



# Investing in Summer Learning Opportunities

Recommendations from the Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council



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The Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) is a public-private collaborative that envisions a day when all communities in Georgia have the resources to provide exceptional afterschool and summer programming. Our mission is to advance, connect, and support high quality afterschool and summer learning programs to promote the success of children and youth throughout Georgia.

In December 2020, GSAN convened the Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council to develop a shared region-wide summer learning agenda, increase and coordinate funding from public and private sources, and ensure that all of Greater Atlanta’s young people have access to high quality summer learning opportunities. The council also seeks to strengthen the quality of Greater Atlanta’s summer learning landscape and position Greater Atlanta as a leader in summer learning with greater investment and improved infrastructure to combat learning loss and inequities in youth development outcomes exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## Our Process

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### Community Landscape Assessment

In 2018, the United Way of Greater Atlanta and the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) commissioned the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to conduct a landscape assessment of summer learning programs in the Atlanta region. The findings of the community assessment and a self-assessment based on NSLA’s Community Indicators of Effective Summer Learning Systems (CIESLS) completed by key partners led to the release of “**Summer Matters: A Community Landscape Report**” in October 2019. The report concluded that **the Greater Atlanta region must fulfill two criteria to be properly equipped to increase access and strengthen the quality of summer learning: expand funding and engage leadership.**

### Summer Learning Council

To ensure that all of Greater Atlanta’s young people have access to high quality summer learning opportunities, **GSAN convened a Summer Learning Council to develop a shared region-wide summer learning agenda as well as increase and coordinate funding from public and private sources.** The council is comprised of key philanthropic, business, community, and civic leaders, along with school superintendents and summer learning program providers. The council engaged in five 2.5 hour long virtual working sessions between December 2020 to April 2021 to develop a shared vision and actionable recommendations informed by input from young people, families, summer learning program providers, and community partners.

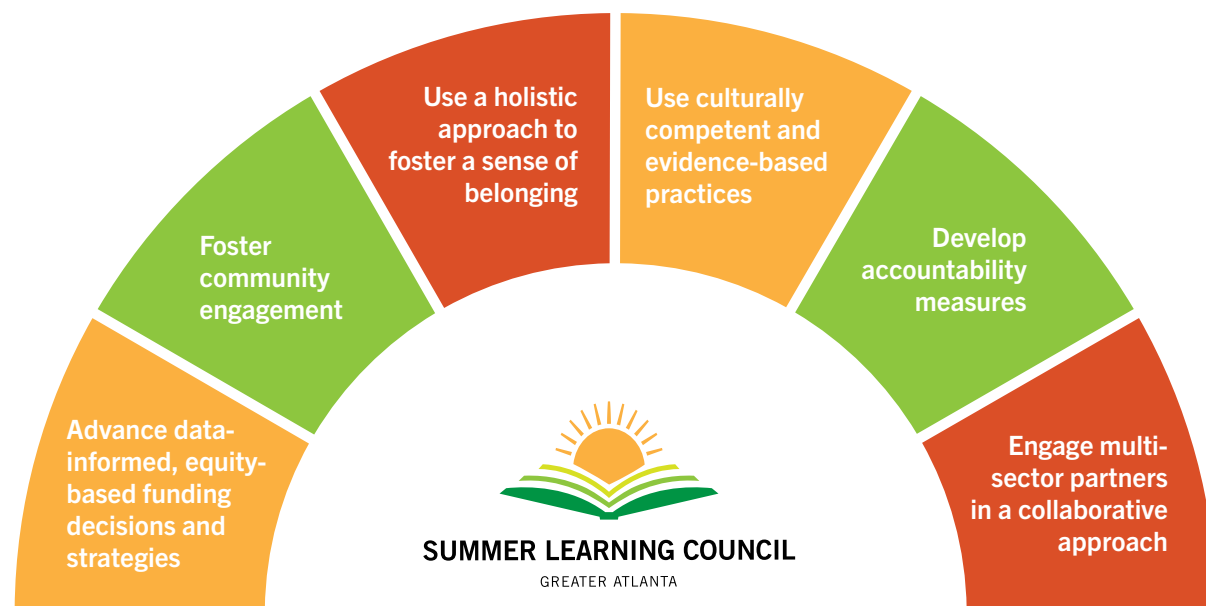


The Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council is comprised of key philanthropic, business, community, and civic leaders, along with school superintendents and summer learning program providers.

## What's At Stake

Nearly half a million children in Greater Atlanta live in communities with [low or very low child well-being](#) and lack basic opportunities and resources needed to thrive. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated gaps in unequal outcomes for children in under-resourced communities due to long-standing inequities in educational opportunities, systemic barriers, and significantly [fewer opportunities to drivers of economic mobility](#). Lack of affordable high quality summer learning access contributes to these unequal outcomes. The Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council has developed recommendations in order to strengthen the infrastructure and quality of Greater Atlanta's summer learning landscape, increase and coordinate funding, and serve the needs of the whole child. It is vital that Greater Atlanta implement these strategies to remove systemic barriers and create an equitable community where all children can thrive regardless of race or zip code.

### Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council Strategies to Advance Equity



The Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council envisions a day when all youth have access to high quality affordable summer learning opportunities. **High quality summer learning programs can close educational and opportunity gaps, support the positive development of the whole child, and can be a key strategy to improving child well-being.** Greater Atlanta has an opportunity to be a leader in this space, but greater investment, infrastructure, and planning are needed to truly move the needle.

In October 2019, the National Summer Learning Association released "[Summer Matters: A Community Landscape Report](#)," commissioned by the United Way of Greater Atlanta and the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN). The report found that while many children and youth across Greater Atlanta are offered a variety of programming, persistent gaps in educational outcomes still exist between students from under-resourced communities and their more affluent peers. **Nearly half a million children in Greater Atlanta live in communities with low or very low child well-being lacking the necessities needed to thrive.** Only 44.1% of 3rd graders are exceeding reading standards. And only 46.7% of 8th graders are exceeding math standards. In addition, only 80% of high school students across the region are graduating.<sup>1</sup>

There are many causes for these achievement gaps including lack of quality early childhood education, low literacy rates, suspension or expulsion from school, developmental delays and disability, low parental literacy, exposure to childhood trauma, and poor school attendance—often due to illness or lack of transportation. **This achievement gap is widened because most students do not have access to high quality summer learning programs.** Many children and youth lose other vital supports including access to healthy meals, academic enrichment, social and emotional support, arts, sports, and connections to healthcare during the summer.<sup>2</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated systemic inequities and barriers that Greater Atlanta's youth and families face in their daily lives. According to a recent study, "[Quantifying the Impact of COVID-19 School](#)



[Closures on Metro Atlanta Student Proficiency](#)," about **21,000 fewer students in English language arts and 29,000 fewer in math are now on track for grade-level proficiency** in Metro Atlanta. Two measures of proficiency correlated to long term student success are also falling, with **3rd grade reading levels expected to decline by 3.5% and 8th grade math proficiency expected to decline by 4.8%**. Projections are looking even worse for Black, Latinx, and economically disadvantaged students.<sup>3</sup> Summer presents a unique opportunity to change this trajectory by providing support to youth and their families, especially in underserved communities, and ensuring future success.

