



Investing in Summer Learning Opportunities

Recommendations from the Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council



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.

Our Process

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

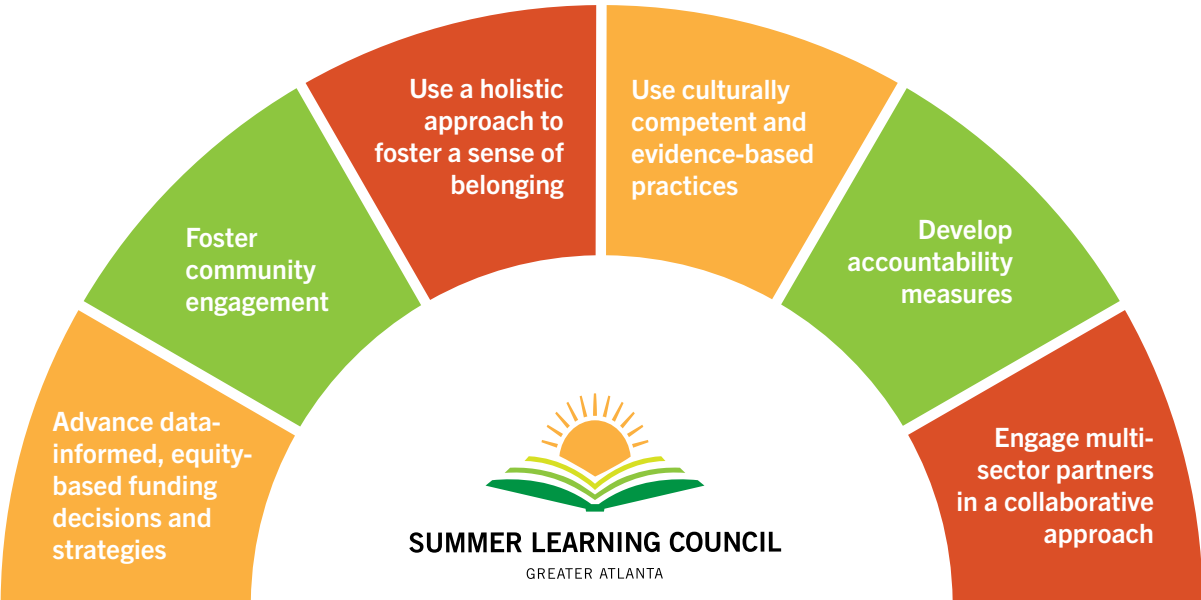
To ensure that all of Greater Atlanta’s young people have access to high quality summer learning opportunities, **GSAN convened a Summer Learning Council to develop a shared region-wide summer learning agenda as well as increase and coordinate funding from public and private sources.** The council is 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.¹

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.²

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.³ 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**.⁴



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.⁵

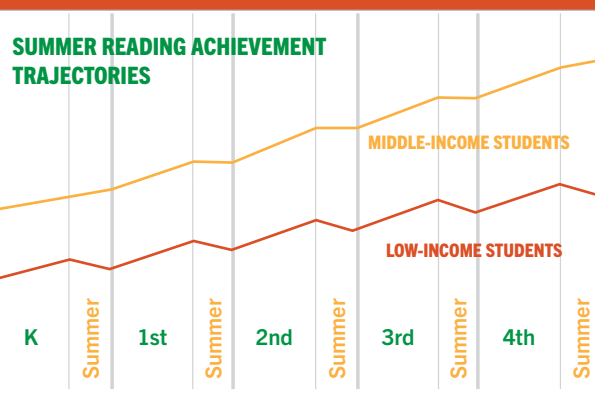


More than half of U.S. students on average lose nearly **40% of school year gains** because they experience summer learning losses 5 years in a row.⁶



