DRINKING FROM THE RESOURCE FAUCET:

SUMMER LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

AT PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

IN PENNSYLVANIA

by

Jessica Kilmetz

An education leadership portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Spring 2019

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Jessica Kilmetz

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank my entire committee, especially, my adviser, Steve Amendum, for his support and guidance throughout my journey, and Catherine Renzulli, who brought an invaluable perspective to my ELP as a member of my organization. Lorenzo DeAngelis, my partner throughout this educational journey, pushed me to "stick to the timeline e," ensuring we would meet the graduation deadline we set for each other – thank you! And of course, a heartfelt thanks to my family for their love, support, and patience during quite a few months of take-out dinners!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES vi
LIST OF FIGURES vii
ABSTRACT viii

Chapter

1 INTRODUCTION 1

2 PROBLEM ADDRESSED 7

3 IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES 19

4 IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS 28

5 REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS 44

6 REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT 55

REFERENCES 60

Appendix

A EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL 65
B PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN 100
C LITERATURE REVIEW 133
D RESEARCH BRIEF 155
E PARENT SURVEY 167
F SUMMARY OF SURVEY AND PARENT FOCUS GROUPS 184
G COMMUNICATION PLAN 194
H INFOGRAPHIC 205
I PARENT MAILING 208
J PARENT PRESENTATION 218
K EVALUATION 239

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Elementary Student Demographics 8

Table 2 PASD Elementary PSSA Data from 2017, 2016, and 2015 9

Table 3 Students Enrolled in SSU 2018 from PASD Schools and Non-Public Schools 13

Table 4 Summer Stepping Up Growth Data 2017 16

Table 5 2018 Results for Students Eligible for Summer Programs by Program and Non-Participating Students 29

Table 6 2018 Districtwide Results for Students Invited to Elementary Summer Literacy Programs 31

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you decide not to participate in summer programs?" 34

Figure 2 Text responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you decide not to participate in summer programs? 35

Figure 3 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you choose to participate in Jumpstart?" 36

Figure 4 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you choose to participate in Summer Stepping Up?" 37

ABSTRACT

Summer reading is correlated with improved reading scores and a decrease in summer learning loss. This educational leadership portfolio (ELP) was designed to address summer learning loss as a way to im/prove reading achievement for elementary students in the Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. More specifically, the ELP was an investigation of two existing summer literacy programs to (a) examine current program results, and (b) make program revisions and recommendations for new initiatives that could increase participation in the PASD summer literacy programs. Both programs, one on-site in school and one at home, were designed to increase reading engagement and decrease summer learning loss. In spite of the attention given to summer literacy programming, PASD administrators were still concerned with students' literacy achievement levels, which prompted further investigation. Students' Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) achievement levels hovered around 70 to 80% proficient, with historically underperforming subgroups of students scoring at proficiency rates between 41 and 60% proficient.

In order to develop strategies to accomplish the goals of evaluating current program results and making revisions and recommendations for future years, I conducted an evaluation of the current iterations of the Phoenixville *Summer Stepping*

Up and *Jumpstart* programs. I examined the needs and interests of families and the achievement data of participants through surveys, focus groups, and analysis of existing data. Results showed that families are interested in joining PASD summer literacy programs, but scheduling and childcare issues may limit access and participation for some families. Other families value the academic break in the summer months and are not interested in sending their children to summer school programs. In addition, families reported the desire and need for an improved system of communication before the Summer Stepping Up program to better understand how children are identified for support. Families would also appreciate more frequent communication during the Summer Stepping Up program to ensure children's needs are being met. Across both summer literacy programs, analysis of student data showed that 84% of program participants were able to maintain or increase their reading level during the summer compared with 65% who were eligible, but did not attend.

Based on these data, I made critical revisions to systems and structures that will potentially result in increased participation and information delivery to families. Revisions include a clear plan for communication with efforts made by administration and teachers, and an infographic and planned parent presentation to better explain the summer offerings. Further recommendations include continued commitment to refining communication systems between home and school, professional development for staff on the communication and decision-making process for summer programs, and a commitment to family literacy engagement during the summer programs, including engagement with families whose children do not participate in summer

programs. Improved student data collection and evaluation methods are also needed to ensure effective program evaluation.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD), located in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, runs robust elementary summer programming for its four elementary schools to support students who struggle to reach grade-level literacy goals. The intent of the summer program is to prevent the regression of literacy skills and reading habits during the summer months. Given my role as a PASD district administrator, the purpose of this Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP) is to evaluate the results of the current elementary summer program, Summer Stepping Up, along with a recently piloted book access program, Jumpstart, in order to make specific recommendations for enhancements, future program resources, and an implementation plan for future iterations of both summer programs.

I decided to first approach this problem with a review of the literature around effective summer literacy programs for elementary students. This provided me with a background with which to measure success. I then created a program evaluation plan specific to PASD. This evaluation plan prompted the collection and review of various types of data. I gathered reading benchmark data from students invited to the summer programs. I sent a parent survey and held several focus groups to delve into the summer programs' successes, barriers to entries, and areas for improvement. I used

this data to revamp parent communication and parent presentations, and to do an overall evaluation for the PASD superintendent.

In this ELP I discuss the problem in detail in six chapters, followed by references and appendices. The current chapter orients the reader to the problem, and describes how the ELP is organized. Chapter two discusses current achievement data that motivated improvement, my role in the organization, and improvement goals. In chapter three, I describe the actions I took for improvement, the timeline for doing so, and the resources required. Chapter four is a discussion of, and reflection on, the results of my improvement efforts. Through an evaluation of student achievement data and the data I collected from parents, I was poised to make recommendations regarding the future of the PASD summer literacy programs in chapter five. I also suggest wider areas for improvement in PASD. Lastly, in chapter 6, I reflect on my learning throughout this program and the development of my leadership skills, in conjunction with the College of Education and Human Development's Conceptual Framework.

Also, included in the appendices of this Educational Leadership Portfolio are ten artifacts that represent my efforts to better understand and improve PASD summer literacy programs. Each artifact is included in an Appendix, including the ELP proposal in Appendix A and the set of artifacts in Appendices B-K. Below is a short description of the proposal and each artifact.

ELP Proposal

The ELP proposal defines the current summer literacy programs at PASD and lists my planned action steps. It describes my role in the organization, and how I plan to use this ELP to create new iterations of the summer programs. This paper is presented and rooted both in the literature and local context. This proposal was presented to my ELP committee in October, 2018, and guided all of my work on this project (see Appendix A).

Program Evaluation Plan

This plan was first drafted as part of my coursework in program evaluation. It describes the current elementary summer programming at PASD, including program theory, strategies, implementation, and long-term goals. A plan for data analysis is outlined. I revised this plan to be reflective of my current Educational Leadership Portfolio proposal, and the current iterations of both the Summer Stepping Up (SSU) and the Jumpstart programs (see Appendix B).

Literature Review

This literature review is a document synthesizing research on various summer program models and their efficacy. It demonstrates the need for summer book access programs, particularly for historically underperforming groups of elementary students, while considering the cost-effectiveness of such program models. My research into the results of traditional, brick-and-mortar summer school programs led me to the development of the Jumpstart book access pilot program as a research-based alternative or supplement to traditional summer programs (see Appendix C).

Research Brief

This artifact is a short research brief for presentation to the superintendent and district administrators. I conducted an analysis of reading benchmark scores from spring 2018 to fall 2018, a measure of student growth/maintenance for both Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up students. The brief includes relevant charts, tables, and a written explanation (see Appendix D).

Parent Survey

The Parent Survey contains feedback from parents about the Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs. Information from the survey allowed for changes to be made to the SSU and Jumpstart programs to better accommodate parent and student needs. IRB approval was obtained to complete this artifact. While the survey is anonymous, I asked for volunteers to participate in the parent focus group outlined below (see Appendix E).

Summary of Survey and Parent Focus Groups

The Summary of Survey and Parent Focus Groups is a short brief for presentation to the superintendent and district administrators. The focus group sessions were designed to further illuminate survey results and suggested next steps from families by obtaining in-person explanations of a respondent's opinions. Questions for the groups related to positive characteristics of the summer programs as well as barriers to attendance and suggestions for improvement. IRB approval was secured to complete the focus groups (see Appendix F).

Communication Plan

The Communication Plan outlines the steps and timeline required to successfully communicate with parents and teachers regarding the summer program. The purpose is to clearly communicate the rationale for participation in either Summer Stepping Up or Jumpstart to parents. I also produced a comparison of the two programs, benefits, required parent and teacher actions, and timelines. More specifically, the artifact is a framework which includes the components of the plan and the timeframe for completion of each component (see Appendix G).

Infographic

The Infographic is a comparison between Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart. Its purpose is to clearly illustrate the program differences so that parents can select the program that best meets their needs. Student growth data, quotes from parents, and general information is included about each program. This artifact was included in the Parent Mailing and presentation outlined below (see Appendix H).

Parent Mailing

The Parent Mailing is a new comprehensive mailing to families which provides a full description of summer 2019 program offerings. PASD mailings existed only to outline the SSU program, and the later addition of Jumpstart created a lot of confusion for families in 2018. This artifact informs families of the choice between SSU and Jumpstart, and provides registration materials (see Appendix I).

Parent Presentation

A previous PASD presentation described Jumpstart program's vision, strategies, and projected outcomes. However, the Parent Presentation is a completely

revised version of the presentation to help parents understand both SSU and Jumpstart and, ultimately, choose the best one for their child(ren) (see Appendix J).

Evaluation

The Evaluation is a presentation based on the research and analysis of the existing summer programs for the superintendent of schools and/or School Board. In the presentation I created an overview of the summer programs, an analysis of each, including supporting data, and recommendations for change (see Appendix K).

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) serves approximately 3,850 students in its six schools: Phoenixville Early Learning Center (PAELC), Barkley Elementary School, Manavon Elementary School, Schuylkill Elementary School, Phoenixville Area Middle School, and Phoenixville Area High School. Across the district, 74% of the overall student population is white, 13% Hispanic, 6% African American, 4% multi-racial, and 3% Asian. Twenty-seven percent of students are economically disadvantaged, 15% have individualized education plans (IEPs), and 5.5% are English learners (ELs) (Pennsylvania School Performance Profile, 2017).

Student Characteristics

A closer look at each school's demographics reveals differences among PASD's elementary schools. As seen in Table 1 below, the largest population of economically disadvantaged students, as measured by free and reduced lunch data, is at Barkley Elementary, which serves students in grades 2-5. The Phoenixville Area Early Learning Center (PAELC) serves all of the district's kindergarten and grade one students. This building has the second largest percentage of economically disadvantaged students. These two buildings also have the highest percentages of students with IEPs, EL, African American, and Latino students.

Table 1 Elementary Student Demographics

School (Grades)	Total pop	% ED	% IEP	% EL	% White	% Black	% Latino
PAELC (K-1)	659	27.01	11.69	7.44	70.71	4.86	15.78
Barkley (2-5)	291	51.20	14.09	15.46	51.20	10.65	29.55
Manavon (2-5)	420	23.10	14.53	2.62	78.10	3.33	9.06
Schuylkill (2-5)	515	19.03	13.21	5.24	75.15	2.52	10.10

Achievement Data

Data from PASD tell an interesting story about the differences in student performance. Achievement data is criterion-referenced; it measures student performance as compared with grade-level standards. Table 2 shows that when PASD examined 2017 state achievement data for students in third through fifth grade, 79% of third-grade students met standards. However, when disaggregated for historically underperforming (HU) subgroups and non-historically underperforming (non-HU) subgroups, the data show between 90% and 95% of non-HU students met grade-level standards as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). By contrast, only 54% of HU students met grade-level standards (see Table 2). The results do not differ much for grades 4 and 5, with 60% and 56%, respectively, of HU

students having met grade-level standards. Clearly, there are many students who still cannot reach the goal of grade level proficiency as measured by the PSSA.

When we examine the cohort of HU students over the past three years this trend is further illuminated (see Table 2, bold percentages). For example, 49% of the 2015 third-grade HU students met grade level standards. In 2016, this cohort's proficiency levels dropped slightly to 47%. As fifth graders in 2017, 56% of these students met grade-level standards. Over this three-year period, the group saw some gains, but still struggled to come close to matching the non-HU proficiency rate of approximately 95%.

Table 2 PASD Elementary PSSA Data from 2017, 2016, and 2015

District PSSA English Language Arts Scores	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
2017			
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	79%	81%	80%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	54%	60%	**56%**
2016			
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	72%	74%	77%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	56%	**47%**	43%
2015			
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	74%	76%	81%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	**49%**	41%	58%

Candidate's Role

I am one of two curriculum and instruction supervisors employed by the district. I report to the assistant superintendent, and work closely with him, other central office personnel, building administrators, and classroom teachers to improve curriculum and instruction in the district. My work generally entails direction of federal programming, grants, and summer programs; coordination, planning, and facilitation of professional learning; and curriculum writing and teacher supervision in the areas of English Language Arts, English Language Development, and Social Studies. Since I currently plan and oversee elementary summer programs, I was eager to use the Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP) to better inform my work and further develop my leadership skills.