We must come together as a community to ensure youth success – a key part of that is summer learning opportunities. To ensure that all youth across Greater Atlanta have access to high quality affordable summer learning opportunities, we must work together to implement **a region-wide action plan that targets the needs of the community, including youth, families, providers, and educators, in order to build capacity, fill gaps, and promote equity.** Philanthropic, business, civic, community, and education leaders must work in partnership to find innovative solutions and build sustainable systems that fulfill the needs of the whole child and tackle the long standing systemic barriers that have hindered the success of children from under resourced communities and communities of color.

# The Case for Summer Learning

## Summer Slide

Students suffer a decline in reading ability and academic skills during the summer months due to lack of opportunities.



Most students lose **2 months of math skills** & low-income students lose an additional **2-3 months of reading skills**.<sup>4</sup>



Summer learning loss in elementary school accounts for **2/3 of the achievement gap** in reading between low-income and middle-income youth by 9th grade.<sup>5</sup>

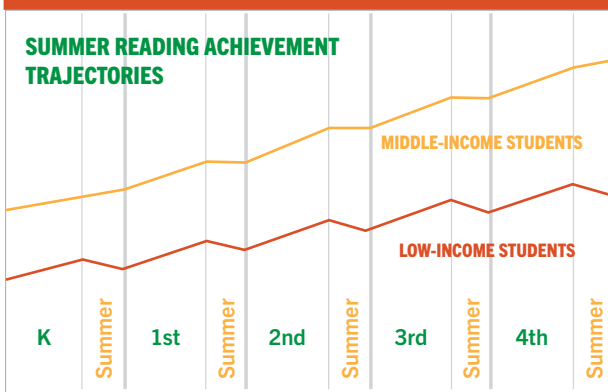


More than half of U.S. students on average lose nearly **40% of school year gains** because they experience summer learning losses 5 years in a row.<sup>6</sup>



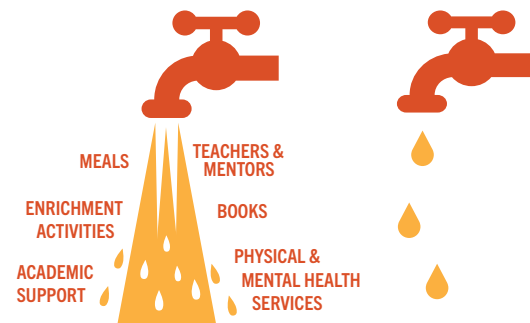
**9 in 10** teachers spend at least **3 weeks** re-teaching lessons at the start of the school year.<sup>7</sup>

## Average Reading Achievement Level<sup>8</sup>



## Faucet Theory

The “resource faucet” is on during the school year but the flow of resources slows during summer for students with limited access to resources.<sup>9,10</sup>



## Summer Melt

**1/3 of first generation college attenders** fail to enroll in the fall without summer counseling and support – even after being accepted.<sup>11</sup>



## Summer Meals

Only **1 in 7 youth** who qualify for free or reduced price school lunch during the school year are reached by the Summer Nutrition Programs nationally, which include the Summer Food Services Program and the National School Lunch Program.



In Summer 2019, Georgia Summer Nutrition Programs only reached **13.6% of youth** who qualified for free or reduced lunch and missed out on an additional **\$19.1 million** in federal funding.<sup>12</sup>

## Regular attendance in high quality summer learning program can improve academic outcomes.

The National Summer Learning Project examined the effectiveness of voluntary summer learning programs developed by five school districts and their local community partners and found:

- After the first summer, students regularly attending voluntary summer programming performed higher on math state assessments compared to non-participating students.
- After the second summer, students regularly attending voluntary summer programming performed better in math and language arts compared to non-participating students.<sup>13</sup>

A three-year study of 438 students from schools in areas with high levels of poverty showed that students with high attendance in the Teach Baltimore Summer Academy experienced significant gains in literacy. Students in the summer academy gained **40 – 50% of one grade level advantage over peers not in the program**.<sup>14</sup>







In 2019, Dallas Afterschool implemented a six-week literacy intervention using 15 literacy tutors for 600 K-3rd graders at 8 summer camp sites and found that **92% of students did not experience summer learning loss in literacy**.<sup>15</sup>



HEALTHY MEALS ENRICHMENT  
 ACADEMIC RECOVERY MENTORING WORKFORCE SKILLS LITERACY  
**SUMMER PROGRAMS PROVIDE**  
 SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS STEM PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROJECT BASED LEARNING  
 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

High quality summer programs play a critical role in inspiring learning, providing enrichment activities, keeping kids safe and healthy, and supporting working families. High quality summer programs can close educational and opportunity gaps.<sup>16</sup>