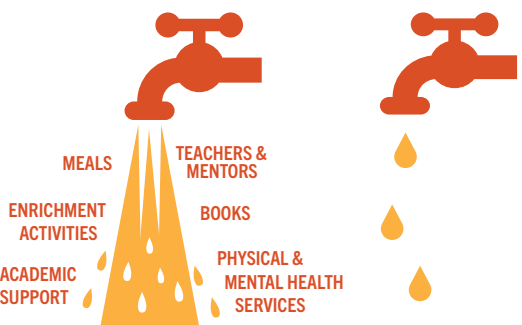
9 in 10 teachers spend at least **3 weeks** re-teaching lessons at the start of the school year.⁷

Average Reading Achievement Level⁸



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.^{9, 10}



Summer Melt

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



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.¹²

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.¹³

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**.¹⁴

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**.¹⁵



SUMMER PROGRAMS PROVIDE

HEALTHY MEALS
ACADEMIC RECOVERY
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

MENTORING
ENRICHMENT
WORKFORCE SKILLS
LITERACY

STEM
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

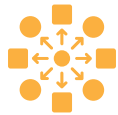
PROJECT BASED LEARNING

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.¹⁶

HIGH QUALITY SUMMER PROGRAMS:



Broaden students' horizons



Include a wide variety of activities



Help youth build skills



Foster cooperative learning



Promote healthy habits

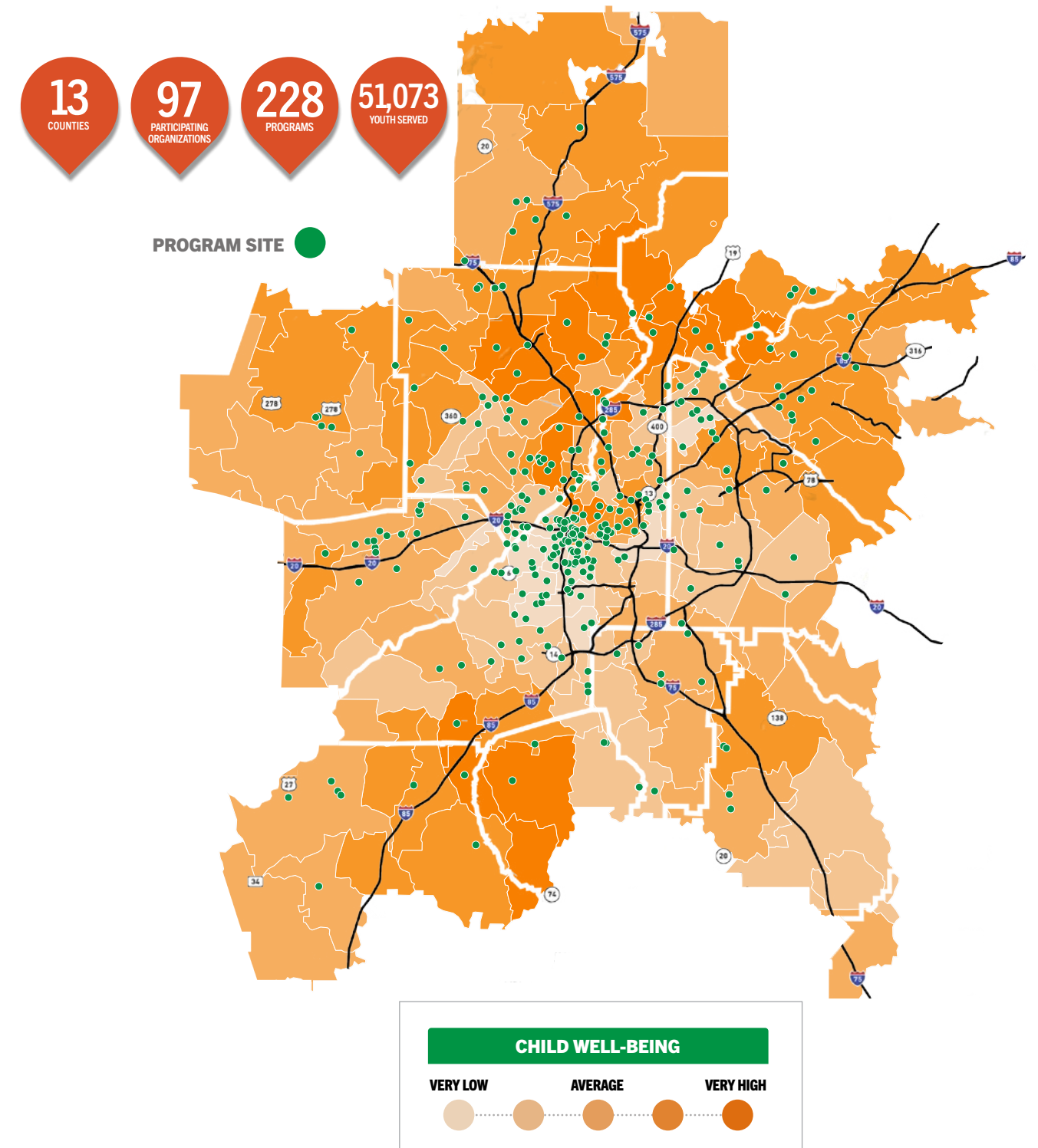


Last at least one month¹⁷

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 meals¹⁸

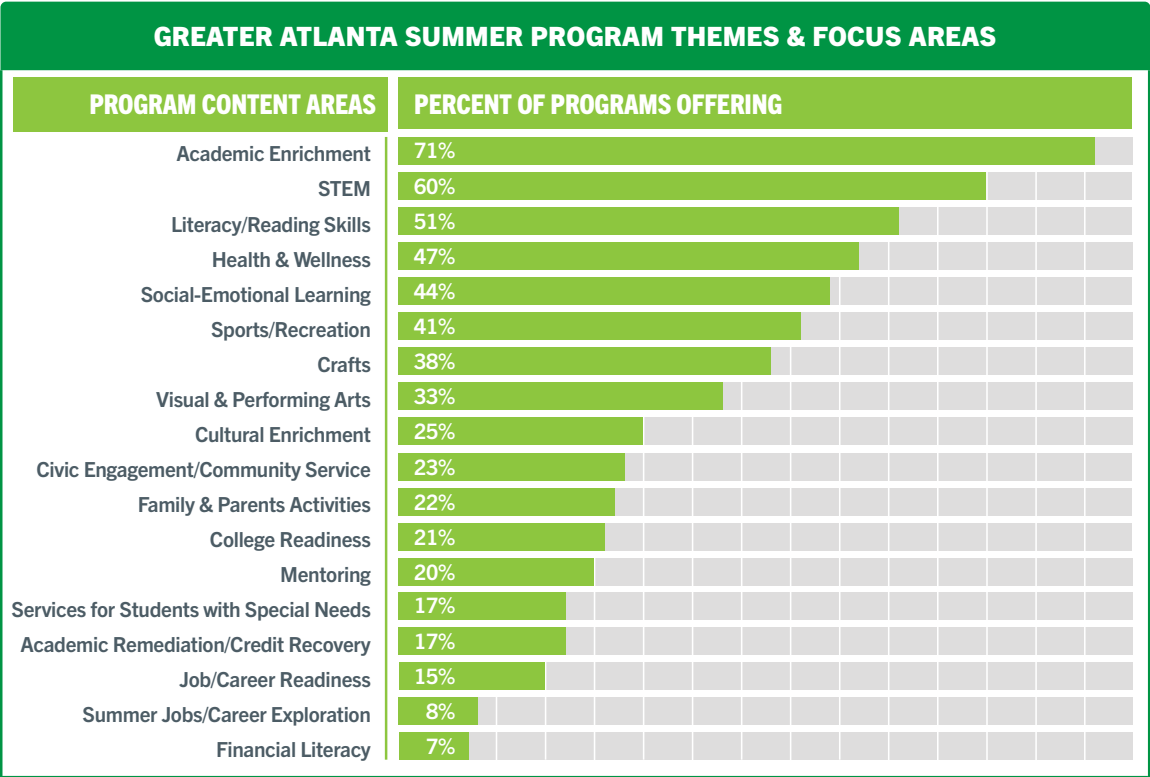
2018 Summer Learning Landscape in Greater Atlanta^{19*}