As a doctoral candidate, I have reviewed literature about traditional summer programs, book access programs, and summer achievement loss. Based on the literature, I recognized the marginal effectiveness of traditional summer programs, and how students can maintain upward learning trajectories by simply engaging in reading during the summer months (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003; Allington et al., 2010; Kim & White, 2008).

Development of this Education Leadership Portfolio aids PASD's improvements to summer literacy programs for elementary students. My ELP project aligns closely with the district's goals of high-quality instruction for all students and data-driven decision making. Through this ELP I provide strong, research-based recommendations, materials, and plans for summer programming to reduce summer

reading loss, especially for historically underperforming groups of students. Additionally, the ELP affords me opportunities to communicate with multiple stakeholders – teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the PASD School Board – about our summer program effectiveness and future plans for refinement.

Summer Program Characteristics

Like most years, in 2018 PASD offered extensive summer programming. The many offerings provide remediation, enrichment, and enjoyment. Local recreation centers and other community organizations ran summer programs at PASD facilities. English Language Development and Extended School Year programs were offered to eligible English Learners and students with IEPs, respectively, in grades K-12. Credit recovery and original credit were offered at the high school level.

One main focus of this ELP, the Summer Stepping Up (SSU) literacy program, was offered for students exiting kindergarten through fifth grade. SSU is a school-based literacy program for elementary students in grades K-5 run by PASD. Like many traditional summer school programs, it meets at school for half-day sessions Monday through Thursday for four weeks during the summer. Students are assigned to one homeroom teacher, and at SSU, they also have a STEM teacher they see approximately once per week. Classes are small – no more than twelve students – and elementary teachers are hired to conduct them.

The purpose of SSU is to reduce summer loss in student literacy achievement and maintain engagement in reading during the summer months. Students invited to SSU are those who are reading below or just at grade level. They proportionally

represent all four elementary schools in the district, including the Title I schools, PAELC and Barkley. Student achievement/loss prevention are measured by student performance on benchmark assessments (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) administered in the fall, compared to the previous school year's spring scores. To accomplish the SSU objectives, teachers use interactive, standards-based whole class mini-lessons, small group, and individual lessons using the reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015). Students also complete nightly reading homework and log their independent reading at home.

During the summer of 2018, the program served 231 students in class sizes of 8-12 students (see Table 3). SSU teachers provided literacy instruction on a variety of strategies to help students maintain their reading skills and a joy of reading, aligned to the school-year curriculum. Lessons were taught using the reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015). Students were assessed as needed for instructional purposes using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) (Good & Kaminski, 2002), and before and after the program using Fountas & Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS; Fountas & Pinnell, 2010).

Table 3 Students Enrolled in SSU 2018 from PASD Schools and Non-Public Schools

Grade	Total Enrolled	PAELC	Manavon	Barkley	Schuylkill	Nonpublic
K-1st grade	30	30	0	0	0	0
1st grade - 2nd grade	36	36	0	0	0	0
2nd grade - 3rd grade	38	0	15	14	9	0
3rd grade - 4th grade	47	0	15	11	20	1
4th grade - 5th grade	47	0	14	14	19	0
5th grade - 6th grade	33	0	9	9	15	0
Totals	231	66	53	48	63	1

During the summer of 2018, the PASD SSU program ran concurrently with another separate summer literacy program: Jumpstart, the second focus of this ELP. Jumpstart was a non-traditional pilot program I created to provide book access to students and help parents maintain strong literacy habits during the summer months (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003; Allington et al., 2010; Kim & White, 2008). Like SSU, Jumpstart's purpose is to maintain student literacy performance and engagement in reading during the summer months. Unlike SSU, Jumpstart aims to do this by providing parents with tools to support strong *home* literacy habits, instead of having students attend a school-based program. Families participating in Jumpstart work

mostly on their own, with the exception of two PASD-sponsored gatherings during the summer months. During 2018, 60 students in grades K-5 participated in the Jumpstart program whose families had previously declined the opportunity to participate in SSU. Student achievement/loss prevention for Jumpstart students was evaluated by their performance on F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) in the fall, as compared with the previous school year's spring benchmark data.

In order to provide free books to children in Jumpstart, I organized a book drive during which an estimated three thousand books were donated by PASD families and community members. The books were reviewed to ensure only gently used or new books were made available to students, and that the content was appropriate for elementary students. Various fiction and nonfiction genres were represented. Jumpstart began with a mandatory informational parent session in May, during which students chose as many books of interest as they desired. Most children chose to take home between 10-20 books, while some outliers chose between two and five books.

After that, families were encouraged to read at home and maintain strong literacy habits, such as establishing daily reading routines, reading together, talking about text, and using small incentives for reading. However, two optional student and parent Jumpstart gatherings were hosted by PASD in June and July. During these events, held off-campus at the library and a local water ice store, students browsed for new texts. They also talked with teachers and administrators about the books they read thus far and their reading habits. These events were attended by approximately 10 families.

Problem Statement

Differences in reading achievement between students from high-income and low-income households, and students who speak English as their native language and those who do not, continues to grow (Fry, 2007; Fry, 2008; Harris & Herrington, 2006; Lee & Reeves, 2012; McGee, 2013; Reardon, 2013). Currently, 44% of the nation's children live in low-income households, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey (Sillers, 2015). Many of these families are ethnic minorities, some of whom are learning English as a foreign language.

Current data from Phoenixville Area School District show differences in achievement levels between historically underperforming and non-historically underperforming groups of students at the elementary level. While about 80% of the overall student population in grades 3, 4, and 5 achieve proficiency on state assessments, only 54-60% of historically underperforming students achieve the proficiency goal. Compounding the growing achievement gap in PASD is the colloquially described *summer slide* (also known as *summer setback*, *summer loss*, or *slump*). Students from low-income backgrounds can lose, on average, months of hard-won progress over the summer (National Summer Learning Association, 2016). While PASD has not, to date, corroborated this with its students, research suggests that by fifth grade, students from low-income backgrounds may be two or three years behind their peers due to the cumulative effect of multiple summers with learning loss (Slates, Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2012).

Therefore, the PASD administration believes that summer literacy opportunities for students are incredibly important, especially for historically underperforming groups of students. These types of programs provide much needed resources to students who might not otherwise get them during the summer months. The development of a traditional elementary summer school program, SSU, was one of the methods PASD used to reduce the deficits HU students demonstrated on achievement testing. Overall, the data have not shown this to be an entirely effective solution, however.

The previous PASD curriculum and instruction supervisor reported that 90 - 99% of the children who regularly attended SSU in 2016 were able to increase or maintain their reading skills. From Table 4 below, note that this rate has been reduced to 46% overall in 2017. The reasons for this are likely complex.

Table 4 Summer Stepping Up Growth Data 2017

Grade level	% increased reading level	% maintained reading level	% decreased reading level
K	13	50	38
1	47	21	32
2	21	15	64
3	20	23	57
4	31	17	52
5	25	23	52

Data collection within PASD related to summer programming has been both difficult and inconsistent. Under previous supervisors, data collection was often incomplete. In fall of 2017, PASD transitioned from use of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) (Beaver, 2006) to the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010). The conversion between DRA and F&P BAS levels is not exact, which made comparison of spring 2017 and fall 2017 data problematic. Also, with F&P BAS characterized as a more rigorous test, reading benchmark scores dropped across the district. For funding purposes only, during 2017 DIBELS data were compared instead, but this is not sound practice because PASD does not use the specific DIBELS tests that measure comprehension (retell and maze comprehension tasks); only oral reading fluency tasks were assessed. Data from 2018 were less challenging to examine, as the benchmarking system was consistent from spring 2018 to fall 2018. I also ensured all students were accounted for during spring data collection and did the same in the fall.

The lack of consistent, positive results from SSU is unsurprising. Research suggests that traditional summer school programs struggle to obtain gains in student achievement, in part because program monitoring is challenging (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Gorard et al., 2015). For example, often the population of students that school districts intend to serve and the number of students who actually agree to attend are vastly different (Gorard et al., 2015). After the program begins, some students do not regularly attend, reducing the treated population even further (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Gorard et al., 2015).

These challenges should not discourage school districts from providing

programming for students in the summer months. Many students do not have access to the "resource faucet" during the summer (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2000). This means they lose library access, may have few books to read for practice in the home, and do not have access to literacy instruction. For students from low-income backgrounds, this is particularly noteworthy and may explain the findings on the increased severity of summer slide for this demographic group (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003). The challenge of book access during the summer months spawned a treatment for summer reading loss that has been oft espoused in the literature: voluntary access to books, particularly those that are self-chosen and matched to student reading levels (Allington, et al.,2010; Kim et al., 2016).

Consequently, programs providing improved book access to students may be a beneficial cost-saving solution to the problem of summer learning loss. Informed by the evidence related to book access programs, I created the at-home book access program, Jumpstart, as a pilot in 2018. An analysis of the viability and success of both the Summer Stepping Up and the Jumpstart programs at Phoenixville produced areas of program refinement and improved resource allocation to help PASD see less summer setback and greater gains in student achievement.

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Phoenixville Area School District elementary students have access to summer programs, Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart, that help to keep Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson's (2000) "resource faucet" on for students, particularly students from low-income backgrounds, during the summer months. These summer programs may help to close the achievement gap and reduce summer learning loss by: (a) maintaining student engagement in reading during the summer months; and (b) improving students' literacy skills, thereby improving students' reading performance, throughout the summer months. My goal for this ELP was addressed in two stages and I planned to (a) collect and use data and the existing research evidence on combatting summer learning loss to (b) plan for new iterations of the PASD summer literacy programs for the summer of 2019 and beyond. This chapter will explain how I addressed this overall goal in these two stages.

Stage 1: Data Collection and Analysis

This section of the ELP explains the data collection components of the work I undertook for my ELP. Based on the ELP goals, I needed to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data to examine the current implementation of Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart compared with PASD parents' desires and what the

research evidence recommends. To do this, I created the following ELP Artifacts: 1) Program Evaluation Plan, 2) Literature Review, 3) Research Brief, 4) Parent Survey, and 5) Summary of Survey and Parent Focus Groups.

Program Evaluation Plan

To thoroughly investigate the summer programs' results, I created a Program Evaluation Plan (Artifact 1, Appendix B), begun in EDUC 863 and revised in October, 2018. Based on participatory and theory-driven evaluation, this plan encompasses qualitative and quantitative data analysis to evaluate the SSU and Jumpstart programs. In this document, I discuss the program theory undergirding SSU and Jumpstart. I also plan the steps I take to collect data: parent surveys, parent focus groups, and student reading benchmark data. Lastly, I discuss the evaluation design, wherein families self-select their children into the SSU, Jumpstart, or no treatment group, and how the results of each are compared in my analysis. While some of the steps of this evaluation plan are outside the scope of this ELP, they nonetheless inform the administration and facilitation of both the SSU and Jumpstart programs.

Literature Review

The Literature Review (Artifact 2, Appendix C), a culminating project for EDUC 802, examines treatments for summer learning loss. I was in the beginning stages of this research when I first created the pilot program of Jumpstart for implementation during the summer of 2018. The research question for the review is directly related to the problem examined in my ELP: Are there programs that demonstrate efficacy with certain student populations, and are these scalable outside

of experimental designs to inform school districts' intent to design summer programming that works?

In this review, I examine the effects of treatments such as voluntary reading interventions and traditional summer school. In traditional summer school programs, students attend school for a few weeks or months of the summer to receive literacy instruction from teachers. Conversely, voluntary reading interventions are less structured than summer school programs, can be done entirely at home, and provide students with self-selected reading material.

For voluntary reading interventions, effect sizes are not large but generally consistent and positive. Researchers suggest the success of these treatments depends on students' access to text during the summer months and family involvement. For traditional summer school, results are inconsistent but show small positive effects, particularly at the elementary level. Ultimately, in my review I recommend that school districts design interventions that incorporate parent workshops, voluntary reading interventions, and traditional summer school to yield the greatest gains in students' literacy achievement.

Student Data Analysis

My next step was to complete an analysis of literacy benchmark data from the students who attended SSU in 2018 and those who participated in the at-home book access program Jumpstart during the same time period. In order to examine growth from the spring to fall, I collected the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) data from the PASD students who were invited to a 2018 summer literacy program. Once tests

were administered by teachers and reading specialists, I analyzed these data in the late fall of 2018 to examine individual growth of students in both treatments compared with those who did not attend, but were eligible and invited. After this work, I was able to create a research brief (Artifact 3, Appendix D), outlining this comparison. During this process, it became clear that there are limitations in the warehousing of data at PASD that prevent certain types of analyses, namely that of demographic subgroup achievement and longitudinal analysis. These limitations are further discussed in Chapter 5.