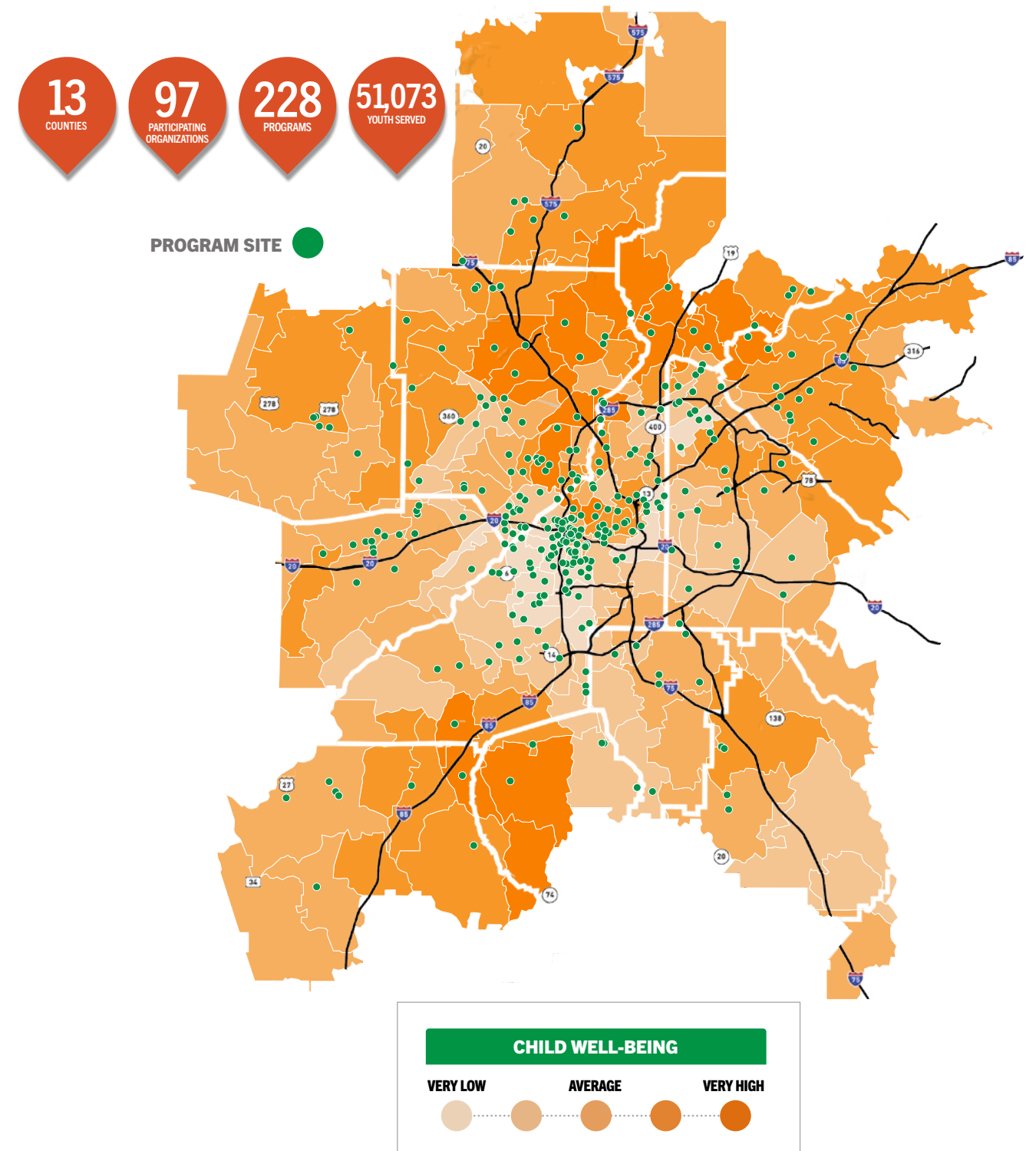
**HIGH QUALITY SUMMER PROGRAMS:**

-  Broaden students' horizons
-  Include a wide variety of activities
-  Help youth build skills
-  Foster cooperative learning
-  Promote healthy habits
-  Last at least one month<sup>17</sup>

**CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE SUMMER PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

- ✓ Voluntary, full-day programming that includes academics and enrichment
- ✓ Five days a week for at least five weeks
- ✓ Increased dosage and hands-on learning provided by a certified teacher
- ✓ Small class sizes
- ✓ No fees to families
- ✓ Free transportation and meals<sup>18</sup>