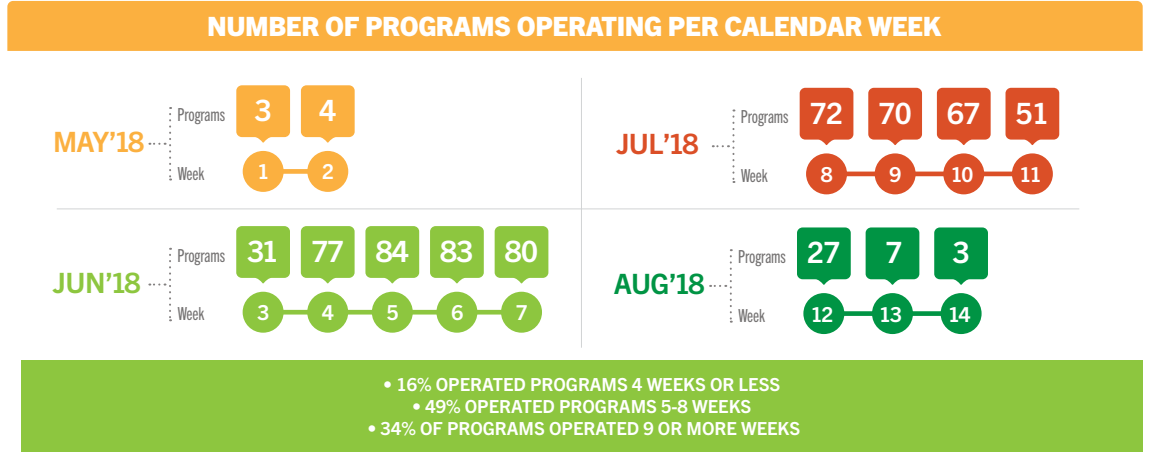
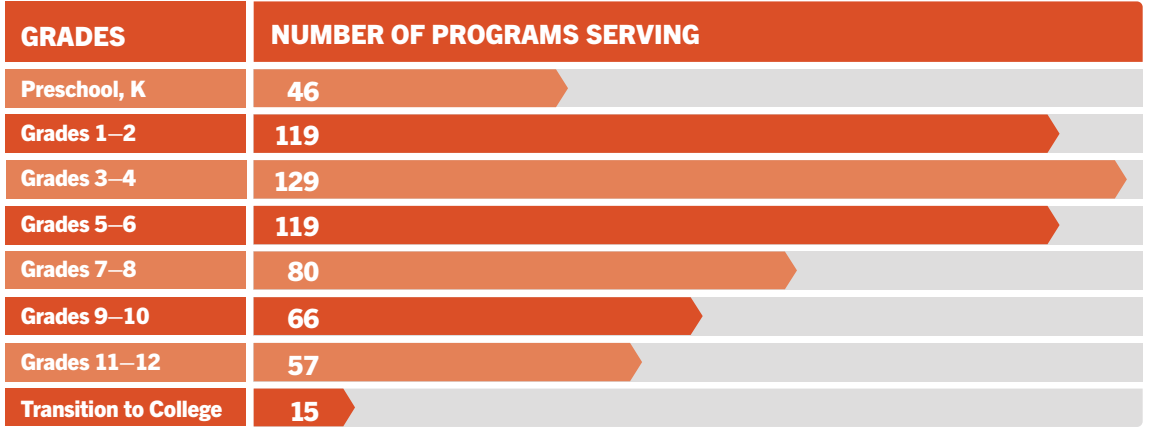


COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS OF GREATER ATLANTA REGION*	
Total Regional Population	4.6 million
Total Regional Child Population	1.3 million
Percent of Students Exceeding 3rd Grade Reading Standards	44.1%
Percent of Students Exceeding 8th Grade Math Standards	46.7%
High School Graduation Rate	80.3%
Percent of 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

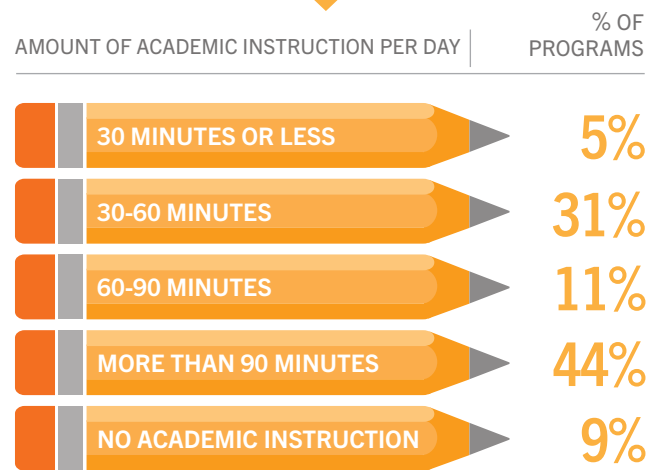


Only a quarter of the programs served high school youth. Older youth need access to opportunities for internships and apprenticeships, college and career readiness, and financial literacy.





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

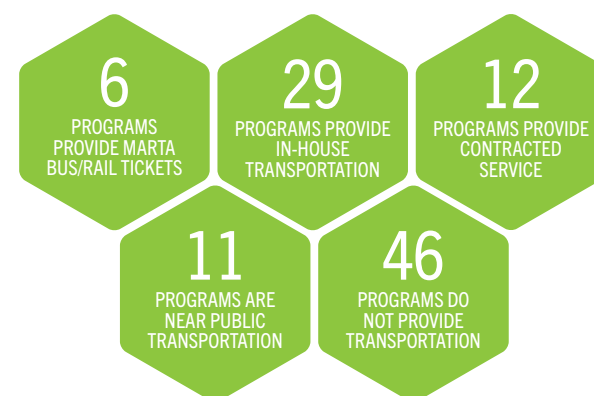
BREAKFAST	NO. PROGRAMS	83
LUNCH		116
SUPPER/DINNER		6
SNACK		94
DON'T PROVIDE MEALS		40



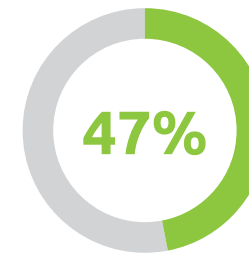
Summer programs are often the only consistent source of meals for youth who receive free breakfast and lunch at school during the rest of the year.



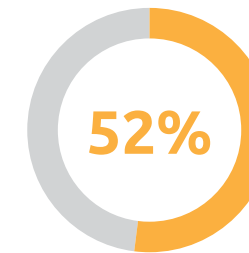
TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS



America After 3PM: What Parents Have to Say About Summer 2019 in Greater Atlanta²⁰



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



95%
safety of environment



93%
opportunities to build life skills



90%
knowledgeable and caring staff



86%
physical activity opportunities



85%
program costs

FACTORS PREVENTING ENROLLMENT IN A SUMMER PROGRAM:

42%

Family does other things together

32%

Programs are too expensive

18%

No programs or availability relevant to children's needs

17%

Issues with location or transportation

16%

Don't know what programs are available

14%

Summer programs not available in their community

12%

Summer hours not meeting needs

DOSAGE & AVERAGE WEEKLY COST IN GREATER ATLANTA



4.5 weeks



6.9 hours a day

VOLUNTARY SUMMER CAMP
\$225.40/week



4.3 weeks



5.4 hours a day

SPECIALTY CAMP
\$190.50/week

TOP 5 LOCATIONS FOR A SUMMER PROGRAM

26%
PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SCHOOL

19%
A CITY OR TOWN FACILITY INCLUDING PARKS & REC

17%
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION

16%
RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

13%
CHILD CARE CENTERS


²⁰ 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



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 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



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



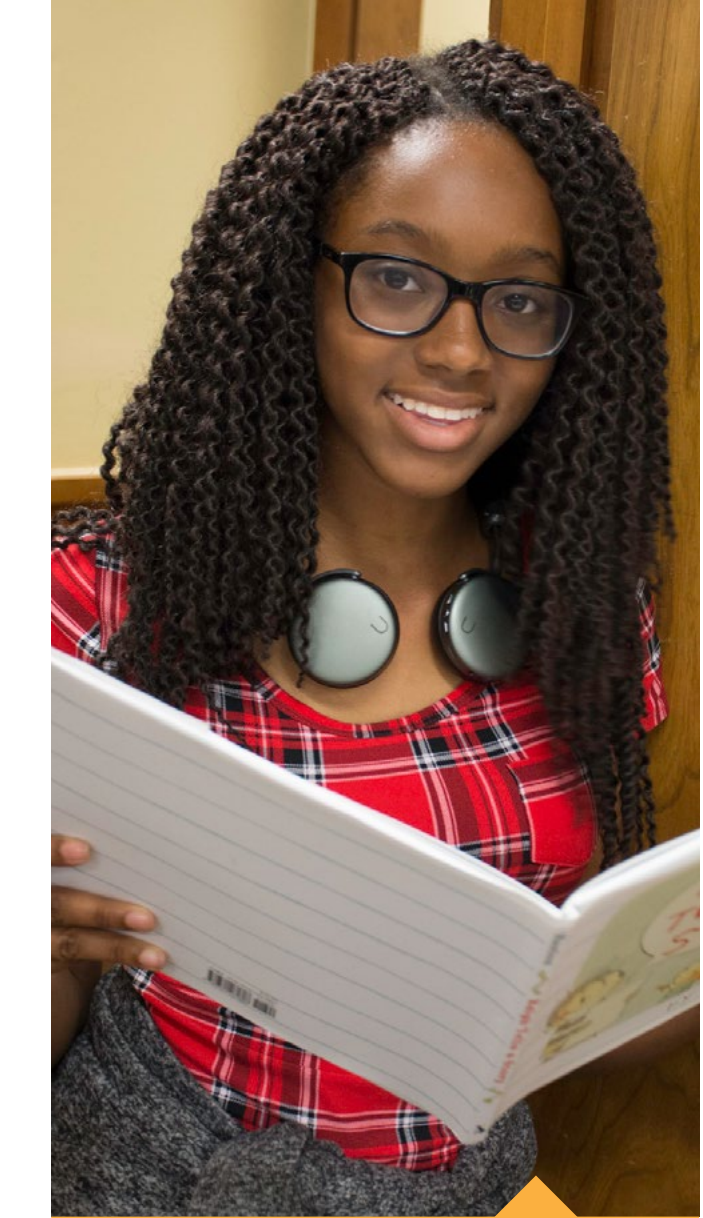
Barriers Include

- 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.”