Parent Survey and Focus Groups

In Artifact 4 (Appendix E), I designed a survey in Qualtrics to gather feedback from parents about the Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs. I collected parent survey data about the viability of the programs and suggested improvements, especially related to improvement of student participation in both programs. While the survey was completely anonymous, at the conclusion of the survey I asked for volunteers to participate in parent focus groups. I obtained IRB approval on November 26, 2018, before administering the survey. A total of 127 surveys were returned by parents out of 463 that were distributed, for a return rate of 27%. However, this return rate might be artificially lowered due to three constraints. First, surveys were distributed to families of students who withdrew from PASD between the time they were invited to the summer programs in Spring 2018 and the date the survey was first sent on November 27, 2018. These families may have ignored an email from a school district they no longer attend. Second, an unknown number of email addresses were

invalid, meaning that some families likely did not receive the survey. Third, families who have multiple students who were invited to the summer program received multiple emails regarding the survey, one for each invited child. These parents likely only completed one survey for their entire family, another factor which could have affected return rate.

Based on parent availability, I held five focus group sessions in December of 2018 to further dig into perceptions (and misperceptions) about the summer programs. While I had not intended to have five sessions, several participants showed up late to sessions, necessitating that I hold separate sessions directly after those that had been scheduled. A total of 12 parents participated in the five focus group sessions. I had each session transcribed by Rev.com, and I imported the transcripts into NVivo 12 for analysis. In NVivo, I coded each transcript by highlighting for nodes, or themes, that I identified. The themes I identified after examining the transcripts were:

- climate and culture at SSU;
- communication;
- summer reading incentives;
- data/student progress;
- finances;
- schedule;
- instructional support; and
- transportation.

I then looked at the results of the parent survey using reporting features in Qualtrics. In Artifact 5 (Appendix F), I summarized the results of the survey and focus group sessions. This work examined common themes that emerged from the collected data: communication, student participation, and at-home summer reading. Lastly, I share parent recommendations for improvement around summer reading incentives, overall communication, SSU transportation, SSU aftercare, and SSU scheduling.

Stage 2: Improvements to Systems and Structures

This section of the ELP explains the steps I took to improve PASD summer program systems and structures, informed by the previously described data collection and analysis. Based on these data, I made critical revisions to systems and structures that will hopefully result in increased participation and information delivery to families in 2019. During this process, I created the following Artifacts: 1) Communication Plan, 2) Infographic, 3) Parent Mailing, 4) Parent Presentation, and 5) Evaluation.

Communication Plan

It became clear when analyzing collected data that PASD communication about summer literacy programs was inconsistent and irregular. Inconsistent communication was significant because we as school leaders must clearly communicate with families in order to foster desired levels of engagement. To improve upon our current levels of communication, I created a plan for communication to both staff and families, including parent informational sessions (Artifact 6, Appendix G). The Communication Plan outlines specific communication,

the intended audience, the medium, timeline, and responsible parties. The Communication Plan was designed specifically to help students and their families make informed decisions regarding their participation in either of the PASD summer literacy programs offered to elementary students. It is currently being implemented at the PASD-level to prepare teachers, parents, and students for summer 2019 literacy programs.

Parent Materials

The goal to help families make informed decisions regarding SSU and/or Jumpstart participation also drove the creation of an Infographic (Artifact 7, Appendix H). Although originally intended to share evidence from empirical research that undergirds the Jumpstart program, the design of the infographic evolved based on parent feedback during data collection. In 2018, parents expressed their confusion regarding the late addition of Jumpstart. Parents were not sure why their children were invited to this program, nor how it differed from Summer Stepping Up. I decided to focus the infographic on a comparison of the two summer programs so that parents could see their components and results at a glance. This infographic was vetted by the district literacy team and classroom teachers to ensure it would meet their needs when discussing the summer learning opportunities with parents in February, 2018.

In PASD, families usually register for the summer programs after Parent-Teacher conferences occur in mid-February. The registration mailings were also a point of contention for parents and families. They were long, sometimes misunderstood, and did not describe the programs. The newly revised mailings

(Artifact 8, Appendix I) include the aforementioned infographic, a Save-the-Date for the parent workshop described below, and registration materials for SSU and Jumpstart. I developed an online registration process as well. An SSU confirmation letter, mailed to families after registration forms are received, accompanies this mailing packet.

Workshops that aid parents in helping their children succeed in academics are informed by the research on within-family social capital and family reading (O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Slates et al., 2012). Family behaviors that correlate with summer gains for students despite low SES include: taking children to the library and checking out books, reading to children, and checking homework (Slates, et al., 2012). Learning the characteristics and behaviors of families with students who defy the typical pattern of summer learning loss may be instructive for all families. Similarly, parents benefit from understanding what strategies they can use with their children while reading together, such as literacy games, storytelling, and reading for recreation (Elish-Piper, 1996; O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Parker & Reid, 2017). As such, I created Artifact 9 (Appendix J), the parent presentation and accompanying materials.

This presentation, designed for parents of children invited to Jumpstart and SSU and created in January, 2019, includes a PowerPoint presentation and handouts. The handouts will be given in hard copy to parents when they attend this presentation in May, 2019. Handouts include:

- Literacy Websites for Kids handout,

- Summer Reading Calendar,
- Reading charts,
- Bookmarks, and
- PASD Summer Reading Bingo Board and suggested reading lists for each grade level.

Evaluation Presentation

Lastly, based on the research and analysis I conducted for this ELP, I created an overview of the summer programs; an analysis of each, including supporting data; and recommendations for change. The presentation is intentionally brief, a big-picture overview of our programs and suggested changes, meant to be digested in an administrative conversation of thirty minutes or less. It is not often that administrators have time to thoroughly analyze the effectiveness of programs, usually because of the time this type of analysis takes. I thought it was especially important to share and discuss my analysis with those who make PASD budgeting decisions, sometimes with and sometimes without my input. My hope is that a few of my recommendations will be considered and budgeted for in 2019 and beyond. This information was shared in a presentation to the superintendent and assistant superintendent of schools in February, 2019.

Chapter 4

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS

Phoenixville Area School District's Summer Stepping Up program has been in existence for at least seven years, and in its tenure, many district administrators have contributed to its evolution. At present time, my role at PASD includes the planning, facilitation, and oversight of SSU and Jumpstart. I am supported by building level literacy leadership teams, which are comprised of all the elementary reading specialists. This group of specialists helps to disseminate information and complete building-level tasks related to the summer programs, such as determining student participation. As a result of this ELP, I revamped aspects of the SSU and Jumpstart programs, with new iterations to be rolled out in the summer of 2019.

Results were collected from the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) data from 2018, the parent survey sent to all families whose children were invited to the 2018 summer program, and the focus group sessions with volunteer parents of invited children. From these data, several themes emerged.

Results from Student Reading Data

Student reading results, as measured by the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010), were positive overall. Data were collected in the late spring of 2018 and again in the fall of 2018, to measure whether students maintained, increased, or decreased

reading levels during the summer months. If students grew one reading level or more from spring to fall, they were coded as *increased* with respect to reading level. Students with levels coded as *maintained* stayed at the same reading level from spring to fall. Students coded as *decreased* had reading levels that declined one reading level or more, or were not able to pass the assessment for the same reading level they attained in the spring.

Table 5 2018 Results for Students Eligible for Summer Programs by Program and Non-Participating Students

	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Maintained or increased reading level	Total students with Spring and Fall data	% maintained or increased reading level
Non-participating students	77	19	96	147	65.3%
Jumpstart students	33	13	46	55	83.6%
Summer Stepping Up students	128	43	171	204	83.8%

Results for students enrolled in summer programs, whether at-home or at-school, are promising. After eliminating data from students who withdrew from PASD before the fall 2018 testing window, or students whose data was not collected in fall 2018, data from a total of 147 non-participating students, 55 Jumpstart students, and

204 Summer Stepping Up students from grades K-5 were analyzed. Just 65% of non-participating students maintained or increased their reading levels from spring 2018 to fall 2018. This result is in direct contrast with 84% of Jumpstart students and 84% of Summer Stepping Up students who maintained or increased their reading levels (see Table 5).

These data were presented to the superintendent and assistant superintendent of PASD in a short Prezi presentation (Artifact 10, Appendix K). Along with background information about the rationale behind the summer literacy programs, this presentation also discusses my recommendations for continued programmatic growth, which are further explored in Chapter 5. This presentation was a necessary component of this ELP because clear communication about the results of the summer programs will help to ensure these programs are fully funded in the summers to come.

In examining the data further, interestingly, in the fall of 2018 reading specialists from all the elementary buildings had reported that the 1st grade-2nd grade cohort of students (students ending first grade in spring 2018 and beginning second grade in fall 2018) was performing lower than expected. This was confirmed by the districtwide results for all students invited to the summer literacy programs (see Table 6). On average, this cohort of students, including those who attended SSU and Jumpstart, as well as those who did not, lost more ground over the summer months than other cohorts. In the 1st grade-2nd grade cohort, 34 students decreased reading levels, as compared with 19 students in grade K-1st grade, 14 students in 2nd grade-3rd

grade, 13 students in 3rd grade-4th grade, 10 students in 4th grade-5th grade, and three students in 5th grade-6th grade (see Table 6).

Table 6 2018 Districtwide Results for Students Invited to Elementary Summer Literacy Programs

	Withdrawn from PASD	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Decreased reading level	Data not collected	Total
Kindergarten-1st grade	8	28	8	19	0	63
1st grade-2nd grade	9	33	8	34	2	86
2nd grade-3rd grade	6	51	11	14	0	82
3rd grade-4th grade	6	52	19	13	1	91
4th grade-5th grade	3	57	25	10	0	95
5th grade-6th grade	2	17	4	3	57	83

All PASD students in Kindergarten and first grade attend the Phoenixville Area Early Learning Center. Students then split up into their designated elementary schools for second through fifth grades. It may be that the perceived decline in reading skills from the end of first grade to the beginning of second grade (in the 1st-2nd grade cohort) is due to students' transition to a new building. Perhaps students who enter a

new building for second grade simply do not yet feel comfortable during the September testing window with their new teachers, or the new environment. This might contribute to lower reading scores in the fall. Alternately, there may be a district concern with interrater reliability. Teachers in the Early Learning Center may be inflating scores for their exiting first graders, or second grade teachers may be scoring students too harshly. This inconsistency is something that could be addressed with refresher workshops on scoring the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) using the provided rubrics.

Both Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up students outperformed non-participating students who were eligible for the summer literacy programs in 2018 but did not participate. While Jumpstart appears to have strong results, the program also had a significantly smaller sample size than SSU. To verify these results, at least three years of data and increased Jumpstart numbers are needed.

Results from Parent Survey and Focus Groups

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) parents were surveyed regarding the elementary summer literacy programs, Summer Stepping Up (SSU) and Jumpstart. In late November 2019, the survey was distributed via our electronic messaging system to parents of students who were invited to a summer program. One reminder was sent a week later via the same system. These surveys were followed up with five focus group sessions conducted on December 10 and 19, 2018 comprised of volunteers who self-identified for participation during the survey.

The results of the survey were mixed, as I suspected they might be. From working the programs for a few years, much of the feedback I had heard, both positive and negative. However, there were some unexpected challenges. From the survey data, there was no discernable difference in the amount of at-home reading done by students in one of the PASD summer literacy programs and those who were not in any program. Respondents with non-participating children reported that students read around two books per week and five books per month. Jumpstart students read three books per week and seven per month. SSU students read three books per week and six books per month. Parents of non-participating children read four books per week with their children, and six books per month. Parents of Jumpstart students read on average three books per week with their children, and six per month. Parents of SSU students read three books per week with their children, and five books per month.

All respondents answered questions about the summer reading incentive, which was a coupon for a local water ice place. Forty-three respondents were aware of the incentive, twenty-nine were not, and sixteen were unsure. Fifty-four people thought the incentive was fine, while thirty-one thought it needed improvement.

The focus group sessions provided a deeper investigation into this topic. One parent noted that water ice coupons were overused, and therefore not much of an incentive for students. Some parents were unhappy with a food-based incentive. One parent said, “I don't know if there's any way we can incentivize them like through school, like when they come back…a free homework night.” However, other parents

suggested a free ice cream at school with the return of their Bingo Board, free pizza, or a free book.

With regard to the SSU and Jumpstart literacy programs, parents/guardians reported a variety of reasons why children did not participate, and from the responses shown Figures 1 and 2, it does not seem PASD may be able to address all the concerns to encourage more participation. Many parent suggestions are either not feasible due to increased costs for schools, negative effects on other school summer programs, or are already occurring, such as free transportation. Some respondents indicated that their children just needed free time, implying that they would not consider sending their children to any program.

