Summer Starts in September! Planning for a Quality Summer Program

Leslie Gabay-Swanston
Director of Program and Systems Quality

@SummerLearning
SESSION OBJECTIVES

• Establish a shared understanding of why summers matter and researched-based indicators of quality
• Identify program best practices
• Develop 1-2 quality improvement goals for summer 2019
NSLA is a national, non-profit organization focused on the powerful impact of one achievable goal: investing in summer learning to help close the achievement gap. NSLA uses the power of research, advocacy, training, and policy to transform America’s neighborhoods and communities, one child at a time.

Our work is based on the simple idea that summer—a time that is easily overlooked yet critical to educational development—is bursting with possibility, and instrumental in closing the achievement gap between privileged children and our most vulnerable children.
Summer is the time of greatest inequity for young people. When schools are closed, many low income young people lack access to meals, books and other learning resources, and physical activity.
WHY SUMMERS MATTER

During the school year, resources are turned ON.

- Teachers/Mentors/Peers
- Meals
- Health Services
- Safe Supervision
- Books & Learning
WHY SUMMERS MATTER

During the summer, the faucet is turned OFF for low-income youth.
The achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families is roughly thirty to forty percent larger among children born in 2001 than among those born twenty-five years earlier.

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

9 IN 10 TEACHERS spend at least three weeks re-teaching lessons at the start of the school year.

Of families who pay for summer programs, the average weekly reported cost is $288 PER CHILD PER WEEK.

FOOD INSECURITY

In 2016, only ONE IN SEVEN youth eligible for the federal Summer Food Service Program received these subsidized meals during the summer.

Minority children gain weight up to **TWICE AS FAST** during the unstable months of the summer as during the school year.

Without summer counseling and support, **ONE THIRD** of first generation college attenders fall victim to the “summer melt” and fail to enroll in the fall, even after being accepted.

Waiting lists for summer youth jobs are **IN THE THOUSANDS** in most major cities, despite promising findings around reduced crime and mortality rates for participants.


Why Summers Matters

- Extensive opportunities for growth and learning
- Support for working families
- Spans transition periods
- Significant opportunities for partnerships
- Innovation and Experimentation
Elementary school students with high levels of attendance (at least five weeks) in voluntary SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS experience benefits in math and reading.

1. Review your experiences during the summer of 2018.
2. Identify one GEM—a genuinely exciting moment--that happened this past summer with your summer program.
3. Share your GEMS with one another!
WHY WE FOCUS ON QUALITY

Summer Learning Loss is real and Program Quality matters.
SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT
WHAT IS THE SL PQA?

1. Safe Environment
   • Emotional Safety
   • Healthy Environment
   • Emergency Preparedness
   • Health and Nutrition

2. Supportive Environment
   • Warm Welcome
   • Program Flow
   • Active Learning
   • Skill-Building and Encouragement
   • Reframing Conflict
   • Managing Feelings

3. Interaction
   • Belonging
   • Collaboration and Leadership
   • Adult Partners

4. Engagement
   • Planning, Choice, and Reflection
   • Learning Strategies
   • Higher Order Thinking

Supplemental Scales: Math and Literacy
Site Manager Interview, Greetings, Transitions, and Departures
LIBRARY SUMMER LEARNING MODELS

• Summer Reading PLUS
• Skill-based drop-in learning activities
• Focused enrollment programs
SUMMER STARTS IN SEPTEMBER

Summer Starts in September
A Comprehensive Planning Guide for Summer Learning Programs
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

• **PLAN**: Set quality improvement goals and develop and implement a plan for achieving them.
• **TRAIN**: Develop staff understanding and ownership of program quality goals and strategies.
• **ASSESS**: Look for evidence of quality improvement during the program.
• **REFLECT**: Review summer program data and debrief with key stakeholders.
Program Infrastructure
• Purpose
• Program Sustainability
• Planning
• Staff
• Partnerships

Point-of-Service
• Individualized
• Intentional
• Integrated
• Unique Program Culture
## Sample Quality Improvement Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Improvement Goal</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Assessment Strategy (How will you know if the program has improved?)</th>
<th>Who is accountable for the improvement?</th>
<th>Who else needs to be involved?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Set at least two specific, measurable, realistic, time-limited goals for youth outcomes each session that align with the mission and the needs of youth served. | • Talk to key stakeholders  
• Use results to write goals  
• Work with staff to develop objectives for each goal | - December - January | 1. Aligned evaluation strategy  
2. Measurable outcomes from beginning to end of summer | Program Director | Site Coordinators  
Teachers |
SMART GOALS

Specific: What do you want to do?
Measurable: How will you know when you've reached it?
Achievable: Is it in your power to accomplish it?
Realistic: Can you realistically achieve it?
Timely: When exactly do you want to accomplish it?
GREEN LIGHT, YELLOW LIGHT, RED LIGHT

• **GREEN LIGHT** - Something you want to take back and share with others at your program or an action you want to take to be part of the systems work.

• **YELLOW LIGHT** - Something you learned today that you want to learn more about or discuss with a colleague

• **RED LIGHT** – Something you see as a barrier to improving the quality of your program.
NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING WEEK
JULY 8-13, 2019
FOLLOW US

Find NSLA on social media to keep updated on #summerlearning

Follow us at Twitter.com/SummerLearning
Like us on Facebook.com/SmarterSummers
Subscribe to us at Youtube.com/SummerLearning
Leslie Gabay-Swanston
Director of Program and Systems Quality
leslie@summerlearning.org