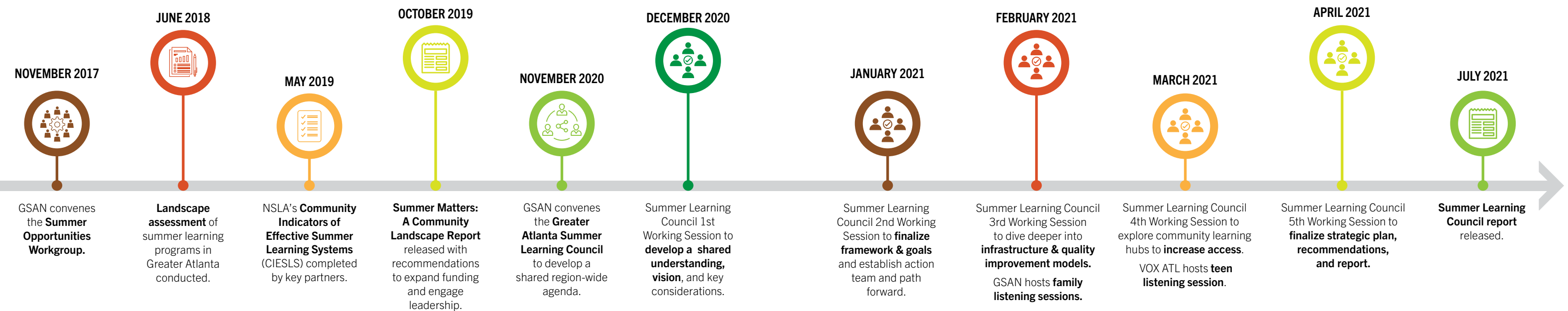
– 18 yr old teen

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

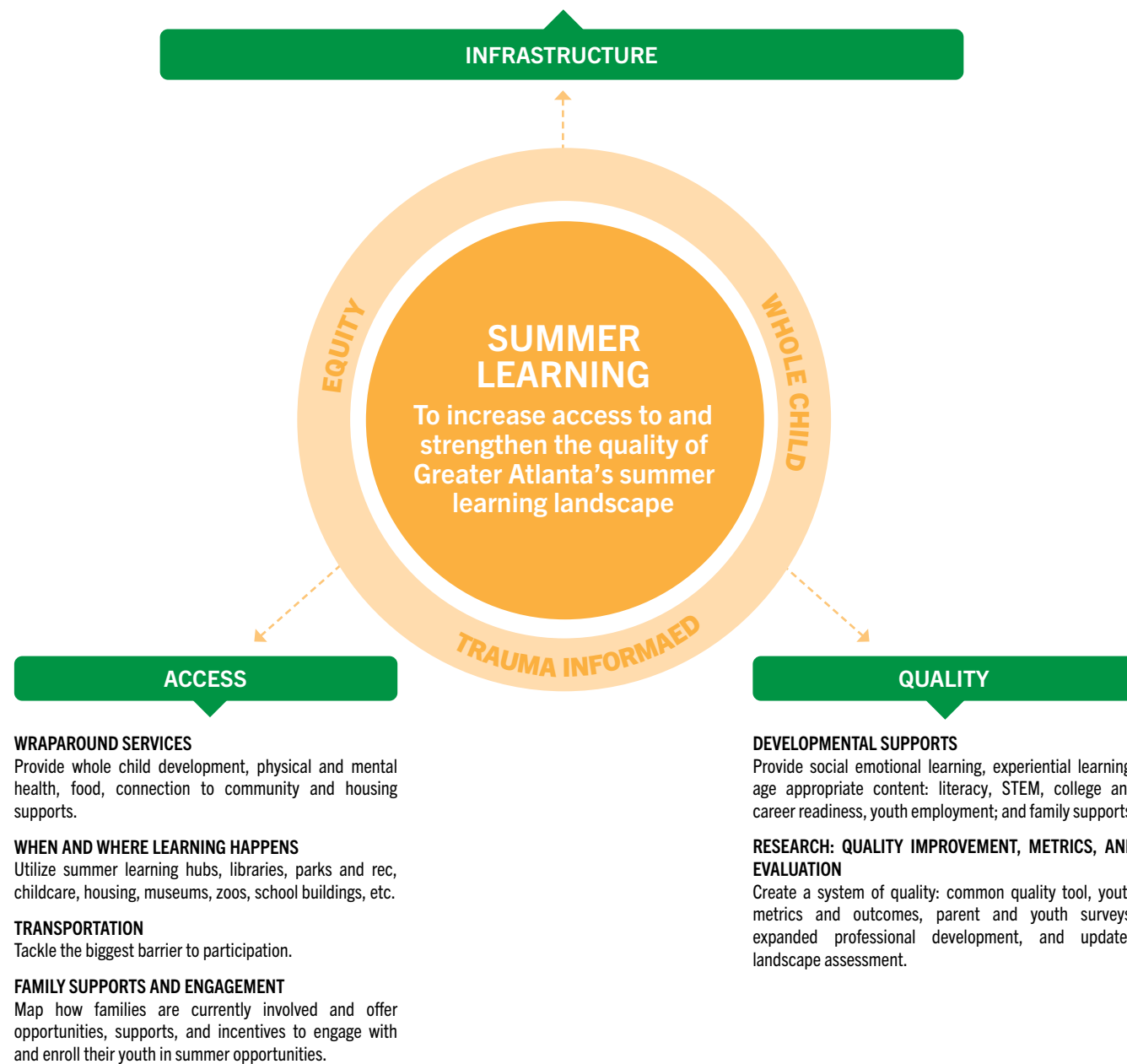
Develop a data sharing system and partnerships that proactively target student needs.