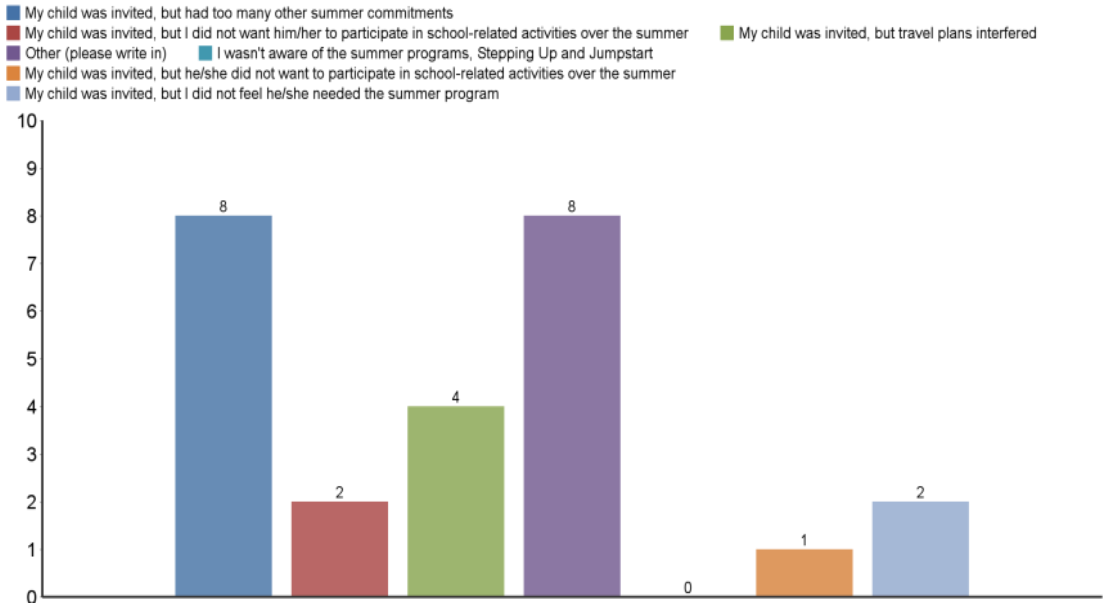

Figure 1 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you decide not to participate in summer programs?"

Text Entry
Maybe a list of "If you like ____, try these" so choosing books isn't so overwhelming
provide transporaton
If something like this is offered in the future, it should be full day so that working parents can make accommodations for the child.
offer multiple times or transportation
Later start time
No, all students grow at their own pace, it’s not a one size fits all. As long as my child is making a steady improvement, absolutely not. Children need down time.
My child's teacher believed his reading comprehension was lagging. We strongly disagreed & suspected what was being observed by the teacher was undiagnosed ADHD. The teacher disagreed, saying she didn't believe he exhibited ADHD symptoms. Our child subsequently was diagnosed with ADHD by a neurologist. We
It needs to be communicated earlier. This program is not conducive for families with 2 working parents. Have an aftercare and Friday option.
It's too long of a committment amd interferes with other summer activities.
Provide care for the entire day, the half day program does not work for working parents.

Figure 2 Text responses to the parent survey question, “Why did you decide not to participate in summer programs?

Jumpstart was not as popular a choice as Summer Stepping Up, but it was a better fit for some families for the reasons outlined by parents in response to the question, “Why did you choose to participate in Jumpstart?” (see Figure 3). Some respondents valued the flexibility of Jumpstart. Others enjoyed the off-campus gatherings and the free books. Specifically Figure 3 shows that families appreciated the opportunity for their children to stay at home instead of attending school. They

also valued some summer interaction with school staff, however, as shown by the positive responses to the meet-up events at the public library and Petrucci's Water Ice.

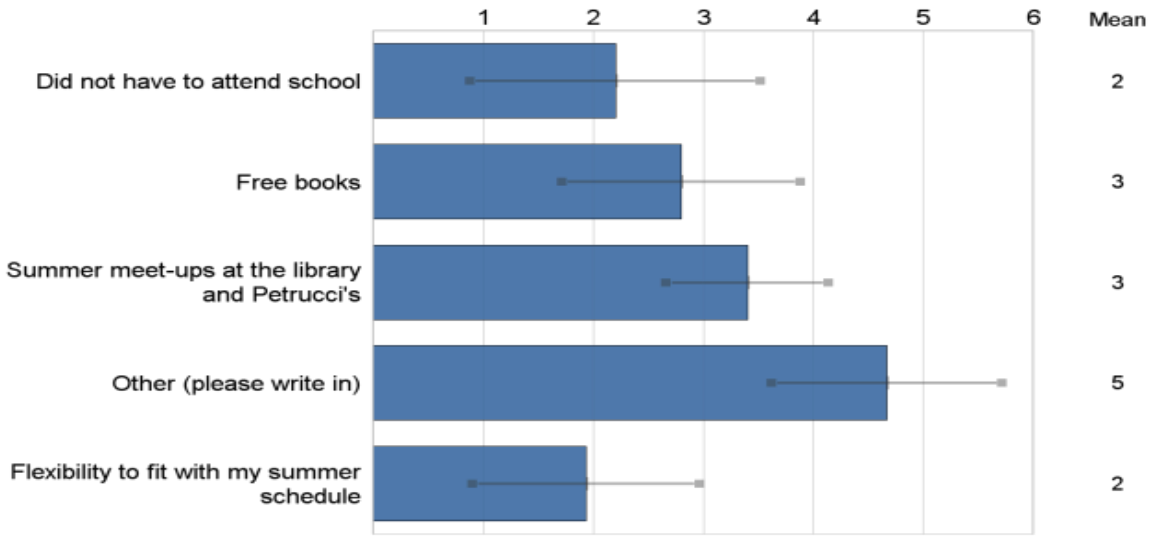

Figure 3 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you choose to participate in Jumpstart?"

The Summer Stepping Up program was chosen by parents of SSU students for the reasons outlined in Figure 4. Reasons include free transportation to and from SSU which is provided by PASD, and the opportunity to receive literacy instruction at school. Parents also appreciate the opportunity for students to receive free breakfast, socialize with their friends, have independent reading time at school, and keep up school routines during the summer. These reasons were echoed in the focus group sessions, during which parents claimed that they like the "camp" atmosphere and were grateful for the opportunity to improve their children's reading abilities. Parents stated,

"Because it's a good way to keep them reading…It allows them to stay at the same level and not decline. It gives them choice and opportunity."

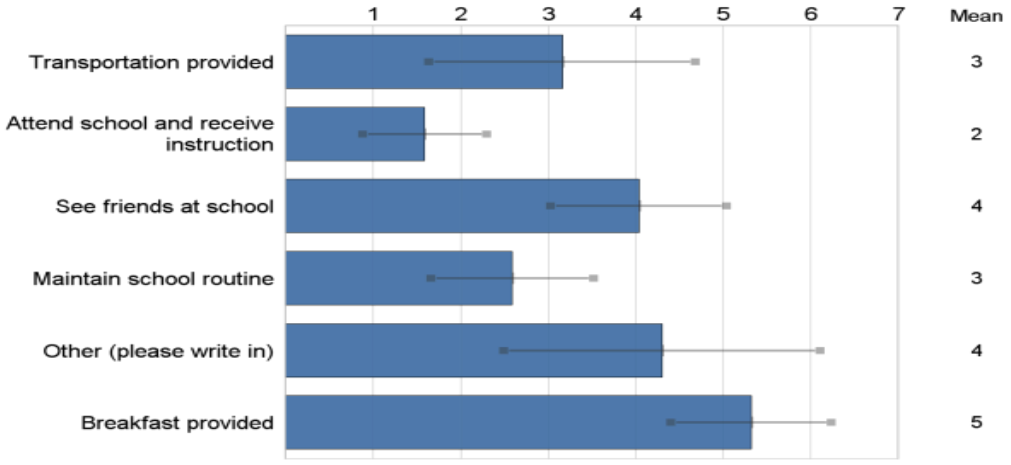

Figure 4 Responses to the parent survey question, "Why did you choose to participate in Summer Stepping Up?"

Additionally, survey and focus group data revealed that communication between the teachers, summer program staff, and parents needs improvement, both before and during the SSU program. The survey data showed that 81% of respondents felt well informed, and 22% felt that some communication was confusing. Similarly, parents' focus group comments about communication prior to the summer programs showed that PASD often missed the mark. Parents wanted to be informed earlier, so they could make decisions about summer camp participation. They wanted to have more open conversations with classroom teachers about their children's reading difficulties. One parent noted she never received the invitation during conferences:

> February 28th, in my son's folder came home the letter which had to be back March 1st, and when I called they said, ‘I don't know. You should have been at conferences,’ and I said, 'I was at conferences, so where has this letter been for the last two weeks and now I have a day to decide?’ Obviously, we wanted to do it because it was recommended but where was it for the two weeks and why did the reading teacher not indicate anything to us that it was going to be coming, because it was a big surprise because we thought we had made great strides last year with him catching up with everyone else.

Parents clearly wanted to be informed of their children’s invitations to the SSU and Jumpstart programs even earlier than in 2018. Because of this information and data from the survey and focus groups, I revised my Communication Plan (Artifact 6, Appendix G). Invitations will now be mailed prior to spring parent-teacher conferences, so that parents can arrive at conferences ready to ask questions and discuss summer opportunities, as opposed to being caught off guard by the invitation during the conference.

Communication during the SSU program received lackluster feedback as well. During focus group sessions, most parents said there was little to no communication from teachers, although some outliers did receive weekly or biweekly emails from teachers. Parents noted that they were not informed about the day’s schedule or assignments from SSU teachers. Some received a welcome email from teachers, while others said they received nothing. Others noted they did not know how their child performed during the program. One parent stated, “I would like to see what the goals

of the program were. Did they meet the goals?" Parents expressed that there was a disconnect with the transition from classroom teacher to summer school teacher, as it related to Individualized Education Plan (IEP) services, achievement data, pick up and drop off from school, and accommodations for allergies.

The mandate for improved communication between teachers and parents was clear. To address these disconnects regarding communication, I made additions to the Communication Plan (Artifact 6, Appendix G) that will require SSU teachers to reach out to parents prior to the start of the program and at least twice during the program. Teachers will also send home end-of-program reports including students' achievement data and narrative comments about how parents can continue to assist their children during the remainder of the summer.

Parents frequently commented on aspects of SSU scheduling. Feedback was varied, however, there were no overwhelming sentiments that PASD could likely address. Some appreciated the half day timeframe, while others noted they would prefer a full-day program. Some parents wanted a longer number of weeks for the program, but others liked the four-week timeframe. A few parents wanted school to be held on Fridays. At this time, no changes will be made to the duration of the program or the daily schedule to neither increase costs for the district, nor impact other summer programs in the district that utilize the same resources during the same timeframes.

Many parents take advantage of PASD aftercare options, held at the SSU site. This partnership with Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (PAPA) provides free aftercare from noon until 3 p.m. following SSU. Some parents expressed satisfaction

with this, while others did not like the PAPA program. Several parents suggested we form a partnership with the local YMCA chapter, an aftercare provider, to provide a discount on weekly camps. I am partnering with the PASD superintendent to explore this option.

From my experience managing the SSU program for the past few years, I knew that parents had some concerns that had not been addressed to date. I had thought most issues were about communication prior to the start of the program. Through the survey and the focus groups, I learned that many parents had additional concerns regarding topics that I had not previously attempted to address:

1) Parents want to better understand the criteria for selection into the program. Within the district, these criteria are clear: our Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) students receiving Tier 2 and 3 services are invited to SSU, if they are not invited to the English Language Development or the Extended School Year Student Services programs. While I thought most parents knew the RtII tier in which their students were instructed, I learned this is not the case. In general, parents did not seem to understand the data we collect from reading benchmark assessments, nor how to interpret these data about their child's current reading levels.
2) Also, teachers may be telling parents that students should only read books on their reading levels, as parents made comments that did not show an appreciation of students' reading of choice texts (texts that students choose based on their interests instead of ones adults curate for them). In my role

as Supervisor of Curriculum, this is something that I will need to address with teachers. An important part of both SSU and Jumpstart is student choice in reading material, as this helps to keep students engaged in reading throughout the summer.