**2018 Summer Learning Landscape in Greater Atlanta<sup>19\*</sup>**

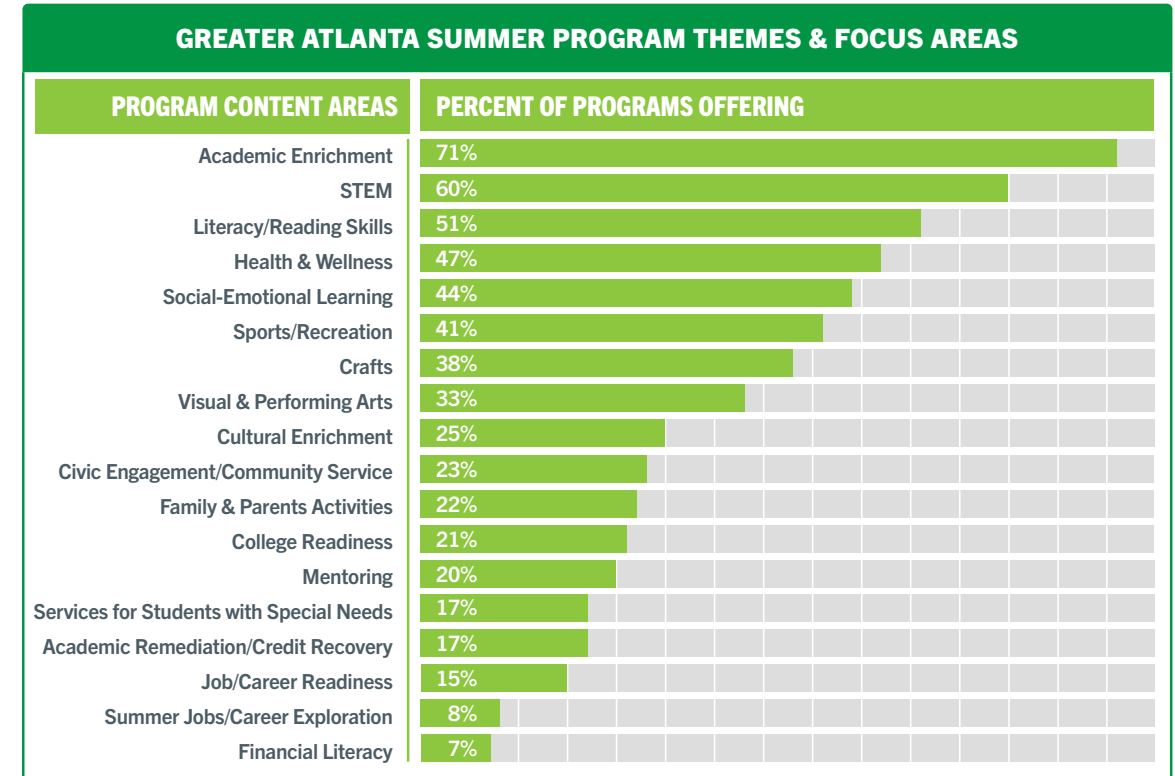


\* Butts, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale

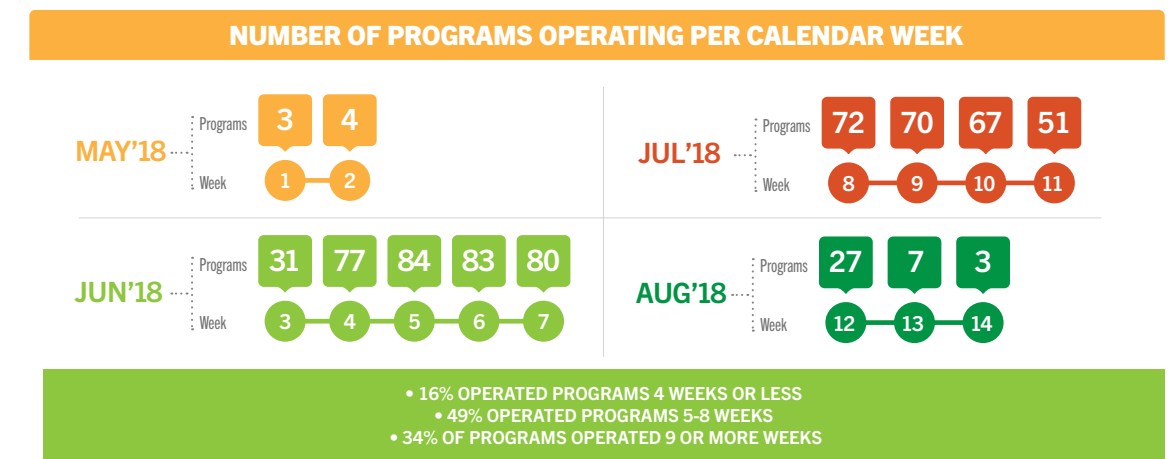
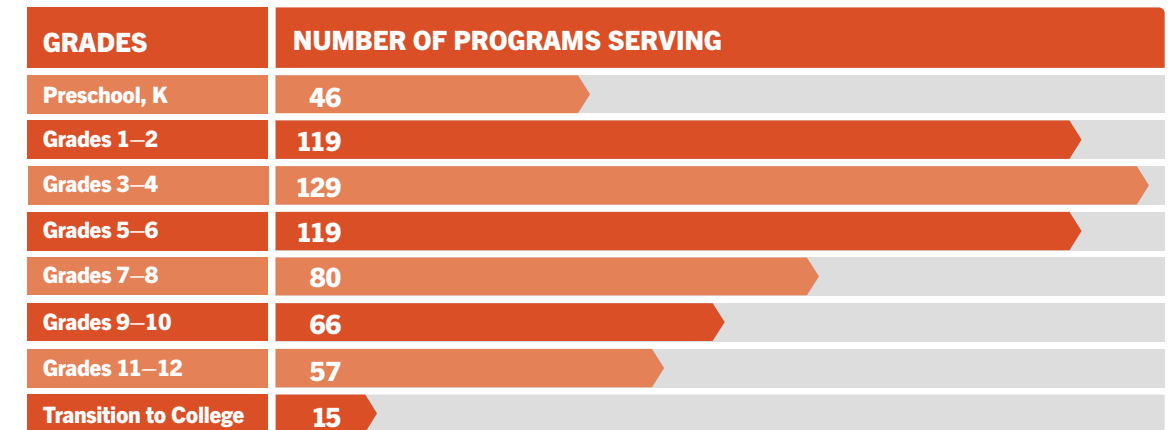


COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS OF GREATER ATLANTA REGION*	
Total Regional Population	4.6 million
Total Regional Child Population	1.3 million
Percent of Students Exceeding 3rd Grade Reading Standards	44.1%
Percent of Students Exceeding 8th Grade Math Standards	46.7%
High School Graduation Rate	80.3%
Percent of Children in Poverty	24.2%
Percent of Families Not Financially Stable	31.3%
Percent Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education	75.6%
Unemployment Rate	10.2%

\* United Way of Greater Atlanta, Stakeholder Report 2018

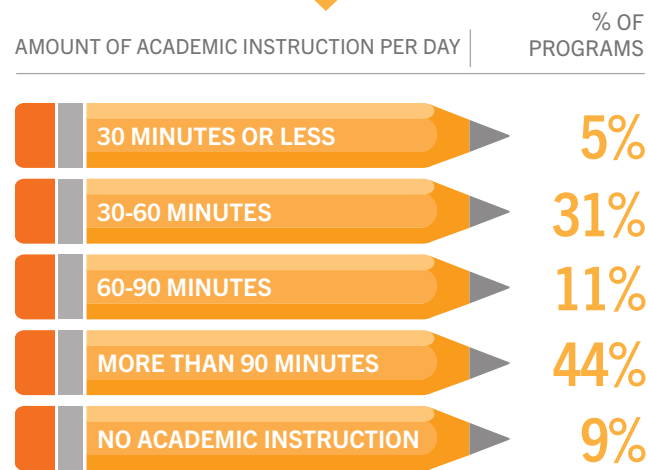


Only a quarter of the programs served high school youth. Older youth need access to opportunities for internships and apprenticeships, college and career readiness, and financial literacy.





Most programs offered a significant amount of academic instruction time each day. Incorporating 2-3 hours per day is often enough to produce measurable gains in reading or math.



The most common barrier to enrollment was youth finding transportation to and from the program.

Graphics adapted from NSLA's [Summer Matters: A Community Landscape Report](#)

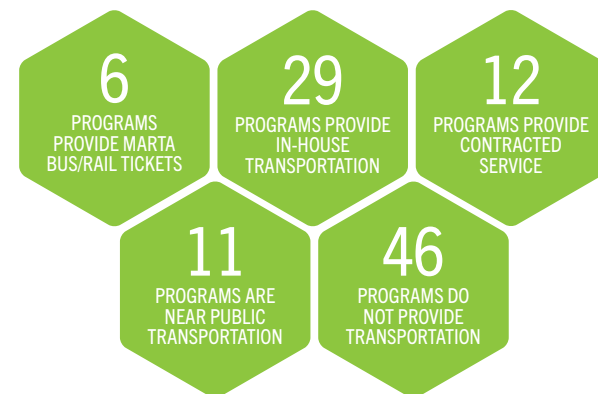
Meals Served		
BREAKFAST	NO. PROGRAMS	83
LUNCH		116
SUPPER/DINNER		6
SNACK		94
DON'T PROVIDE MEALS		40



Summer programs are often the only consistent source of meals for youth who receive free breakfast and lunch at school during the rest of the year.