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.



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

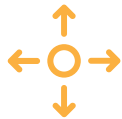
Intended Impact



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



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



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



Improved academic outcomes



Enhanced youth workforce skills and increased opportunities to explore careers



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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Greater Atlanta Summer Learning Council

Tangee Allen

Co-Founder
Raising Expectations

Dr. Morcease Beasley

Superintendent
Clayton County Schools

Kenneth Braswell

Chief Executive Officer
Fathers Incorporated

Julianna Cagle

Vice President of Programs
The Goizueta Foundation

Tim Cairl

Director of Education Policy
Metro Atlanta Chamber

Steve Card

Executive Director
Georgia Recreation &
Park Association

Alyssa Cobbs

Program Officer, Strong Families
Community Foundation for
Greater Atlanta

Bobby Dunn

Regional Director
Boys & Girls Club of Metro Atlanta

Sharon Foster

Co-Founder
Georgia Afterschool Program (GASPI)

Danielle Gray

Associate Director
The Zeist Foundation

Ashley Harris

Director of Whole Child Supports
& Strategic Partnerships
Georgia Department of Education

LaMarva Ivory

Deputy Division Director of Strategy,
Innovation and Engagement
Georgia Division of Family & Children
Services

Amy Jacobs

Commissioner
Georgia Department of
Early Care and Learning

Emmanuel Jones

Senator
Georgia State Senate

Ryan Lee-James

Director
Rollins Center for Language
& Literacy

Polly McKinney

Advocacy Director
Voices for Georgia’s Children

Katrina Mitchell

Chief Community Impact Officer
United Way of Greater Atlanta

Kim Nelson

Senior Vice-President of
Program Development
YMCA of Metro Atlanta

Trent North

Superintendent
Douglas County Schools

Chris Perlera

Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships
and Messaging Georgia Division of Family
& Children Services

Kay Pippin

Mayor
City of Jackson

Elna Poulard

President
Family Support Circle, Inc

Dana Rickman

President
Georgia Partnership for
Excellence in Education

Dr. Grant Rivera

Superintendent
Marietta City Schools

Kenny Ruffin

Councilman
City of Riverdale

Eli Velez

Managing Director of Youth Services
Latin American Association

Alex Wan

Executive Director
Horizons Atlanta

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



GEORGIA STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

75 Marietta Street, Suite 401
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 521-0355 | info@afterschoolga.org
www.afterschoolga.org



@AfterschoolGA



[Facebook.com/AfterschoolGA](https://www.facebook.com/AfterschoolGA)