3) I did not expect the number of concerns parents expressed regarding aftercare. The PAPA aftercare program that PASD partners with is run by a young staff with no formal training in education. I knew this was problematic for some parents who wanted a more structured, school-like environment for their children in aftercare. It was a surprise, however, when parents commented about the YMCA's fee structure. The YMCA charges a weekly rate for their camp, which runs from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. SSU students are bussed to the YMCA and arrive around 12:15 on Monday through Thursday. Parents relayed that they were charged the full price for the week of care, receiving no discount for the time that their children are not in attendance.
4) Finally, the variation in teacher communication with families during the SSU program was unknown to me. My clear directive to teachers had been about issuing a welcome letter at the start of the program, but further guidance is needed. Not all parents received welcome letters and communication after that was nonexistent in some classes. Some teachers are not partnering with parents over the summer. Communication could

definitely be improved to benefit families, SSU students, and their achievement.

For 2019, PASD will be following the Communication Plan I created (Artifact 6. Appendix G). This will ensure consistency across the district, beginning in February when we first send out invitation letters for SSU and Jumpstart to families (Artifact 8, Appendix I). All schools now send home the invitations on the same day shortly before parent-teacher conferences. This ensures there is time for parents to discuss students' reading progress with teachers, and ask any questions they may have about PASD summer programming. Both teachers and parents are also provided with the Infographic (Artifact 7, Appendix H). This ensures a clear understanding by all parties of the differentiation between Jumpstart and SSU. I hope the Infographic will enable parents and teachers to have frank conversations about what they are able to commit to at home and at school during the summer months.

As part of the Communication Plan, PASD will also be hosting a beginning of May parent meeting for families who are registered for, or interested in, Jumpstart or Summer Stepping Up. During this meeting, the Parent Presentation (Artifact 9, Appendix J) will be used to discuss the two summer programs and provide resources for parents. Provided parent and student materials include copies of the following:

- A summer calendar to help keep children motivated to read
- The PASD summer reading assignment and suggested reading lists for each grade level
- Bookmarks

- Motivational incentive charts
- Suggested websites for literacy games and resources

While I will not be able to formally measure the results of my efforts until the end of summer 2019, the strategies implemented will address many of the parent concerns with the summer programs, and help to ensure PASD resources are appropriately allocated to the programs in the future. Additional measures for continued improvement will be described in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS

There is always work to be done in a school district in order to see continued growth in students, staff, and the organization as a whole. While the changes made to the summer literacy programs as part of this ELP will likely improve the programs themselves, there is more that can and must be done to decrease summer learning loss and increase summer reading engagement.

Personal Reflection

The ELP project was more successful than I had anticipated in reducing summer learning loss, which is the ultimate goal of the PASD summer programs. Overall results showed that 84% of 55 Jumpstart students and 84% of 204 Stepping Up students maintained or improved their reading levels over the summer months. This outcome certainly shows that the project is meeting the established goal, however, there is more work to be done to ensure *every* student can achieve this level of success.

Because of the preliminary results from the 2018 Jumpstart pilot, proof of concept for book access programs in PASD has been established. By simply following the recommendations from empirical research – free choice text for students, and lots of it, combined with one parent workshop – I was able to show results similar to those

attained by SSU students (Allington, et al., 2010; Kim, et al., 2016). I had slight reservation that I would be able to accomplish what the experts achieved in their studies, but the data were certainly positive.

While future data sets and an expanded cohort of Jumpstart students are needed to demonstrate the worth of the program, I wholeheartedly recommend that other district administrators consider similar book access programs, depending on their district contexts. Districts looking to address the issue of summer learning loss can achieve results with a very limited or nonexistent budget by marshalling community resources, something I never thought was possible before working through this ELP. I often tell other districts about Jumpstart for just this reason. This information gives me hope, not just for addressing the problem of summer slide, but for other educational problems as well. If we can help students so significantly with this simple evidence-based solution, what other issues might be addressed through creative problem solving and use of research evidence?

In completing this ELP, I wanted to improve the next iteration of the summer programs, and I certainly have done that. The Communication Plan, in particular, is very useful to the district and can continue to be developed as the programs evolve. Never before had there been a comprehensive and clear plan that defined actions, responsible parties, and timelines for communication. Hence, certain communications were inconsistent or not taking place at all. Now, program administrators will be able to hold all parties accountable for meeting these shared goals. I am also proud of the fact that we now have a parent survey that can be sent every year to parents of all

students who were invited to the summer programs. This will continue to give us useful data to ensure programming evolves with changing parent and student needs. The parent materials, presentation, and mailings also help with my efforts to improve PASD summer programs. These documents will also change and evolve over time, but they are templates from which to work.

Certainly, my role at PASD was crucial to the success of my ELP. Knowing the summer programs as well as I do provided me with intimate background knowledge. I had a good idea of the program strengths and weaknesses, and an existing vision for success from which to build. I wish, however, that I had been able to also survey Summer Stepping Up teachers and students as part of this ELP project. Their insight was absent from this ELP, except as it was acquired secondhand through parents. In the future, I plan to survey these parties to learn from their experiences in order to make informed choices regarding further changes to SSU and Jumpstart.

There are additional, larger changes I would make to continue to improve Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up. My recommendations for PASD as an organization are multi-faceted and drawn from the improvement effort results previously discussed. Several areas for improvement emerged when I took the time to listen to parents, and this information informed recommendations one, two, and three. Recommendations four, five, and six were borne from the process I undertook to research elementary summer literacy programs.

Recommendation One

PASD administrators now understand the power of student access to books in the summer months, and most importantly, the effects the research (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003; Allington et al., 2010; Kim & White, 2008) suggest book access has on student reading achievement. Because of this knowledge, my first recommendation is to start a bookmobile model during the summer months to provide PASD students with increased book access. A bookmobile would provide an opportunity for students to get easy access to books of their choosing during the summer months, perhaps through library loan. The Phoenixville Public Library is actually part of Phoenixville Area School District, and is run by the School Board of Directors. Therefore, partnership with the Public Library in this endeavor would be relatively seamless. In this way, students would not need to rely on parents or guardians to take them to the library, school book swap and chat events, or the school buildings to pick up new books. For the first year, this initiative could be piloted in targeted lower income borough neighborhoods served by PASD. The increased PASD visibility could also indirectly affect school-community relations in a positive way.

The cost to PASD would be minimal, particularly if books were loaned through the Phoenixville Public Library. Costs would be limited to a van, gas, and staff. A district van could be used for the summer at no extra expense, since vans already owned by the PASD are used infrequently during the summer months. Gas expenses would be nominal to drive throughout the borough of Phoenixville once per week. Public Library staff and/or a PASD librarian could run the bookmobile, and the

employee would only need to be paid for a few additional hours per week, or a small stipend for the summer.

Recommendation Two

In the online survey and focus groups, many parents complained about aftercare options available during the Summer Stepping Up program. The Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (PAPA) program was run on-site and at no cost, but some parents were unhappy with the quality of care. The program also ended at 3 p.m., leaving some parents in a difficult situation for pick-up, and the program is limited in the number of students it can accommodate. Other families used the YMCA as an aftercare option, and the district transported SSU students to the YMCA at the end of the SSU day. However, parents were charged the *full* weekly price even though their children only attended a half-day program, making this option unaffordable for some families. Lastly, some parents chose to forgo sending their children to SSU entirely because they did not have an inexpensive option for aftercare.

It is clear PASD needs some innovative solutions to the problem of aftercare. I recommend that PASD capitalizes on resources already in use in the district, and pays for SSU students to attend half-day afternoon Phoenixville summer weekly camps that are ongoing in the district. These camps are extremely popular, with topics such as "Cupcake Wars," various sports, games, and art options. Many of them are taught by Phoenixville teachers, which would provide a familiar atmosphere for students. Students could easily walk from the SSU site at noon to the Phoenixville Area Middle School next door, where the camps are held.

The cost to PASD would be minimal, as most of these half-day camps only cost $50-$100 dollars per session. Not all SSU students would take advantage of this option; my best estimate is that 50-75 students would participate, resulting in a total cost of $2,500 to $7,500. The only negative aspect of this recommendation is that camps end at 3 p.m., with students needing to be picked up at this time. Some parents would still experience difficulty with this pick-up time, and for them, this would not be a viable option. It would, however, address the other problems parents expressed related to PAPA. The quality and reputation of the Phoenixville Summer camps is strong, and the camps can accommodate large numbers of students. Parents would greatly appreciate the opportunity to send their children to these camps for free, in exchange for coming to SSU.

Recommendation Three

During the online survey and focus group sessions, parents prized communication about the summer program. While the Communication Plan (Artifact 6, Appendix G) addresses many of the concerns expressed by parents, PASD could more proactively tackle the issue of communication. Recent research cites the benefits of regular summer text messaging to parents related to children's reading scores in the fall (Kraft & Monti-Nussbaum, 2017). While this research is in its infancy, it is a cost-effective manner of engaging families in the educational process.

I have investigated several mass text messaging services which have districtwide capabilities, the ability to translate messages into multiple languages, and are free. With one of these services, PASD could engage in a summer text messaging

campaign consisting of tips, resources, and encouragement, similar to the campaign used by Kraft and Monti-Nussbaum (2017), with the goal of increasing home-based literacy activities during the summer months. There are few, if any, negative consequences to trying something like this, particularly if parents must opt-in in order to participate.

Recommendation Four

Although not addressed explicitly in this ELP, student attendance at SSU is much lower than it is during the school year. It can be challenging to get students to get on the bus, sometimes earlier than during the school year, to come to summer school. One recommendation to improve attendance is to provide recreational activities to students during the SSU day (McLaughlin & Pitcock, 2009). Perhaps recommendation two, detailed earlier, might help incentivize student attendance with recreational activities after the summer school day, but some activities could also be built into the SSU day. In 2018 at SSU, the addition of STEM classes served to provide learning-based recreation to students. PASD could choose to expand these offerings to expose students to STEM daily. Alternately, PASD could offer additional opportunities for students to be exposed to the outdoors and to play through nature-based project learning, conventional recess, or free play during morning drop-off time from 8:15-8:45. Not only would these recreational options likely increase student attendance, they would also serve to boost students' attitudes towards SSU and summer learning.

Recommendation Five

During focus group sessions, concerns were generated about teacher and parent knowledge of the summer programs and summer reading. I recommend a simple and inexpensive was to address this need: increased professional learning in this area. The main expense for this professional learning would be one related to time, as PASD has the capacity to do this in-house. This year, teachers will receive more explicit communication regarding the process for summer program invitations and registration. In the future, this could be taken a step further and PASD facilitators could explain the research base behind the elementary summer literacy program options. The goal would be to provide teachers with a firm knowledge of the programs, as well as the research evidence that undergirds their development and evolution. For example, teachers and parents must understand that children's reading levels are not representative of the only books students can or should be reading. Choice is a crucial component of students' development as readers. This concept is foundational to our core reading program at the elementary level, the Calkins Units of Study in Reading (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015). It is also foundational to our summer literacy programs. Once this learning has occurred, teachers will likely feel more comfortable talking openly to parents about their children's reading abilities and what can be done at home to support continued growth in reading, particularly during SSU.

Recommendation Six

Data collection is a normal part of a school district's operations. At PASD, we collect data from the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). We also

house our local benchmark data, including the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS; Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) reading data that I used to examine the elementary summer literacy programs. These data are warehoused online in Performance Tracker, a SunGard (https://phoenixville-pa.perfplusk12.com/) product that stores assessment information in one place.

In concept, Performance Tracker (PT) is very useful to a school district. Teachers and administrators appreciate the ability to see a variety of student achievement information in one place, and to only have to login once to do so. Yet, in practice, PT is cumbersome. The uploading of information must be manually completed after each assessment. Longitudinal assessment data is stored for every individual child, but it is difficult to analyze data in aggregate by subgroup. A child's demographic data, for example, has to be uploaded in exactly the same manner for each assessment. Since demographic data is coded differently depending on where the assessment results come from, aligning this information is nearly impossible. For F&P BAS data specifically, there is no way for us to enter assessment scores, unless we want to code only student reading levels. However, the F&P BAS data is multifaceted because it provides educators with the ability to analyze additional components of reading beyond reading level, such as fluency, accuracy, words per minute, or comprehension scores, creating a complex picture of students' strengths and areas for growth.

The data I analyzed for this ELP were, consequently, not able to be analyzed through the Performance Tracker system. Every year, the reading specialists at each

building complete a spreadsheet comparing spring F&P BAS scores with fall scores for each SSU student. This allows us to report necessary information to the organization that partially funds SSU. As part of this ELP, I compiled the data for all SSU invites who did not attend, and all Jumpstart students. This meant I had to cross-reference multiple spreadsheets for each school year from each of the elementary buildings in order to pull each individual student's reading benchmark data. This was tedious, which is probably the reason it has not been comprehensively completed in the past.

In summary, PASD has not been able to analyze the results of SSU with our current data tracking system, and we have never before compared the growth of SSU students to non-participating invitees. Due to these limits, these data have also never been analyzed longitudinally; I could not compare the growth of SSU students, Jumpstart students, non-participating invitees, and the general population of PASD students. Doing so would likely yield valuable information about the short- and long-term effectiveness of the elementary summer literacy programs and help funding sources determine how much to invest in the programs.