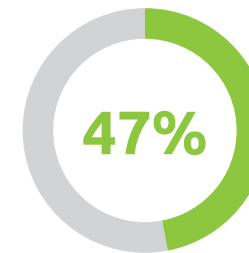


#### TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

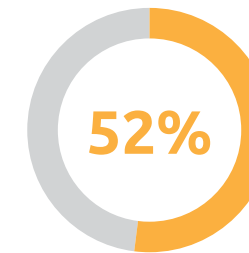


## America After 3PM:

### What Parents Have to Say About Summer 2020 in Greater Atlanta<sup>20</sup>



47% of parents reported at least one child participating in a summer program

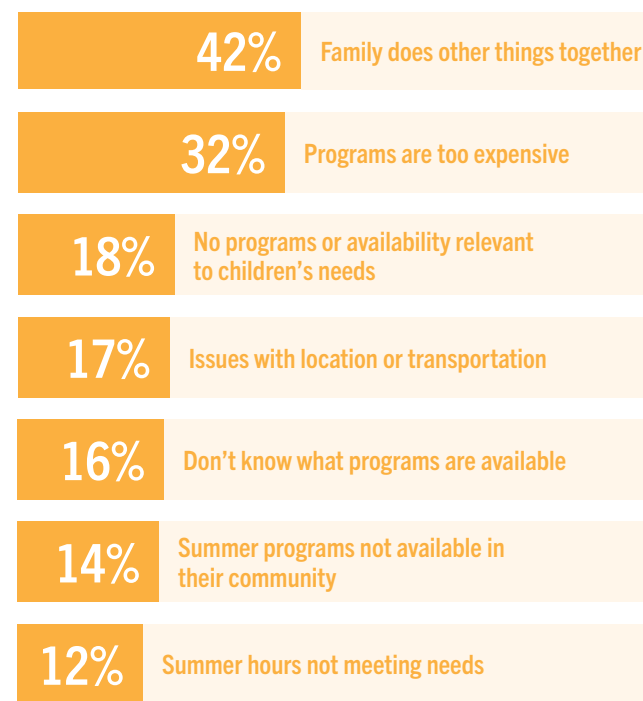


52% of parents reported they would have liked to enroll their child in a summer program if one were available

#### FACTORS IN SELECTING A SUMMER PROGRAM



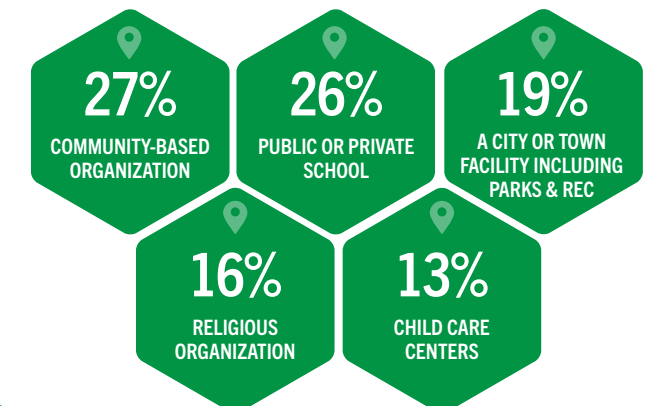
#### FACTORS PREVENTING ENROLLMENT IN A SUMMER PROGRAM:



#### DOSAGE & AVERAGE WEEKLY COST IN GREATER ATLANTA



#### TOP 5 LOCATIONS FOR A SUMMER PROGRAM



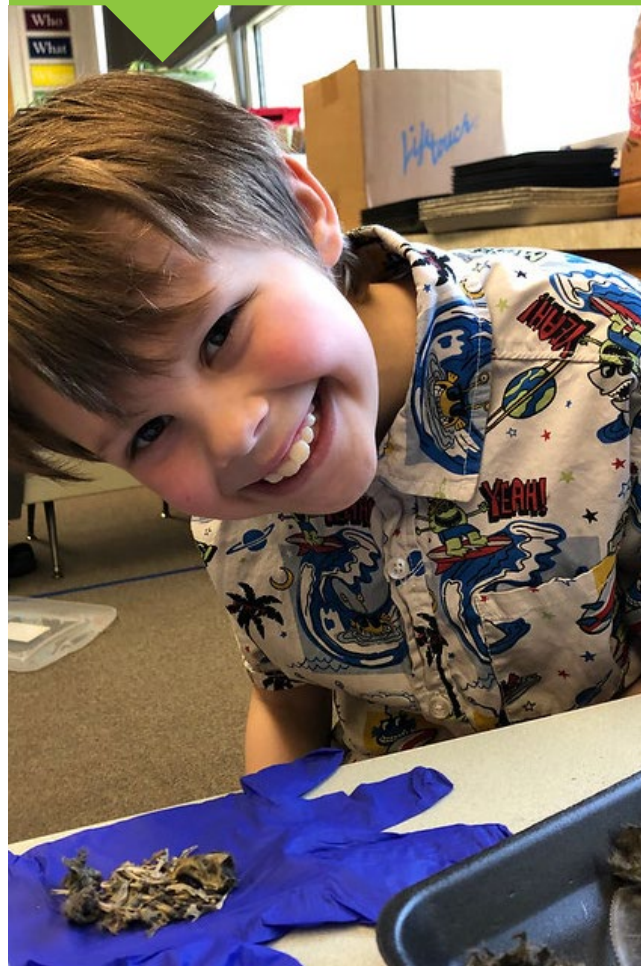
<sup>20</sup> Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Morgan, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Rockdale, Spalding, Walton

# Family Listening Sessions

GSAN hosted **2 virtual family listening sessions** with **23 individuals** and administered a summer learning survey to **9 individuals** that could not attend the listening sessions reaching a total of **32 participants**.

*"I feel like there are some children out there traveling the world during the summer...I don't want to feel like my kids don't have access to opportunity and really learning things in depth and getting to know a subject on a very deep level to grow a love for it, that I feel some kids have access to. I want my kids to be able to go to that specific science camp or zoo camp."*

– DeKalb County Mother of 3



## What Families Said



### Summer Learning Programs

- Are effective and high quality
- Provide amazing experiences
- Staffed with caring mentors



### Access Is Limited Due To

- High cost of programming
- Lack of transportation to and from programs
- Hours of operation are not always extensive
- Limited programming options in counties outside Metro Atlanta



### Reasons for Enrollment

- Academic and cultural enrichment
- Physical engagement
- Socialization
- Supervision



### Access Can Be Increased By

- Expanded funding via increased scholarships and free programming opportunities
- Region-wide communication on the importance of summer and marketing of existing programs

# Teen Listening Sessions

GSAN contracted VOX ATL to host **3 virtual teen listening session** with **19 teens ages 12 – 18 years old** to gather insights and experiences teens have around summertime learning within the Greater Atlanta area.

