that introduced summer learning legislation



INVESTMENTS IN SUMMER AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Of primary importance to the field is greater investment in summer and afterschool programs, in line with the need and demand for these critical resources. In 2015, states increased investments and piloted new grant programs to direct more funding into out-of-school time. Though ultimately not passed, California made significant progress toward passage of an increase in the After School Education and Safety (ASES) daily rate. Similarly, Oregon continued work toward expanding a promising summer library pilot program.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **Massachusetts:** Increased budget appropriation for the After-School and Out-of-School Grants (ASOST) grant program



SPOTLIGHT ON: LITERACY

Building on the momentum of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, more states are passing legislation that incorporates summer learning as a required or optional strategy for getting students to read proficiently by the end of third grade. However, recent research demonstrates that legislation rarely incorporates best practices for effective summer school programs, leaving states and districts to set these standards through regulation and implementation strategies. Summer school or summer reading tutoring is typically one of several options that districts may offer to students and families for literacy support.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **Oklahoma SB630:** Providing for intensive remediation of students with certain scores on reading assessments
- **Wyoming SF74:** Supplemental at-risk financial assistance program for summer school and extended day intervention and remediation programs

Resources:

[Summer School and Reading Proficiency](#)

[How to Make Summer Reading Programs Effective](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON: STEM

Investments in science, technology, engineering, and math education and career development are growing across the country. Summer is recognized as an ideal time for students to engage in hands-on STEM learning, explore their STEM career interests, and develop skills imperative for working in STEM fields such as collaboration and creative problem-solving. Partnerships between schools, community organizations, and STEM-field companies are ideal for bringing cutting-edge resources to students inside and outside of the classroom.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **Tennessee SB453:** Promoting and expanding the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in K-12 public schools across Tennessee through the Tennessee STEM Innovation Network

Resource:

[STEM Resources for summer learning programs](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON: LIBRARIES

In almost every community or neighborhood, the public library is a bedrock institution that plays a critical role in keeping kids of all ages safe and productively engaged during the summer months. Formal and informal summer library programs provide reading materials, guided-learning activities in many subjects, summer meals, and access to many family resources. New research and recognition is promoting the possibilities for summer learning at the library. Legislation introduced

but not passed would have expanded selected state libraries' investments in summer reading programs.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **California SCR31:** Recognizing California Library Week

Resources:

[Report from NSLA and the Urban Libraries Council: Accelerate Summer: A Partnership for Learning](#)

[Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge at the Chicago Public Library](#)

STUDYING THE ISSUES MORE DEEPLY

States are beginning to look at expanded-learning time in a much more strategic way, with states like Massachusetts, Texas, and Washington having already created such commissions in recent years, and New Jersey, Nebraska, and Vermont introducing similar bills in 2015. These councils serve an important role in bringing many partners and agencies to the table to discuss opportunities to connect and support learning and other student needs beyond the regular school day.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **Arizona SB210:** To create the Governor's Advisory Commission on National Service and Volunteerism
- **Hawaii HR57, SR120:** Requesting the Department of Education to organize and coordinate out-of-school programs for kindergarten through twelfth grade and identify funding opportunities for current and future department of education out-of-school programs
- **Louisiana HCR81:** Creating the Task Force on Summer Hunger
- **Washington SB5721:** Expanding the membership of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Council

Resource:

[NSLA 2016 policy priorities](#)

RECOGNITION OF SUMMER'S POTENTIAL

Summer learning appeared in several statewide proclamations, resolutions, and recognitions of important education initiatives this year. NSLA encourages states to support this recognition with policy and budgetary commitments that reflect the recognized significance of these activities and programs in combatting summer learning loss.

Example of legislation passed in 2015

- **California SCR14:** Arts Education Month
- **Georgia HR819, SR69:** Georgia STEM Day
- **Illinois SR161:** Preventing Lost Potential Day
- **Pennsylvania HR358:** Summer Reading Games Months
- **Texas HR598:** Expanded Learning Opportunities Day at the State Capitol

Resource:

[National Summer Learning Day is July 14, 2016!](#)

[Find information and a sample legislative proclamation at \[www.summerlearning.org\]\(http://www.summerlearning.org\).](#)



The vision of the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is for every child to be safe, healthy, and engaged in learning during the summer. To realize that vision, our mission is to connect and equip schools, providers, communities, and families to deliver high-quality summer learning opportunities to our nation's youth to help close the achievement gap and support healthy development.

www.summerlearning.org  