I recommend that PASD investigate other data warehousing and management systems, carefully looking at the processes for uploading data and comparing data across assessments. Should a better system not exist, PASD may want to consider creating spreadsheet templates to house the data ourselves. This would not be more difficult that our current system and would more easily allow for cross-comparison.

While some of these suggestions are presented with a full understanding of increased spending for PASD, I firmly believe that improved relationships with community and family members will produce dividends in student achievement, particularly at the elementary level. Likely, these suggestions will also result in greater numbers of students attending SSU, and improved daily attendance amongst registrants.

Chapter 6

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

When I began this journey at the University of Delaware, I had just started a new position in a school district prior to my current position in Phoenixville Area School District (PASD). I was working hard to form collegial relationships, make inroads towards meeting my goals for the organization, and balancing work, family, and school. A year later, I was starting that process again at PASD.

Since then, I have learned a lot about myself as a member of a larger organization and as a leader. I have always believed in servant leadership (Greenleaf & Spears, 1998), but this orientation has deepened through my work on this Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP). I have come to a fuller understanding of what servant leadership means, too. I now understand that I had previously made decisions *believing* that I knew what was in the best interest of students, families, and teachers, but I may not have collected enough information to *know* what was in their best interest. Last year, for example, I made some changes to the Summer Stepping Up program and created the Jumpstart program as a pilot. I did this without asking parents or teachers for their feedback, with few exceptions. I thought that because I knew what the literature recommended, no further data was needed. I missed out on an

opportunity to learn context-specific information that may have made Summer Stepping Up and the first iteration of Jumpstart even stronger.

As an administrator in a school district, the people I serve first and foremost are students and their families. I had to follow Stephen Covey's (1989) advice, "Seek first to understand" in order to serve these parties. Through the focus group sessions and parent surveys, I accomplished this. Parents had never before been asked about their opinions on Summer Stepping Up, and with the addition of Jumpstart, the time was right to examine parents' feelings about the programs. It was crucial to collect data from the parent survey and the focus group sessions in order to illuminate the themes that emerged. A full understanding of the range and depth of insights could not have been obtained from using solely one method. With this knowledge, I was able to make changes to the summer programs that I believe will be well received.

PASD strives to be data-driven, as evidenced by its strategic plan (Phoenixville Area School District Strategic Plan, 2016). I learned more about how to do this well through my ELP process. The right kind of data has to be collected in order for comprehensive and informed change to occur. In years past, PASD collected data on the Summer Stepping Up program in order to complete grant reports. This data did not tell a complete story about the program. As PASD evolved, we adopted a more rigorous reading benchmark, the F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010), a step in the right direction. This year, we started to make more meaningful use of these data in context. As a district literacy team, we looked at grade level, classroom, and schoolwide trends. We targeted specific weaknesses in data collection. For example,

the comprehension conversation scores from classroom teachers were inflated compared with assessments completed by reading specialists. We created short trainings delivered in each of the four elementary buildings in order to address these concerns. We noted that the 1st grade-2nd grade cohort of students declined in reading levels the most over the summer of 2018, and that the prior year the same cohort (then moving from Kindergarten to 1st grade in 2017) lost more ground as compared with other grade levels. Knowing there were students who could not attend Summer Stepping Up, we launched the new Jumpstart program to further prevent summer slide.

All this information painted an incomplete picture, however. Parent feedback was a missing piece of the puzzle. PASD was using quantitative data, but not collecting qualitative data. Because of this, I had not yet identified all the factors that may have been preventing some students from registering or regularly attending Summer Stepping Up. I had not yet figured out the ways Jumpstart could be improved.

It was certainly time consuming to collect all of these qualitative data, and I spent even more time on its analysis than the quantitative analysis. This time required may be why many school districts, where staff is in short supply and are often overworked, do not frequently code survey results or hold focus group sessions. Using mixed methods, I was able to more fully understand the needs of PASD parents and students in my efforts to better serve them. Additionally, the data I gathered was contextualized. While I can read about summer programs in the literature, the research literature does not provide localized data specific to PASD families and students.

Having this local perspective helped me to make changes undergirded by research and supported by local data.

As an additional benefit, I developed stronger partnerships as a consequence of this work. More PASD families know I am someone who will listen to them and attempt to address their concerns. Many of the parents I worked with will likely feel more comfortable reaching out to me when they encounter problems. They may be less likely to complain about the district in the community without first contacting me. While these are not direct outcomes of the focus group sessions, these benefits may help PASD to better engage parents in the educational process.

While not within the scope of this ELP, I have thoughtfully considered the steps I will take next to continue to listen, understand, and improve the elementary summer literacy programs. I would like to survey the students in summer 2019, once they have completed Jumpstart or Summer Stepping Up. This feedback will help me to revise these programs to attract more students, to improve SSU attendance, and to revamp incentives for the PASD summer reading assignments. I will also survey teachers, but not just summer program teachers. I plan to send out a short survey in the spring of 2019 to all elementary teachers asking for feedback about the invitation and registration process for Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart. While I hope the changes made this year will simplify registration, I am sure there are further improvements that would be beneficial. I will also specifically survey Summer Stepping Up teachers to ask about their experiences teaching Summer Stepping Up, and for recommendations to improve the program. Because I have already created the parent survey, in 2019 I

will be able to send this out to families right at the start of the 2019-2020 school year. This may increase the number of completed surveys, providing me with more data.

Combined with my program-specific recommendations in Chapter 5, these steps will help PASD develop research-based and context-specific programs to address the problem of summer learning loss. Many districts in the county are no longer running summer school programs, nor am I aware of any nearby districts with summer book access programs for students. PASD data and the strong research base in support of book access programs may convince other districts to embark on this adventure. PASD is certainly willing to share their experiences and learn from other districts in our efforts to continuously improve the service we provide to students and their families.

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Appendix A

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL

Elementary Summer Literacy Programming

Education Leadership Portfolio Proposal

Jessica Kilmetz

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Overview

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) runs a robust elementary summer program to support students who struggle to reach grade-level literacy goals. The intent of the summer program is to prevent the regression of literacy skills and habits during the summer months. Given my role as a PASD district administrator, the purpose of this Educational Leadership Portfolio is to evaluate the results of the current elementary summer programming with a newly piloted book access program in order to make specific recommendations for enhancements, create program resources, and generate an implementation plan for future iterations of the summer programs.

Organizational Context

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) is located in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania and serves approximately 3,850 students in its six schools: Phoenixville Early Learning Center (PAELC), Barkley Elementary School, Manavon Elementary School, Schuylkill Elementary School, Phoenixville Area Middle School, and Phoenixville Area High School. Across the district, 74% of the overall student population is white, 13% Hispanic, 6% African American, 4% multi-racial, and 3% Asian. Twenty-seven percent of students are economically disadvantaged, 15% have individualized education plans (IEPs), and 5.5% are English learners (ELs) (Pennsylvania School Performance Profile, 2017).

Student Characteristics

A closer look at each school's demographics reveals differences among PASD's elementary schools. As seen in Table 1 below, the largest population of economically disadvantaged students, as measured by free and reduced lunch data, is at Barkley Elementary, which serves students in grades 2-5. The Phoenixville Area Early Learning Center (PAELC) serves all of the district's kindergarten and grade one students. This building has the second largest percentage of economically disadvantaged students. These two buildings also have the highest percentages of students with IEPs, EL, African American, and Latino students.

Elementary Student Demographics

School (Grades)	Total pop	% ED	% IEP	% EL	% White	% Black	% Latino
PAELC (K-1)	659	27.01	11.69	7.44	70.71	4.86	15.78
Barkley (2-5)	291	51.20	14.09	15.46	51.20	10.65	29.55
Manavon (2-5)	420	23.10	14.53	2.62	78.10	3.33	9.06
Schuylkill (2-5)	515	19.03	13.21	5.24	75.15	2.52	10.10

Achievement Data

The data from PASD tell an interesting story about the achievement gap. Achievement data is criterion-referenced; it measures student performance as compared with grade-level standards. The table below shows that when PASD examines 2017 state achievement data for students in third through fifth grade, 79% of third-grade students meet standards. However, when disaggregated for historically underperforming (HU) subgroups and non-historically underperforming (non-HU) subgroups, the data show between 90% and 95% of non-HU students meet grade-level standards as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). By contrast, 54% of HU students meet grade-level standards (see table below). The results do not differ much for grades 4 and 5, with 60% and 56%, respectively, of HU students meeting grade-level standards. Clearly, there are many students who still cannot reach the goal of grade level proficiency as measured by the PSSA.

When we examine the cohort of HU students over the past three years this trend is further illuminated (see table below, bold percentages). For example, 49% of the 2015 third-grade HU students met grade level standards. In 2016, this cohort's proficiency levels dropped slightly to 47%. As fifth graders in 2017, 56% of these students met grade-level standards. Over this three-year period, the group saw some gains, but still struggled to come close to matching the non-HU proficiency rate of approximately 95%.

PASD Elementary PSSA Data from 2017, 2016, and 2015

District PSSA English Language Arts Scores	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	2017		
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	79%	81%	80%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	54%	60%	**56%**
	2016		
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	72%	74%	77%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	56%	**47%**	43%
	2015		
Overall % Proficient/Advanced	74%	76%	81%
Historically Underperforming % Proficient/Advanced	**49%**	41%	58%

District Strategic Plan

In accordance with the district strategic plan, administrators use data-driven decision making to drive the following district goals (all directly quoted from the PASD Strategic Plan, 2016):

1) *Allocate resources to foster excellence for all students*: PASD expects that all students will be provided with the necessary support allowing each student to reach her/his full potential. In providing the necessary support, it is understood

that each student will be challenged to grow to the highest level of success (p. 1).

2) *Promote employee growth and effectiveness*: PASD understands that when employees are engaged and have ample learning opportunities to address the needs of their students, they are more effective employees. By encouraging a growth mindset, recognizing the work done by our staff, and making our District a destination district for new hires, we will then have a staff that is ready and capable of personal growth (p. 4).
3) *Provide high quality instruction*: Quality instruction is a key component for student success. When instruction is engaging and differentiated to meet the learning needs of the students, students will learn to their full potential (p. 8).
4) *Implement effective, consistent communication and collaboration*: Effective, consistent, and open communication has been found to be strongly correlated with successful organizations. It is important that the District communicate with all parties – students, employees, parents and community – proactively and intentionally (p. 12).
5) *Implement a consistent and reflective use of data to drive change*: A culture of quality data will better enable the District to evaluate instructional programs and student achievement. The development of a culture of quality data will help reveal areas of success and areas needing improvement in an environment supporting growth (p. 16).

My proposed ELP project related to PASD summer programming aligns well with the districts' strategic plan goals. The goals of high-quality instruction for all students and data-driven decision making are particularly relevant to this ELP.

Organizational Role

I am one of two curriculum and instruction supervisors employed by the district. I report to the assistant superintendent, and work closely with him, other central office personnel, building administrators, and classroom teachers to improve curriculum and instruction in the district. My work generally entails direction of federal programming, grants, and summer programs; coordination, planning, and facilitation of professional learning; and curriculum writing and teacher supervision in the areas of English Language Arts, English Language Development, and Social Studies. Since I currently plan and oversee elementary summer programs, I am eager to use the Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP) to better inform my work.

As a doctoral candidate, I have reviewed literature about traditional summer programs, book access programs, and summer achievement loss. Based on the literature, I recognize the marginal effectiveness of traditional summer programs, and how students can maintain upward learning trajectories by simply engaging in reading during the summer months (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003; Allington et al., 2010; Kim & White, 2008).

Developing this Education Leadership Portfolio will aid in PASD's improvement of summer literacy offerings for elementary students. My proposed ELP project aligns closely with the district's goals of high-quality instruction for all

students and data-driven decision making. I am excited to provide strong, research-based recommendations, materials, and plans for summer programming to reduce summer reading loss, especially for historically underperforming groups of students. Additionally, my ELP will afford me opportunities to communicate with multiple stakeholders – teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the PASD School Board – about our summer program effectiveness and future plans for refinement.

Summer Program Characteristics

PASD currently offers an extensive summer program (see Proposal Appendix A). Its many offerings provide remediation, enrichment, and enjoyment. Local recreation centers and other community organizations run summer programs at PASD facilities. English Language Development and Extended School Year (ESY) programs are offered to eligible English Learners and students with IEPs, respectively, in grades K-12. Credit recovery and original credit are offered at the high school level. A main focus of this ELP, the Summer Stepping Up (SSU) literacy program, is offered for students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Summer Stepping Up (SSU) is a literacy program for elementary students in grades K-5 run by PASD. The purpose of SSU is to maintain student literacy performance and engagement in reading during the summer months. Students invited to SSU are those who are reading below or just at grade level. They proportionally represent all four elementary schools in the district, including the Title I schools, PAELC, and Barkley. During the summer of 2018, the program served 231 students in class sizes of 8-12 students. SSU teachers provided literacy instruction on a variety of

strategies to help students maintain their reading skills and a joy of reading, aligned to the school-year curriculum. Lessons were taught using the reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015), and students were assessed before, during, and after the program using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and Fountas & Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment

System (F&P BAS) (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010).

