

Improving Probability of Success through Summer Learning Programs



Picture Source: Allendale SummerLEAP - http://www.summerleap.net/IMG_10-8_3/7/17

CASE STUDY: Preventing Summer Learning Loss

The Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association (GRSLA), also known as summerLEAP, strives to transform the lives of Rochester City School District children and children in the nine county Greater Rochester region by improving access to high-quality, tuition-free summer learning programs.

Executive Summary

Summer learning loss is an important topic in conversations about supporting student success. Summer programming designed to keep students prepared for the upcoming school year provides a great opportunity for enrichment. Evaluating the success of these programs can often be difficult because the programs can be short and require school-controlled data for evaluation but GRSLA found a solution with COMET and Children’s Institute.

Notable outcomes for the 2016 PreK cohort:

- 88% Daily attendance rate
- 90% Demonstrated gains or maintained academically
- Went **from 55% ready** for kindergarten at the start of the program **to 76% ready** at the end of six weeks

“We view our work with COMET and Children’s Institute as a strategic partnership. Having an independent evaluator of our data has been key for us.”

Luis A. Perez
Director – Program Support and Expansion
Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association



Source: RECAP & Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association Special Report: 2016 PreK Go K Summer Program Outcomes

Challenges

The Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association (GRSLA) is a regional consortium of summer program providers working toward the common goal of closing the achievement gap for local low-income students. They provide effective, evidence-based summer enrichment programs at no cost to students. The programs offer academic classes, physical education and enrichment activities to prevent summer learning loss.

The GRSLA members have committed to the following objectives:

- Increase the number of low-income students participating in high-quality summer learning programs through a summer learning path way for all grades
- Improve reading and math scores for participating students
- Improve high school and higher education graduation rates
- Build a nationally recognized public-private summer learning partnership that can be replicated in other communities

“Collecting and maintaining our own data and database gives us independence, working with Children’s Institute helps us maintain confidentiality so it’s a win-win.”

How COMET Helped

By capturing year-over-year program data from the partners within COMET’s database, both individual and group data evaluations are made possible. Evaluation is done for a given year and longitudinally. It’s been shown that the program is most effective over multiple years and to have a lasting and positive impact on the students at least three summer sessions are required.

Historical performance results for K-8th grade sites have been:

- Students demonstrate a 1-3 month gain in reading and math skills vs. the traditional 2-3 month loss experienced
- An average return rate of 5 years with 95% of students returning year over year
- For students who attend 3 or more summers, over 90% graduate high school on time and 75% go on to college
- A consistently high program satisfaction rating from students, parents, and teachers. Parent engagement and support is a key strategy in the success of this program.

GRSLA doesn’t just work with COMET, they also connect with our non-profit partner, Children’s Institute, who function as an independent evaluator for their programs. Not only having their own data but also having support with understanding and demonstrating the impact they make has taken their operation to a whole new level.

Results and Future Plans

Over the summer students are at-risk of losing up to one-third of a year’s worth of academic knowledge. The best way to prevent this is with effective, evidence-based summer programming which keeps children engaged in learning between school years. COMET and Children’s Institute supports summer learning programs by offering a way to track attendance, test performance and non-cognitive skills and compare them with assessments performed in school. These comparisons allow programs to demonstrate the impact they’re having on school performance.

“When we use words like ‘statistically significant’ and ‘independent evaluator’ we gain credibility. Not only can we answer questions about the impact we’re making, we do so with confidence that the results are accurate and meaningful. That goes a long way with our supporters.”

Questions? Call 585-673-3200

Contact Us

Personal Walk-Thru