

CAMP-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



The Camp-School Partnership Demonstration Project is a collaborative initiative launched by the American Camp Association (ACA) and the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA), aimed at serving low-income, high-need students most affected by the pandemic.

Generously funded by The New York Life Foundation and Mott Foundations, ACA and NSLA are supporting 10 camps for two summers to address summer learning loss, the childcare gap, and post-pandemic effects on students enrolled in middle school.

In 2022, these innovative camp-school partnerships took place in seven states (Georgia, Wisconsin, California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Massachusetts) and impacted 1,643 students from 140 schools located within public districts or charter networks. Most of the participants schools are located in cities, serve majority students of color, and qualify for free/reduced-price lunch.

WE ARE EAGER TO CONNECT MORE CAMPS AND SCHOOLS!

If you are interested in creating a camp-school partnership in your city, please contact us!

We have the resources and connections to help you start building partnerships with state after school networks and to increase access for youth to high-quality summer learning opportunities.

Together, we can help students benefit from all that school-camp partnerships have to offer.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE!

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CAMP-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TIPS

Who should I try to connect with when reaching out to schools?

Common advocate roles:

- School-based: School counselor, community assistant/coordinator, director of admissions or operations, teachers, and, of course, principals or directors
- District/network-based: director of operations, director of schools and partnerships, and, of course, superintendent
- The participating camps with the most enrollment had a strong school advocate — someone who was their champion at the school-level

What kind of program should I pitch to the school?

Find out what the school needs and have a menu of options ready to present. In our project, most of the partnerships were a two- to five-day overnight program, focusing on goals the school found important (like personal growth, team-building, or science). Some camps have found great success in day-camp and school-year options, which better fit their community and are successful because of their strong relationships and collaboration with school and community leaders.

What are the additional expenses I can expect during a camp-school partnership?

Transportation, staffing, insurance, and operational costs.

What are the additional services I can provide to make this partnership successful?

- Provide before-camp training for teachers and chaperones
- Build trust based on relationships and grow excitement among families and the community through camp staff visits to school, open house, or info sessions.
- Ask the school or district registrar if there will be any requirements around information to collect from families, and data they need you to share about campers.
- Suggest the first year be a pilot program, with a goal to expand after they see its success.
- Create a strong partnership that can withstand staff turnover. Develop procedures and communication plans with your partner so the program transitions with new leadership.

What funding is available?

Camps can receive funding from The American Rescue Plan.