Students Enrolled in SSU 2018 from PASD Schools and Non-Public Schools.

Grade	Total Enrolled	PAELC	Manavon	Barkley	Schuylkill	Nonpublic
K	30	30	0	0	0	0
1	36	36	0	0	0	0
2	38	0	15	14	9	0
3	47	0	15	11	20	1
4	47	0	14	14	19	0
5	33	0	9	9	15	0
Totals	231	66	53	48	63	1

The SSU program aims to decrease summer loss in literacy achievement by maintaining student engagement in reading and instruction in key literacy skills.

Student achievement/loss prevention are measured by student performance on benchmark assessments (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) administered in the fall, compared to the previous school year's spring scores. To accomplish the SSU objectives, teachers use interactive, standards-based whole class mini-lessons, small group, and individual lessons using the reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015). Students also complete nightly reading homework and log their independent reading at home.

During the summer of 2018, the PASD SSU program ran concurrently with another separate summer literacy program: Jumpstart, the second main focus of this ELP. Jumpstart was a pilot program I created that provided book access to students, and helped parents maintain strong literacy habits during the summer months. In order to provide free books to children, I organized a book drive during which an estimated three thousand books were donated by PASD families and community members. The books were reviewed to ensure only gently used or new books were made available to students. Various fiction and nonfiction genres were represented. Jumpstart began with a mandatory informational parent session in May where students chose as many books of interest as they desired. Most children chose to take home between 10-20 books, while some outliers chose between two and five books. Two optional student and parent Jumpstart gatherings were held in June and July. During these events, held off-campus at the library and a local water ice store, students browsed for new texts. They also talked with teachers and administrators about the books they read thus far and their reading habits. During 2018, approximately 60 students in grades K-5

participated in this program. These students and families had previously declined the opportunity to participate in SSU. Student achievement/loss prevention for Jumpstart students will also be evaluated by their performance on benchmark assessments (F&P) in the fall, as compared with the previous school year's spring benchmark data.

Problem Statement

The gap in reading achievement between high-income and low-income students, and students who speak English as their native language and those who do not, continues to grow (Fry, 2007; Fry, 2008; Harris & Herrington, 2006; Lee & Reeves, 2012; McGee, 2013; Reardon, 2013). Currently, 44 percent of the nation's children live in low-income households, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey (Sillers, 2015). Many of these families are ethnic minorities, some of whom are learning English as a second language.

Current data from Phoenixville Area School District show a gap in achievement levels between historically underperforming and non-historically underperforming groups of students at the elementary level. While about 80% of the overall student population in grades 3, 4, and 5 achieve proficiency on state assessments, only 54-60% of historically underperforming students achieve the proficiency goal. Compounding the growing achievement gap in PASD is the colloquially described *summer slide* (also known as *summer setback*, *summer loss*, or *slump*). Low-income students can lose, on average, months of hard-won progress over the summer (National Summer Learning Association, 2016). While PASD has not, to date, corroborated this with its students, research suggests that by fifth grade, low-

income students may be two or three years behind their peers due to the cumulative effect of multiple summers with learning loss (Slates, Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2012).

Therefore, the PASD administration believes that summer literacy opportunities for students are incredibly important, especially for historically underperforming groups of students. The development of a traditional elementary summer school program, SSU, was one of the methods PASD used to reduce the deficits HU students demonstrated on achievement testing. The data have not shown this to be an effective solution, however.

Grade level	% increased reading level	% maintained reading level	% decreased reading level
K	13	50	38
1	47	21	32
2	21	15	64
3	20	23	57
4	31	17	52
5	25	23	52

The previous PASD curriculum and instruction supervisor reported that 90 - 99% of the children who regularly attended SSU in 2016 were able to increase or maintain their reading skills. In the table below, note that this rate has been reduced to 46% overall in 2017. The reasons for this are likely complex.

Data collection itself has been both difficult and inconsistent. Under previous supervisors, data collection was often incomplete. In fall of 2017, PASD transitioned

from use of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) (Beaver, 2006) to the F&P Benchmark Assessment System (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010). The conversion between DRA and F&P levels is not exact, which made comparison of spring 2017 and fall 2017 data problematic. Also, with F&P being a more rigorous test, reading benchmark scores dropped across the district. For funding purposes only, DIBELS data were compared instead, but this is not sound practice because PASD does not use the specific DIBELS tests that measure comprehension (retell and maze comprehension task); only oral reading fluency tasks were assessed. Data from 2018 should be less challenging to examine, as benchmarking systems were consistent from spring 2018 to fall 2018. I als ensured all students were accounted for during spring data collection and will do the same in the fall.

The lack of consistent, positive results from SSU is unsurprising. Research suggests that traditional summer school programs struggle to obtain gains in student achievement, in part because program monitoring is challenging (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Gorard et al., 2015). For example, often the population of students that school districts intend to serve and the number of students who actually agree to attend are vastly different (Gorard et al., 2015). After the program begins, some students do not regularly attend, reducing the treated population even further (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Gorard et al., 2015).

Consequently, programs providing improved book access to students may be a beneficial cost-saving solution to the problem of summer learning loss (Allington et al., 2010; Kim, 2006; White, Kim, Kingston, & Foster, 2013). Informed by this, I

created the at-home book access program, Jumpstart, as a pilot in 2018. An analysis of the viability and success of both the Summer Stepping Up and the Jumpstart programs at Phoenixville will produce areas of program refinement and improved resource allocation to help PASD see less summer setback and greater gains in student achievement.

Improvement Goal

Phoenixville Area School District elementary students have access to summer programs that may help to close the achievement gap and reduce summer slide by:

a) Maintaining student engagement in reading during the summer months;
b) Improving students' literacy skills, thereby improving students' reading performance, throughout the summer months.

In order to improve the summer programs' results, I will complete an analysis of benchmark data from the students who attend in-person summer school and those who participate in the at-home book access program to examine growth from the spring to the fall. These data will be analyzed to examine individual growth of students in both treatments compared with those who did not attend, but were eligible. I will also collect parent survey data about the viability of the programs and suggested improvements, especially as they may improve student participation in both programs. My goal is to use these data and the research on combatting summer learning loss to plan for a new iteration of the summer programs for the summer of 2019.

Once School Board approval of potential changes has been secured, I will work on a plan for communication, including parent informational sessions. Trainings

that aid parents in helping their children succeed in academics can be informed by the research on within-family social capital and family reading (O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan and Senechal, 2014; Slates et al., 2012). Family behaviors correlated with students who make strong summer gains despite low SES include: taking children to the library and checking out books, reading to children, and checking homework (Slates, et al., 2012). Learning the characteristics of families with students who defy the typical pattern of summer learning loss may be instructive for all families. Similarly, parents may benefit from understanding what strategies they can use with their children while reading together, such as literacy games, storytelling, and reading for recreation (Elish-Piper, 1996; O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Parker & Reid, 2017). The communication plan will also include materials to aid staff and administrators in conversing with families about PASD summer learning opportunities.

Description of Planned Artifacts

For my Educational Leadership Portfolio, I propose to complete several activities and artifacts that will allow me to analyze the pilot Jumpstart and SSU data, plan for programmatic changes for summer 2019, and create a communication plan for stakeholders. Development of the PASD summer programs is in its infancy, and much can be learned about changes that might be made to summer programming in the future from my ELP project. Several of my artifacts will help to communicate the vision and strategies of the program to administrators, teachers, community members, and most importantly, parents.

Program Evaluation Plan (Included; Proposal Appendix B)

This plan was first drafted as part of my coursework in program evaluation. It describes the current elementary summer programming at PASD, including program theory, strategies, implementation, and long-term goals. A plan for data analysis is outlined. I will revise this plan to be reflective of my current Educational Leadership Portfolio proposal, and the current iterations of both the SSU and the Jumpstart programs.

Literature Review (Included; Proposal Appendix C)

My research into the results of traditional summer school programs first led me to the development of the Jumpstart book access pilot program as one research-based alternative or supplement. This literature review is a written document synthesizing research on various summer program models and their efficacy. It demonstrates the need for summer book access programs, particularly for historically underperforming groups of elementary students, while considering the cost-effectiveness of such program models.

Research Brief

I will enact the plan for data analysis described in the Program Evaluation Plan. Through analysis of Fountas & Pinnell reading benchmark scores from spring 2018 to fall 2018, student growth for both Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up students, as compared with overall student growth for each grade level, will be examined. The results will be presented in a 2-3 page research brief for presentation to

the superintendent and district administrators. It will include relevant charts, tables, and a written explanation.

Parent Survey

It will be extremely helpful to get feedback from parents about the Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs. Specifically, I would like to investigate what worked for families of participants in both programs, and the existing barriers to participation in either. Information from the survey will allow for changes to be made to the SSU and Jumpstart programs to better accommodate parent and student needs. IRB approval will be needed in order to complete this artifact. While the survey will be anonymous, in the survey, I will ask for volunteers to participate in the parent focus group outlined below.

Summary of Survey and Parent Focus Groups

Often, survey data requires in-person explanation in order to create a clear picture of the respondent's opinions. The focus group session or sessions will attempt to do this, further illuminating survey results and suggested next steps. Focus group volunteer participants will be recruited through the parent survey, and each group will have no more than seven participants. Prior to convening the group(s), I will create a protocol which includes questions related to positive characteristics of the summer programs as well as barriers to attendance and suggestions for improvement. IRB approval will be secured to complete the focus groups. Results will be presented in a 2-3 page research brief for presentation to the superintendent and district administrators.

Communication Plan

The communication plan will outline the steps and timeline required to successfully communicate with parents and teachers regarding the summer program. My hope is to clearly communicate the rationale for participation in either Summer Stepping Up or Jumpstart to parents. I will also produce a comparison of the two programs, benefits, required parent and teacher action, and timelines. The artifact will be a framework which includes the components of the plan and the timeframe for completion of each component.

Infographic

The infographic will include information from parent surveys, student growth data, and the literature review in order to communicate a rationale, purpose, and action plan for Jumpstart (mailings already exist for SSU). This artifact will be used in the parent mailing and presentation outlined below.

Parent Mailing

Current mailings exist only to outline the SSU program, and the later addition of Jumpstart created a lot of confusion for families in 2018. This new comprehensive mailing to families will provide a full description of summer 2019 program offerings to parents.

Parent Presentation

An existing presentation describes Jumpstart program's vision, strategies, and projected outcomes. However, I plan to completely revise the presentation to help

parents understand both SSU and Jumpstart and, ultimately, choose the best one for their child(ren).

Evaluation

Based on the research and analysis of the summer programs, I will create an overview of the summer programs, an analysis of each, including supporting data, and recommendations for change. This information will be shared in a presentation for consumption by the superintendent of schools and/or School Board.