## What Teens Said



### Summer Priorities

- Ability to work & earn money
- Engage in career building opportunities
- Have space to hang with friends & relax
- Travel



### Teens Think Great Summers Include

- Time spent with friends and family
- Physical activity such as sports and time outdoors in nature
- Fun activities that are affordable and easy to get to
- Career or future focused preparation



### Barriers Include

- Cost of enrollment and materials
- Lack of transportation
- Families not feeling secure in allowing youth to join residential overnight programs
- Programs that are accessible only to teens within a certain school system or geography



### Teens Want Adults To Know They Want To

- Feel welcomed and wanted in whatever opportunity they engage in
- Relax and be able to express themselves as needed
- Be in programs they find to be fun and interesting



*"I wish we had the time to do more fun things, and I wish those fun things were more accessible financially and distance wise."*

– 18 yr old teen

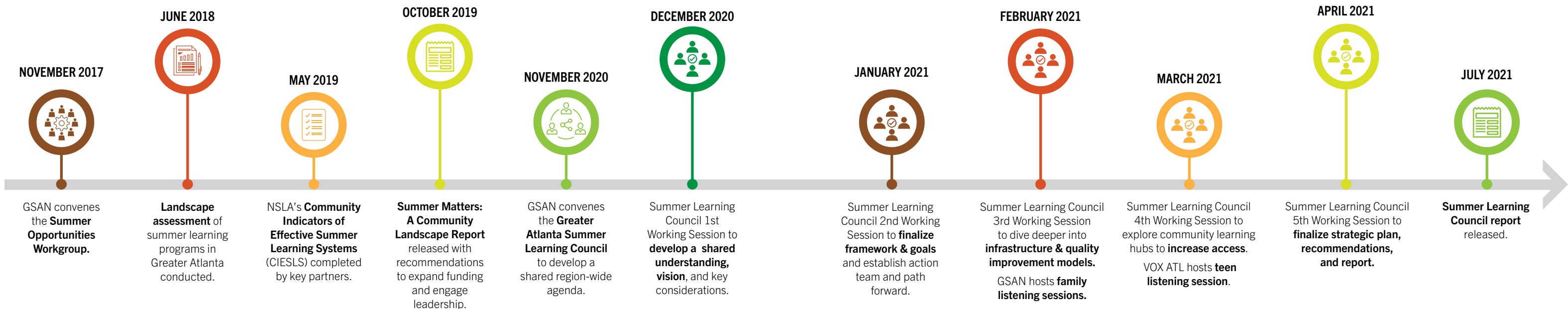


# Summer Learning Council Goal

To increase access to and strengthen the quality of Greater Atlanta’s summer learning landscape and position Greater Atlanta as a leader in summer learning with greater investment and improved infrastructure to combat inequities in youth development outcomes, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Path to Expanding Summer Learning Opportunities



# Building a Summer Learning System

**EXPAND & TARGET FUNDING**

Implement short-term interventions for COVID-19 recovery and create long-term, sustainable systems to expand programs, build capacity, target populations/geography, and creditable scholarships.

**DATA SHARING**

Develop a data sharing system and partnerships that proactively target student needs.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Launch a community education campaign and create and promote a database for families to access all the summer learning opportunities available to them.

**COORDINATION OF NETWORK PARTNERSHIPS**

Map the current landscape to align services and promote partnerships within and across stakeholders, such as school districts, providers, and municipalities.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**



**ACCESS**

**WRAPAROUND SERVICES**

Provide whole child development, physical and mental health, food, connection to community and housing supports.

**WHEN AND WHERE LEARNING HAPPENS**

Utilize summer learning hubs, libraries, parks and rec, childcare, housing, museums, zoos, school buildings, etc.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Tackle the biggest barrier to participation.

**FAMILY SUPPORTS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Map how families are currently involved and offer opportunities, supports, and incentives to engage with and enroll their youth in summer opportunities.

**QUALITY**

**DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORTS**

Provide social emotional learning, experiential learning, age appropriate content: literacy, STEM, college and career readiness, youth employment; and family supports.

**RESEARCH: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, METRICS, AND EVALUATION**

Create a system of quality: common quality tool, youth metrics and outcomes, parent and youth surveys, expanded professional development, and updated landscape assessment.

## Recommendations

The Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council recognizes that we must have both short term solutions to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and long term systemic change in order to combat the effects of systemic barriers and ensure access and quality for all.



RECOMMENDATION

# 1

**Build partnerships between stakeholders including school districts, summer learning program providers, and municipalities across the region to expand capacity, align services, and serve more youth, with an emphasis on children and communities most impacted by inequities.**

## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Immediate COVID Response

1. Create partnerships between school districts, summer learning program providers, and municipalities to align and improve academic and enrichment services through:
  - a. Shared professional development of teachers and staff
  - b. Coordinated wrap-around services, including partnerships with organizations providing mental and behavioral health services and training for educators to recognize and respond to increased trauma in youth and families
  - c. Shared space
  - d. Targeted and aligned recruitment and enrollment
- c. Aligned programming to support academic acceleration, connectedness, and whole child development
2. Increase the number of summer meal sites in food deserts and strengthen enrichment programming and educational activities provided at summer meal sites.

### Systemic Change

3. Create partnerships between school districts and summer learning program providers that include data sharing agreements that proactively target student needs across their educational careers.
4. Expand partnerships between school-based physical and mental health services and community-based summer learning programs to address the exacerbated mental health and social and emotional needs of youth and families.
5. Create family resource centers based on family and youth input via partnerships between school districts, summer learning program providers, and community-based organizations such as parks and rec centers, child care centers, food banks, faith based institutions, and housing authorities to increase stability in students' and families' lives and support learning.

