



**summer matters: a community landscape report**

# westchester & putnam

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**national summer  
learning association**





# intro

In 2017, the United Way of Westchester and Putnam (New York) commissioned the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to conduct a landscape assessment of its summer learning programs in. The assessment provides the United Way a chance to learn more about the range of summer opportunities available, as well as gaps in services or data. This report summarizes key data points from that assessment.

## SUMMER LEARNING IN WESTCHESTER & PUTNAM

New York's Westchester and Putnam counties are home to about 250,000 school-aged children and youth. Served primarily by non-profit organizations, nearly 2,000 of these children benefit from summer learning investments made by private philanthropy, school districts, and cities. Leading the area's drive for summer learning is the United Way of Westchester and Putnam (United Way). Working to stem summer learning loss for K-3 students, United Way is ambitious in its efforts to form of a comprehensive network of Campaign for Grade Level Reading network partners and working to join forces with seven local high-need communities through idea-sharing and collective decision-making.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Sixty percent of programs reported serving at least one meal each day.

One third offered 90 or more minutes of academic instruction each day.

Ninety-three percent of programs had paid staff. Over two-third worked with or had a certified teacher on staff (73%) and most had volunteer staff (60%).

## COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS OF WESTCHESTER & PUTNAM COUNTIES

Total 2016 City Population <sup>1</sup>	1,052,843
Percent of Persons Living Below Poverty Level <sup>1</sup>	7.5%
Total 2016 City Population under 18 in households	240,005
Percent of Adults with at least a High School Diploma <sup>1</sup>	60.4%
Percent of Adults with a Bachelor's degree or higher <sup>1</sup>	32.2%
Number of Students in District-run Schools <sup>2</sup>	177,646
Percent of District Students who are English Language Learners <sup>2</sup>	6.0%
Percent of District Students considered Economically Disadvantaged <sup>2</sup>	31.0%

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey, Community Facts for Putnam County and Westchester County, New York.  
<sup>2</sup> NYSED Data - Counties, 2016-17 Enrollment Data, Putnam County and Westchester County.  
[NSLA received data from 13 organizations offering 17 summer programs throughout Westchester and Putnam. You can find a full list of participating Organizations on the back cover.]







westchester & putnam counties, new york

13  
PARTICIPATING  
ORGANIZATIONS

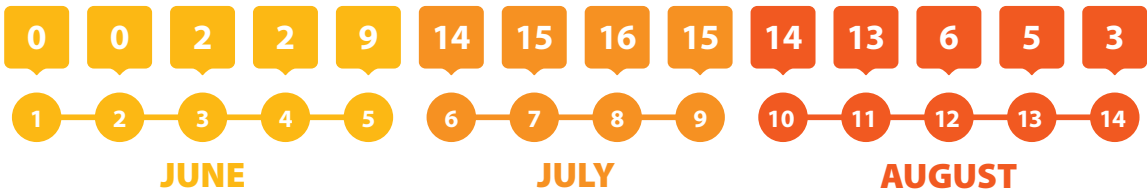
17  
PROGRAMS

15,986  
YOUTH SERVED

PROGRAM CONTENT AREAS	PERCENT
Literacy or Reading Skills	56%
Sports/Recreation	50%
Health and Nutrition	50%
Crafts	44%
STEM	38%
Math	38%
Social-emotional Learning	38%
Fine Arts (visual, performance, etc.)	38%
Academic Enrichment	25%
Summer Jobs/Career Prep	19%
College Access	19%
Bilingual Programming	6%
Other	6%
Academic Remediation/Credit Recovery	0%

## program calendar

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS OPERATING PER CALENDAR WEEK



53% OF PROGRAMS OPERATED 5-7 WEEKS | 35% OF PROGRAMS OPERATED 8 OR MORE WEEKS

### ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAMS BY GRADE

PRESCHOOL, K	7
GRADES 1-2	8
GRADES 3-4	8
GRADES 5-6	9
GRADES 7-8	6
GRADES 9-10	5
GRADES 11-12	4
TRANSITION TO COLLEGE	2

>Fifth and sixth graders were eligible for the most programs



### AMOUNT OF ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

AMOUNT OF ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION	PERCENT OF PROGRAMS
Less than 30 minutes	7%
30 minutes	20%
30-60 minutes	13%
60-90 minutes	0%
More than 90 minutes	33%

No academic instruction and/or literacy enrichment included 27%



93%  
HAD PAID STAFF

60%  
USED VOLUNTEERS

PROGRAM STAFF

73%  
WORKED WITH OR  
HAD A CERTIFIED  
TEACHER ON STAFF



### OUTREACH METHODS USED TO RECRUIT YOUTH

THROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, TEACHERS, OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

86%

PROGRAM ORIENTATION OR OPEN HOUSE INVITATION

57%

PHONE CALLS

43%

SOCIAL MEDIA

21%

MAILERS

43%

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT POSTED IN LIBRARIES, NEWSPAPERS

57%

ONLINE SUMMER PROGRAM DATABASE

50%

WORD OF MOUTH

36%

OTHER

57%

MEALS SERVED	NO. OF PROGRAMS
BREAKFAST	8
LUNCH	9
SUPPER/DINNER	2
DON'T PROVIDE MEALS	4

27% OF THE PROGRAMS DID NOT SERVE ANY MEALS  
60% SERVED LUNCH  
40% SERVED BREAKFAST AND LUNCH





## THE COMMUNITY INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE SUMMER LEARNING SYSTEMS

Developed in 2013, NSLA's Community Indicators of Effective Summer Learning Systems (CIESLS) rating scale is based on the theory that effective summer learning systems can provide more summer learning opportunities for youth, improve program quality, and improve outcomes for youth through coordinated and collaborative action at the community level.

