

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.

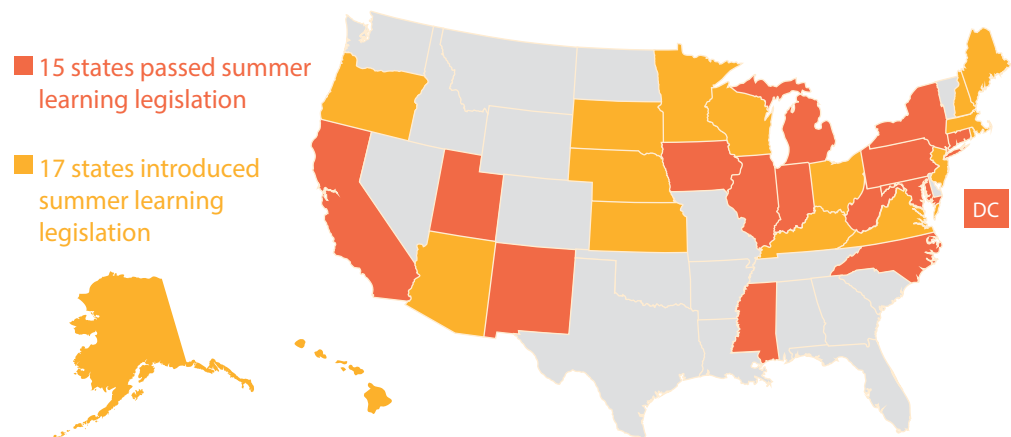
Summer nutrition is also a significant issue. Six out of every seven school children who qualify for federally funded meals during the school year do not have access to those meals during the summer, according to the Food Research Action Center.

**THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR** marks the start of summer slide in math and reading for millions of young people. Across the country, states are undertaking major steps to keep kids learning throughout the summer. In 2016, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) tracked 193 state bills affecting opportunities for summer learning.

In addition to supporting specific kinds of programs such as STEM learning, community schools and youth employment, states are turning an eye toward implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and opportunities for programming that best fits the needs of local communities. We continue to see states recognize the opportunities to extend learning and other supports beyond the school day and year, when student needs don't end just because the bell rings.

### Fifteen states and the District of Columbia passed 40 pieces of legislation affecting summer learning in 2016

(not including appropriations bills funding existing programs)



#### SPOTLIGHT ON: LITERACY

States are refining legislation from recent years related to elementary reading proficiency, building on programs that are working, targeting students most at-risk and adjusting requirements around student retention or promotion at the end of third grade. Summer school or summer reading programs is typically one of several options that districts can offer to students and families for literacy support.



#### Examples of legislation passed in 2016

- **New Mexico SB81:** Expands the 25-day summer reading extension program to fourth and fifth grade students who are not reading on grade level. Previously, the state had successfully piloted and evaluated this program for students in kindergarten through third grade. This bill appropriates \$2 million for this pilot for FY 2017.
- **Mississippi SB2157:** Prohibits promotion to the fourth grade of any student who is not reading on grade level, and requires an individual intensive literacy instruction plan that documents strategies for improvement, including summer reading camps.
- **Iowa HF2413:** Clarifies the screening and standards-based assessments used to determine students who are persistently at-risk and not reading proficiently, in order to target these students for summer reading and other remediation programs.

#### Resources:

[Summer School and Reading Proficiency](#)  
[How to Make Summer Reading Programs Effective](#)  
[Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters](#)

## SPOTLIGHT ON: STEM

Investments in STEM (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 future careers in STEM fields such as collaboration and creative problem-solving. Partnerships between schools, universities and STEM-field companies are ideal for bringing cutting-edge resources to students inside and outside of the classroom.

### Examples of legislation passed in 2016

- **Maryland HB115:** Establishes a grant program for public schools, with a required budget appropriation of at least \$250,000. These schools must have either existing robotics programs or partnerships with nonprofit robotics club. The grants are not restricted to programs or clubs that happen during the school day or year, which allows existing summer STEM clubs and camps to be expanded under this program.
- **California SCR161:** Expresses the resolve of the legislature to expand STEM programming and career pipeline opportunities in the Los Angeles Basin, particularly for students living in low-income communities.