### CRITICAL ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

- Partnership & Collaboration
- Mutual Trust & Transparency
- Data & Resource Sharing
- Targeted & Aligned Services
- Whole Child Focus
- Common Metrics

### TARGET POPULATION

- Students performing below 3rd grade reading and/or 8th grade math proficiency
- Students disengaged from school during the pandemic
- Vulnerable populations (youth from low-income families, youth of color, children with disabilities, English learners, migratory youth, youth experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care)

### TARGET AREA

- Communities with low or very low child well-being
- Under-resourced communities with gaps in access to programs and services
- Food deserts

## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Intended Impact



**Improved academic outcomes**, including gains in reading and math, leading to improved graduation rates



**Increased youth and family stability** to support learning and quality of life



**Improved youth mental health** due to year round access to services and programming



**Decreased food insecurity** allowing student from low-income families to thrive



**Enhanced social emotional skills**



### CASE STUDY

[Prime Time Palm Beach County, Inc.](#) is an intermediary organization dedicated to quality school-age afterschool and summer programs. Prime Time builds partnerships with vetted organizations with the capacity to provide high quality programming and offers quality improvement initiatives such as ongoing training and technical assistance to encourage incorporation of best-practices into curricula and ensure understanding and implementation of youth development principles. In addition, Prime Time maximizes the expertise and resources of community partners to supplement content-specific professional development and works with those partners to monitor and maintain the delivery of comprehensive, high quality content-specific enrichment activities.

This has resulted in a high quality county wide summer learning system comprised of 148 programs, which includes 66 school district programs, 33 community-based centers, 22 early learning centers, 16 middle schools, 7 municipalities, and 4 charter schools that served over 17,500 school age youth and over 1,700 middle school age youth in FY19-20. In addition, Prime Time has also served over 25,000 youth through expanded learning opportunity providers via eligible afterschool and summer learning programs during that time.



## RECOMMENDATION

# 2

Create a Greater Atlanta summer learning fund composed of diverse funding streams with investment from public and private sectors to create sustainable and equitable access to quality programs.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

### Immediate COVID Response

1. Create school district and community-based summer learning program partnerships that leverage the expertise, resources, and capacity of each stakeholder to fund these initiatives using ESSER I, II, and III monies provided to school districts and private grants incentivizing collaboration and expanded access.
2. Create summer learning hubs in spaces children and families already congregate such as schools, community-based programs, libraries, parks and recreation centers, and child care centers in areas with low child well-being and low-income communities, especially low-income communities of color.

### Systemic Change

3. Expand access to high quality programs offering a variety of academic and enrichment services, especially in areas of low child well-being and communities of color.
4. Build the capacity of and strengthen the quality of smaller and less established programs that serve low-income, vulnerable, and under-resourced communities.
5. Expand multi-lingual evidence-based academic and socio-emotional supports, such as literacy, STEM, tutoring, arts, and sports programs.
6. Utilize spaces where children and families congregate and leverage existing resources to maximize learning and enrichment, such as libraries, parks and rec centers, housing complexes, childcare centers, etc.
7. Create scholarship programs to eliminate enrollment fees as a barrier to access.
8. Dedicate a portion of grants and funds to support transportation to increase access.



#### CRITICAL ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

- Increased & Aligned Investment
- Flexible Funding
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Innovative Approaches
- Common Metrics & Youth Outcomes
- Standardized Data Collection

#### TARGET POPULATION

- Low-income families, especially low-income families of color
- Students performing below 3rd grade reading and/or 8th grade math proficiency
- Students disengaged from school during the pandemic
- Vulnerable populations

#### TARGET AREA

- Communities with low or very low child well-being
- Under-resourced communities with gaps in access








## RECOMMENDATION 2

### What Does Access Mean?

According to the Get Georgia Reading Campaign, access means:

- All children and their families have access to high-quality development and education opportunities, from K-12, including after school and summer learning.
- All children and their families have access to support and intervention services that allow each child and family to take advantage of that education—including safe housing, healthy food, safe transportation, and health and dental care.
- Adults will pay attention to factors impacting school attendance and remove these barriers.



 ACCESS	THE SIX KEYS TO ACCESS
 AWARENESS	Population is informed that the service exists & what it provides
 AFFORDABLE	Prices of services meet population's ability to pay
 ACCESSIBLE	Location of supply geographically aligns with population needs
 AVAILABLE	Size or volume of the supply meets population needs
 ACCOMMODATING	Delivery of service meets population needs
 ACCEPTABLE	Characteristics of service providers & population are receptive to each other

Adapted from the [Get Georgia Reading Campaign](#)

## RECOMMENDATION 2

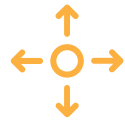
### Intended Impact



**Increased access** to high-quality summer learning opportunities in areas with identified gaps in supply



**Enrollment fees eliminated** as a barrier to access to high-quality summer learning opportunities



**Expanded capacity** of existing summer learning programs in under-resourced communities



**Improved academic and social-emotional outcomes** due to increased access to programs and utilization of evidence-based practices



**Transportation provided** to high-quality summer learning opportunities



**Increased community engagement**



**Improved quality** of existing summer learning programs in under-resourced communities



**Increased multisector investments**



### CASE STUDY

The [Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative](#) was a statewide summer learning initiative funded by Hasbro Children's Fund, a legislative grant from the State of Rhode Island, and other private funding sources managed by the Rhode Island Afterschool Network at United Way of Rhode Island. The initiative required partnerships between school districts and community based organizations leading to a six-week program offered at 14 sites in 10 communities serving more than 1,100 students. The program offered opportunities to mitigate learning loss, improve academic gains and social-emotional well-being, and engage in service learning.



## RECOMMENDATION

# 3

Create a system of quality to continuously evaluate and improve the quality and impact of programming offered across the region.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

### Immediate COVID Response

1. Include summer learning professionals in school district provided curriculum training opportunities.
2. Expand and make accessible professional learning opportunities to all summer learning professionals across the region.
3. Identify common metrics and outcomes and incentivize programs to adopt collection and measurement processes that emphasize equity.

### Systemic Change

4. Identify quality improvement tool(s) to be used region wide and create a system for assessment and analysis.
5. Create a standardized equitable process to collect and track common youth development metrics and outcomes across the region such as enrollment, attendance, learning gains, and social emotional, mental health, and wellness outcomes.
6. Create a sustainable system of quality improvement supports, including training, coaching, and quality assessments, available to all summer learning programs and professionals.