Based on research on system-building, best practices in existing afterschool and summer systems, and a survey of community intermediaries and program providers, NSLA developed a set of 39 indicators that define the size, scope, and features of summer learning systems. These indicators are used to measure community progress in achieving system-building milestones in each of the rating scale's six domains:

- 1) Shared Vision and City-wide Coordination
- 2) Engaged Leadership
- 3) Data Management System
- 4) Continuous Quality Improvement
- 5) Sustainable Resources
- 6) Marketing and Communications

Key stakeholders in Westchester and Putnam were asked to self-assess the current state of the region's summer learning system based on the CIESLS. Their assessment is discussed below.

### 1) SHARED VISION AND CITY-WIDE COORDINATION

A shared vision for summer learning, which informs a community-wide summer learning action plan, can coordinate the efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders and support community-wide collaboration.

During a strategic planning meeting, participants noted the need to create a vision for summer, but wanted to be mindful of who was involved with defining this vision. They recognized that different towns and cities may have different needs, interests, and goals. They suggested gathering various stakeholders and engaging in community dialogs to facilitate this process.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends that the region work on creating a shared vision that will guide their system development. This shared vision should be at the base of forming a coordinating body and will help in identifying which partners are needed.

### 2) ENGAGED LEADERSHIP

Successful summer learning system-building requires community stakeholders and champions to advocate for summer programming, coordinate progress towards summer priorities, and share accountability for the development and implementation of the summer learning action plan.

Participants saw the need to educate leadership on the importance of summer before engaging them. This advocacy should come from a "grassroots" level—engaging the community to engage leadership. They also wanted the equitable distribution of year-round funds to be part of this conversation.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends solidifying the coordinating body, including the roles of the lead organization and stakeholder groups.

### 3) DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Model summer learning systems implement processes for data collection, sharing, and analysis across stakeholders.

Participants at the meeting wanted to know the status of data collection in the region—who has it, how is it being stored and how is it being accessed or shared. They felt a community-wide needs assessment was necessary to identify what data should be gathered and tracked in order to be able to make the case for summer learning.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends first identifying and coming to agreement on the common indicators that will form the basis for a city-wide standardized data collection and evaluation process.

### 4) CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Exemplary summer learning systems adopt a process for quality improvement at both the systemic and programmatic levels.

Participants were able to point to examples of quality improvement efforts that the region could build upon including work by the Boys and Girls Clubs, Town Camp, and the school district. They felt that summer programs might need a "carrot" to help incentivize their use a shared system for quality assessment.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends identifying common standards and tools to assess the quality of summer programs in the city as a next step in this area.

### 5) SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

Community system-building around summer learning should consider the funding targets and strategies for both program development and growth, and system capacity-building.

During the strategic planning meeting, participants noted the potential conflict that may exist between individual needs and the reality of meeting those needs. They wanted to prioritize conducting a needs assessment to identify those needs and identify common goals.

**Recommendation:** As a first step in this area, NSLA recommends conducting a deeper assessment of current summer funding resources that are being utilized in the region. As part of that assessment, attention should be given to the mix of funding that is being accessed from the following sources. Additionally, the assessment should include how resources are used to support various activities.

### 6) MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Exemplary summer learning systems identify community-wide strategies to understand the demand for summer programs, build awareness of the need and available resources, and support student recruitment and enrollment.

Participants felt current marketing dissemination efforts did not align. Local marketing did not seem to make its way up and out to other localities and state-level advocacy did not make its way down to the local level. No conceptual framework is being used, leading to a disconnect in the communication strategies.

**Recommendation:** As a first step, NSLA recommends developing a common message for summer in the city. This message should include input from a variety of stakeholder groups. This will allow for more buy-in from stakeholders and facilitate strengthen communication channels.





# participating organizations

Boys & Girls Club of Mount Vernon  
Challenge Camp  
Child's World Academy  
City of New Rochelle - Parks and Recreation  
Don Bosco Community Center  
Port Chester Carver Center  
The Children's Playhouse, Inc.

Westchester Community Opportunity  
Program, Inc.  
Westchester Library System  
White Plains YMCA  
White Plains Youth Bureau  
Yonkers Partners in Education (YPIE)  
YWCA of Yonkers

## Limitation of the Data

### Incomplete and Estimated Data

Complete data may not have been received from all targeted organizations and agencies for varying reasons. When considered as a whole, it is likely that incomplete and estimated data may have led to an underestimate of the total summer learning program landscape.

### Double Counting

Because youth can participate in more than one program during the summer, they may be counted multiple times in the data used for this report. Where possible, we attempted to remove duplicate counts of children and youth.

### Snapshot in Time

Data collection for this resource scan focused on summer 2017 and represents a snapshot in time. The extent to which providers are able to offer programs and the size of those programs may vary from year to year, sometimes substantially, based on available funding.

## About United Way of Westchester and Putnam

United Way helps local residents in Westchester and Putnam become self-sufficient and thrive in a stronger community.



## 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, offers expertise and support for programs and communities, and advocates for summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. NSLA's work is driven by the belief that all children and youth deserve high-quality summer learning experiences that will help them succeed in college, career, and life.