#### Resources:

[STEM in the Summer: The Joy of Meaningful Learning](#)  
[STEM Policy Brief: The Power of Summer](#)



## SPOTLIGHT ON: SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Expanded opportunities for youth to work during the summer provide youth not only a wage, but a chance to learn social and soft skills that are valuable in both school and the workforce. Engaging students through mentorship, training and paid work is shown to have positive impacts on their behavior, skills and academic performance. Typically these programs are launched and led by mayors' offices and local workforce development boards, but states are beginning to add funding and guidance as they recognize the value these programs contribute to building and maintaining a strong local workforce statewide.

### Examples of legislation passed in 2016

- **California AB2063:** Allows students as young as 14 to receive credit for completing a work experience related to a career/technical education program. This work experience may take place during the summer months.
- **District of Columbia B607:** Extends the highly successful Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program, which reaches up to 21,000 youth aged 14-24 each summer.
- **Pennsylvania HB400:** Provides for workplace-based training and learning experiences for high school students with disabilities, including during out-of-school time.



#### Resource:

[Summer Youth Employment Programs Offer More than Just a Summer Job](#)

## SPOTLIGHT ON: PARTNERSHIPS

States recognize that education initiatives cannot put the burden on schools alone. Community-based organizations, youth-serving agencies and families round out the ecosystem of learning for students. States are encouraging and supporting cross-sector partnerships that improve collaboration among these partners, and create efficiency through data-sharing, aligned funding and other strategies.

### Examples of legislation passed in 2016

- **Maryland HB1402:** Creates the Public School Opportunities Enhancement Program, to provide grants to local school systems, community schools and nonprofit organizations for expanding or creating extended day and summer enhancement programs, and for some school-day programs. This bill requires use of the Maryland Out-of-School Time Programs' Quality Standards Framework to monitor and assess the quality

of funded OST programs. There is an annual \$7,500,000 appropriation included in the law.

- **Utah SB67:** Creates the Partnerships for Student Success Grant program, to improve educational outcomes for low income students through the formation of cross-sector partnerships (including schools and nonprofit organizations) that use data to align and improve efforts focused on student success. These partnerships target key education milestones such as kindergarten readiness, third grade reading, eighth grade algebra and development of career skills that are frequently supported by summer interventions and activities.
- **California AB1557:** Adds nonprofit, recreational youth sports leagues and clubs to the list of organizations that may use public school facilities with limited cost.

#### Resource:

[Meaningful Linkages Between Summer Programs, Schools, and Community Partners: Conditions and Strategies for Success](#)



## EXPLORATION OF SUMMER'S POTENTIAL

States continue to create exploratory commissions to study the need and opportunities for summer and afterschool programming across their communities. Often these commissions produce recommendations and reports that lead to grant programs, quality standards and improved partnerships between schools and community partners.

### Examples of legislation passed in 2016

- **Indiana SB251:** Establishes the out of school time learning advisory board for a three-year period, which will consider and report on existing out of school time programs and recommend policies, procedures, funding levels and eligibility criteria.
- **Maryland SB905:** Establishes a Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, focused on recommendations to prepare students for 21st century workforce needs under a master education plan. Programs that incorporate summer learning, such as community schools, apprenticeships and internships, and the 21st Century Community Learning Center funding program are called out as opportunities to fund and execute this master plan.

#### Resource:

[Summers Matter: 10 Things Every Parent, Teacher, & Principal Should Know About June, July, & August](#)



## SPOTLIGHT ON: ESSA PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains many explicit references to summer learning and enrichment opportunities, as well as indirect uses that are a natural fit for summer activities. Many of these programs were established under the previous version of the law and are continued here. Title IV, in particular, acknowledges that schools cannot and should not do this work alone.

States will have new flexibility to make adjustments to their administration of these programs under ESSA, and in some cases the programs may have different requirements under ESSA.

#### Resource:


[NSLA ESSA Stakeholder Guide](#)



## JOIN US ON NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING DAY!



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](http://www.summerlearning.org)  

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