### CRITICAL ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

- Common Quality Standards & Improvement Tools
- Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement
- Increased Professional Development
- Common Metrics & Youth Outcomes
- Standardized Data Collection & Analysis

### TARGET POPULATION

- Summer learning programs and professionals not a part of a larger association or without access to regular quality supports

### TARGET AREA

- Communities with low or very low child well-being
- Under-resourced communities with gaps in access

## RECOMMENDATION 3

### Intended Impact



**Increased quality** of summer learning programs through common quality standards and practices across the region



**Better supported summer learning workforce** through professional development



**Standardized and equitable data collection** methods to track youth progress across the region



**Data-informed** programmatic decisions



**Systems level data analysis** with results that can be shared with stakeholders



**Evidence-based practices** are disseminated to the field



### CASE STUDY

[Boston Afterschool & Beyond](#) has convened the Boston Summer Learning Community, which includes the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools, funders, researchers, and 367 afterschool and summer learning programs that serve more than 13,000 students. The network conducts trainings on student skill development, develops strategies to address persistent problems, and shares best practices from the field. The partnership uses common program quality metrics and assessments, which has resulted in [data analysis at a system level](#), continuous quality improvement of programs, high quality experiences and skills growth for students, identification of programs that excel in difficult areas, and opportunities to share best practices and learn from each other.



## RECOMMENDATION

# 4

Create a network of summer learning providers that offer comprehensive programming in at least one critical content area.

## RECOMMENDATION 4

### Immediate COVID Response

1. Build capacity of all participating summer learning programs to provide a wide variety of enrichment experiences and incorporate social emotional learning, experiential/project-based learning, and age-appropriate supports.
2. Incentivize programs to offer high need subjects and skill building opportunities such as literacy, STEM, arts, college and career readiness, financial literacy, and trade skills through evidence-based approaches and promising practices.
3. Create partnerships between businesses and summer learning programs to offer youth employment opportunities.
4. Revise and release an updated landscape assessment every 2 years.



### CRITICAL ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

- Voluntary, Affordable Full-day Programming
- Variety of Program Types and Offerings
- Academics and Enrichment
- Spans Transition Periods
- Instruction by Certified Teachers
- Evidence-Based Practices
- Innovative Approaches

### TARGET POPULATION

- All summer learning programs across the Greater Atlanta region

### TARGET AREA

- Greater Atlanta region



## RECOMMENDATION 4

### Intended Impact



**Comprehensive evidence-based programming** and best practices used in programming



**Improved academic outcomes**



**Youth prepared for college and career pathways** regardless of race, gender, or zip codes



**Enhanced youth workforce skills** and increased opportunities to explore careers



**Broad-based community involvement** in the region's summer learning system



**Increased social-emotional development**



### CASE STUDY

[Dallas Afterschool](#) is a county-wide intermediary with a Summer Literacy program network of 28 summer camp sites serving 1,400 1st – 3rd grade students. Dallas Afterschool provides participating programs an evidence-based literacy curriculum, a data sharing system, staffing, common quality standards, standardized and custom trainings, technical assistance via quality advisors and continuous improvement plans, and a research and evaluation system that results in improvement in program quality and student outcomes. In the 2019 inaugural Guided Literacy Cohort, 87% of students did not experience summer learning loss in literacy.



## RECOMMENDATION

# 5

Develop a region wide communications campaign to build awareness of the value of summer learning, drive investment, and connect families to resources, supports, and programs that promote academic, social and emotional resilience for all youth.

## RECOMMENDATION 5

### Immediate COVID Response

1. Launch a campaign that emphasizes summer as an opportunity for recovery and re-engagement to encourage families to enroll youth in summer programming and to drive investment.

### Systemic Change

2. Develop a public education campaign that emphasizes the value of investment in summer learning programs, its return on investment, and its role in preparing youth for college and career readiness.

3. Create a database of summer learning opportunities and resources available in the region that families can access to find opportunities that fit their needs near them.

#### CRITICAL ELEMENTS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

- Shared Vision
- Consistent, Clear, & Aligned Messaging
- Community Engagement
- Centralized Information Hub

#### TARGET AREA

- Communities with low or very low child well-being
- Under-resourced communities with gaps in access

## RECOMMENDATION 5

### Intended Impact



**Increased awareness** of the importance and value of summer learning opportunities



**Broad-based community investment** in the region's summer learning system



**Improved access** to summer opportunities and supports that fit their needs

#### CASE STUDY

[Vermont Afterschool](#) partnered with the Vermont Agency of Education and Vermont Agency of Human Services to launch the [Summer Matters](#) 2021 campaign. This includes a public education campaign with key messages that emphasizes the importance of summer, a grant program to expand access to summer enrichment opportunities, resources for summer programs and schools, guidance for families, and a map of summer opportunities including enrichment and youth employment so families can connect with programs that fit their needs.





RECOMMENDATION  
**6**

Establish a summer learning intermediary to implement the recommendations of the council.

**RECOMMENDATION 6**

In order to implement the recommendations of the Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council, it is vital to establish an intermediary that can function as the backbone of this work. This requires public-private investments, dedicated partners, and commitment from business, civic, community, education, and philanthropic sectors.

**Next Steps**

- Identify an intermediary to manage the effort
- Identify long term investments needed to support the work
- Seek public and private commitments and investments across Greater Atlanta
- Develop a plan for implementing council recommendations and evaluating the results of investments
- Fund a technical assistance consulting relationship with an established intermediary that has implemented a city wide summer learning system
- Seek proposals for implementing recommendations and evaluating results
- Fund the work



*“As United Way of Greater Atlanta works to put our community’s children on an equitable path to fulfilling their potential, it is critical to invest in efforts that improve educational outcomes for children that address the factors beyond school often getting in the way of their success. When children are not reading by the 3rd grade and demonstrating proficiency in math by 8th grade, it limits their opportunities in school, in work, and in life. Our region needs a community-informed, coordinated and data-driven response to ensure strong partnerships for the summer to help students meet these benchmarks.”*

**Katrina D. Mitchell**  
Chief Community Impact Officer,  
United Way of Greater Atlanta

*“Parental engagement is a key component to reducing the impact of the summer/COVID slide. Fatherhood engagement is critical to achieving summer learning goals.”*

**Kenneth Braswell**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Fathers Incorporated

*“We are all forever changed by COVID-19, including our children. It is now time to not just move on, but to move forward. Hopefully this work will help our children do just that.”*

**Kay Pippin**  
Mayor, City of Jackson, Georgia

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## Our Values

### Equity

Cultural Competence  
Community Responsive  
Whole Child Development

### Innovative

Data Informed  
Community Engagement & Ownership  
Family & Youth Centered

### Sustainable

Partnership & Collaboration  
Shared Leadership  
& Accountability



G·san

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