Table of Artifacts

Number	Artifact	Description	Audience	IRB Needed	Action Steps	Timeline	Status
1	Program Evaluation Plan	Program Evaluation Plan describes the elementary summer literacy program, its goals, strategies for implementation, and evaluation.	Committee, Superintendent's Office, School Board	No	Modify existing plan to reflect this ELP proposal; make revisions based on committee feedback	October	Incomplete
2	Literature Review	The literature review demonstrates my knowledge of research and theory on literacy summer programming. It includes research on summer slide, traditional summer school, and book access programs.	Committee	No	Make revisions based on committee feedback	October	Complete

3	Research Brief	Statistical analysis of student growth data; statistical comparison of student groups; tables and charts; summary	Committee, Superintendent's Office	No	Collect anonymous student data from fall 2018 benchmarking; analyze data and create summary	October/ November	Not yet started
4	Parent Survey	Survey of parents who were invited to participate in Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up	Committee, Superintendent's Office	Yes	Obtain approval for survey; input survey items into Qualtrics; distribute survey; analyze results	October	Not yet started
5	Summary of Survey and Parent Focus Group	Informal session held with parents whose students participated in Jumpstart to learn about positive and negative aspects of the program, and barriers to participation.	Committee, Superintendent's Office	Yes	Obtain approval for focus group; create questions; hold session after IRB approval; write summary	October/November	Not yet started

		Summary of information gleaned from parent survey and focus groups will be presented in a research brief.					
6	Communication Plan	This artifact will outline the steps necessary for effective promotion of and participation in the SSU and Jumpstart programs. It will include information on the invitation process, the differences between Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart, required parent and teacher actions, and program goals	Committee, Superintendent's Office, Parents, Teachers	No	Create communication plan regarding the invitation process, need for parent action, and program goals	November /December	Not yet started
7	Infographic	The infographic will include information from parent surveys,	Committee, Superintendent's Office, School Board,	No	Create infographic to inform parents and	December	Not yet started

		student growth data, and the literature review in order to provide a rationale for Jumpstart. This artifact will include a written document with detailed explanations of data represented in the infographic.	Parents, Teachers		teachers using Venngage		
8	Parent Mailing	This mailing will provide a full description of summer 2019 program offerings to parents.	Parents, Teachers	No	Using current mailing as a starting point, add information about Jumpstart, comparison of SSU and Jumpstart, and sign-up info	December /January	Not yet started
9	Parent Presentation	This presentation will provide a full description of summer 2019	Parents, Teachers	No	Using Jumpstart presentation as a starting point, add	December /January	Not yet started

		program offerings to parents.			information about SSU in order to hold a parent info session for anyone interested in summer options		
10	Evaluation	This overview will provide an overview of the summer programs, an analysis of each, including supporting data, and recommendations for change	Superintendent's Office and/or School Board	No	Using information from other artifacts, create presentation to highlight program analysis, data, and recommendations for change	January	Not yet started

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PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUMMER PROGRAMMING
SUMMER OF 2018

IN-DISTRICT PROGRAMS

HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAMS	DATES	LOCATION (PAMS)
Credit Recovery- All Core subjects 2 hours- Session 1: 8am-10:00am; Session 2: 10:15 am-12:15pm	6/25-8/2	201, 202, 203, 204, 205
Original Credit- TOW, Health, Geometry H, Algebra 2 H, Pre-Calc Honors – 4 hours 8-12 noon	6/25-8/2 6/25-7/19 (Health)	206, 208, 209, 211, 210
Eighth to 9th Grade Bridge (by invitation only) 8am-12pm	7/16-8/9	213, 212
Academic Mentoring Program (AMP) (by invitation only) 8am-12pm	7/30-8/9	215
Algebra II to Pre-calculus Bridge 8am-10am	7/9-7/19	221 (Lab)
English 9H Bridge 10am-12pm (Students attend 1 session)	Session 1: 7/8-7/19 Session 2: 7/23-8/2	223 (Lab)
AP Human Geography Bridge 8am-11am (Students attend 1 session)	Session 1: 7/9-7/12 Session 2: 7/16-7/19 Session 3:7/23-7/26	218
Chemistry H Bridge 10am-12pm (Students attend 1 session)	Session 1: 7/8-7/19 Session 2: 7/23-8/2	225
Bio, Lit, Algebra 1 Enrichment (Mandatory for students who wish to retake Keystone exam)	7/23-7/26	220, 225, 102

ELEMENTARY/SPECIAL PROGRAMS	DATES	LOCATION
Stepping Up	**6/25-7/19**	**Manavon Elem-PAELC**
Extended School Year (ESY)	**6/25-8/2**	**Schuylkill Elem/PAMS/HS**
English Language Development (ELD)	**6/25-7/19**	**Manavon Elem/PAMS 118 &120**

PHOENIXVILLE SUMMER PROGRAM

Week 1: 6/18 to 6/21		Week 2: 6/25 to 6/28		Week 3: 7/9 to 7/12	Week 4: 7/16 to 7/19
Week	Camp	Instructor	Grades	Time	Facility
1	Tennis	Summer Landis & Katie Yancik	1 to 8	8:00 AM to 10:00 AM (1-5), 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM (6-8)	Scoda & MES Tennis Courts
1	Boys Basketball Youth Camp	Elite Basketball LLC	3 to 6	9:00 AM to 2:00 PM	MES, PAHS & PASD Gyms & PAMS Aux Gym
1	Geometry Prep	Chris Hoshaw	6 to 12	8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	PAMS 101
1	Algebra 1 Prep	Chris Hoshaw	6 to 12	10:00 AM to 12:00 PM	PAMS 101
1	Pre-Algebra Prep	Chris Hoshaw	6 to 12	12:30 PM to 2:30 PM	PAMS 101
1	Canoe Camp	Dan Sylvan	6 to 8	10:00 AM to 4:00 PMMonday, Tuesday, & Wednesday	Schuylkill River
1	Brightside Boys Lacrosse	Brightside Camp	7 to 12	9:00 AM to 12:30 PM	Upper Turf
1	Dance Team	Judi Grammerstorf	Open	10:00 AM to 2:30 PM	Barkley Elementary
1	Summer Strings Chamber Music Workshop	Leigh Schoepflin	4 to 12	8:00 AM to 11:00 AM	PAHS Choir Room
2	Canoe Camp	Dan Sylvan	6 to 8	10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday	Schuylkill River

2	**Basketball (B)**	**Elite Basketball LLC**	**7 to 9**	**9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**MES & PASD Gyms**
2	**Geometry Prep**	**Chris Hoshaw**	**6 to 12**	**8:00 AM to 10:00 AM**	**PAMS 101**
2	**Algebra 1 Prep**	**Chris Hoshaw**	**6 to 12**	**10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**PAMS 101**
2	**Pre-Algebra Prep**	**Chris Hoshaw**	**6 to 12**	**12:30 PM to 2:30 PM**	**PAMS 101**
2	**Dynamite Girls Lacrosse Camp**	**Dynamite Lacrosse Club**	**1 to 8**	**9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**Washington Field & Upper Turf**
2	**Adventures in Creative Writing**	**Nicole Pearson**	**Open**	**8:00 AM to 10:00 AM**	**PAMS 107**
2	**Cupcake Wars Prep 1**	**Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski**	**2 to 4**	**10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**PAMS 106**
2	**Cupcake Wars 1**	**Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski**	**5 to 9**	**12:30 PM to 2:30 PM**	**PAMS 106**
2	**Baseball Infield Clinic**	**Neil Herman**	**3 to 8**	**June 29 @ 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM**	**MES 30 & 60**
3-4-5	**Art of Jamming**	**Bill Bonnell**	**5 to 9**	**10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**PAMS Auditorium**
3-4-5	**Summer Band Odyessy**	**Bill Bonnell**	**4 to 9**	**8:00 AM to 10:00 AM**	**PAMS Auditorium**
3	**Cheerleading**	**Shea Lapsley & Megan Fettrow**	**1 to 3**	**12:30 PM to 2:30 PM**	**PAMS AUX GYM**
3	**Cupcake Wars Prep 2**	**Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski**	**2 to 4**	**10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**	**PAMS 106**

3	Cupcake Wars 2	Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski	5 to 9	12:30 PM to 2:30 PM	PAMS 106
3	Reading Enrichment	Nicole Pearson	Open	8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	PAMS 107
3-4	Dance Team	Judi Grammerstorf	Open	10:00 AM to 2:30 PM	Manavon Stage
3	Basketball (G)	AJ Thompson	3 to 6	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	PASD Gym
3	Basketball (G)	AJ Thompson	7 to 9	12:30 PM to 2:30 PM	PASD Gym
3	Boys Basketball Shooting Clinic	Elite Basketball LLC	6 to 9	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	PAHS Gym
3	PASC Soccer (B & G)	Mike Pryor	1 to 8	9:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Washington Field
4	Cheerleading	Shea Lapsley & Megan Fettrow	4 to 8	12:30 PM to 2:30 PM	PAMS AUX GYM
4	Field Hockey	Claire Emplit	3 to 8	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	MES 20 & 30
4	Cupcake Wars Prep 3	Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski	2 to 4	10:00 AM to 12:00 PM	PAMS 106
4	Cupcake Wars 3	Nicole Pearson & Mike Cesarski	5 to 9	12:30 PM to 2:30 PM	PAMS 106
4	Youth Football Camp	Don Grinstead	5 to 8	9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Monday-Wednesday	Washington Field
5	Baseball	Neil Herman	3 to 8	TU-TH, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM	MES 30 & MES 60

OUT OF DISTRICT PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	DATES	LOCATION
Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (in conjunction with Summer Stepping Up)	6/18-7/27	Manavon Elementary School
CTC Summer Program	6/18-7/27	Barkley Elementary School
Firebird	6/18-7/31	PAMS
Brightside	6/18-6/21 (week 1)	Upper Turf Field (HS)
Dynamite Lacrosse	6/25-6/28 (week 2)	Upper Turf/Washington Field (HS)
Summer Meal Program	7/2-7/27	Barkley Elementary School
CCIU Classes	7/9-8/8	Barkley Elem/Schuylkill Elem
PA Soccer Club	7/9-7/12 (week 3)	Washington Field
Phoenixville Rec Dept.	6/25-8/3	Manavon/PAELC & Fields
YMCA Camp	8/6-10	PAELC
Library Science	6/18, 18, 20, 21	PAMS rm225
Science in the Summer	6/25-28	PAMS

Appendix B

PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN

Artifact 1

Evaluation Plan for PASD Summer Literacy Programs

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Program Description

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD), located in Phoenixville, PA, runs two literacy programs for elementary students during the summer months. Summer Stepping Up (SSU) is a program for elementary students in kindergarten through fifth grades. SSU intends to maintain student literacy performance and engagement in reading over the summer months. The program serves roughly 200 students each year in class sizes of 8-12. SSU teachers instruct on a variety of strategies to help students maintain their reading skills and a joy of reading, aligned to the school-year curriculum. Lessons are taught using the Calkins reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015), and students are assessed before, during, and after the program using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and Fountas & Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS) (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010).

PASD also runs the Jumpstart Program, an at-home book access program for students in kindergarten through fifth grades. Jumpstart was first offered in the summer of 2018 as a pilot program to provide book access to students, and help parents maintain strong literacy habits in their children during the summer months. In order to provide free books to children, I organized a book drive during which an estimated three thousand books were donated by PASD families and community members. The books were reviewed to ensure only gently used or new books were made available to students. Various fiction and nonfiction genres were represented.

Jumpstart begins with a mandatory informational parent session in May where students choose as many books of interest as they desired. Most children choose to take home between 10-20 books, while some outliers choose between two and five books. Two optional student and parent Jumpstart gatherings are held in June and July. During these events, held off-campus at the library and a local water ice store, students browse for new texts. They also talk with teachers and administrators about the books they have read thus far and their reading habits. During 2018, approximately 60 students participated in this program. These students and families had previously declined the opportunity to participate in SSU for reasons unknown, to be investigated in this Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP).

These programs were formulated by central office literacy administrators after a deep investigation into data. The PASD data illuminate an achievement gap. Achievement data is criterion-referenced; it measures student performance as compared with grade-level standards. When PASD examines achievement data for its approximately 4,000 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade, approximately 80% of its third-grade students meet standards. Disaggregated for historically underperforming (HU) subgroups and non-historically underperforming (non-HU) subgroups, the data show 85 to 90% of non-HU students meet grade-level standards as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). By contrast, 54% of HU students meet grade-level standards. The results do not differ much for grade 4. By grade 5 HU students perform slightly better; about half of these students meet grade-level standards, but there are many who still do not. In contrast, over 75%

of PASD's students make a year's worth of growth or more on norm-referenced measures. We might expect, therefore, to see higher achievement scores in PASD, but HU students often cannot attain grade-level achievement by the end of the year.

Matters are made worse by "summer slump." Low-income students can lose months of hard-won progress over the summer. By fifth grade, low-income students may be two or three years behind their peers due to summer learning loss (Slates, Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2012). Therefore, PASD administrators believe summer school and summer book access are essential to maintaining student progress. The target population includes all students who are reading below grade level, most especially historically underperforming students.

The Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs aim to decrease summer slide in literacy by maintaining student engagement in reading and student literacy skills. These goals are measured by student performance on benchmark assessments, DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010).

To accomplish these objectives, teachers in SSU use interactive, standards-based whole class mini lessons, small group and individual lessons using the Calkins reading and writing workshop model (Calkins et al., 2013; Calkins et al, 2015). Students also complete nightly reading homework and log their reading. In Jumpstart, literacy engagement is maintained through the at-home reading of books of the students' choosing. Jumpstart students are not required to log their reading, although they may complete the PASD summer reading assignment: a Bingo board asking students to read various genres in various locations.

Summer Stepping Up Program Goals

1. Decrease summer slide in literacy through the following:
    a. Maintain student engagement in reading during the summer months; and
    b. Improve students' literacy skills, thereby improving students' reading performance, throughout the summer months.

Summer Stepping Up Program Strategies/Activities

1. Identify students below benchmark in reading using F&P BAS and DIBELS.
2. Teach interactive, standards-based whole class mini-lessons based on the Calkins Reading Units of Study.
3. Use workshop model for reading instruction, including small group and one-to-one instruction.
4. Use standards-based reading assessments (F&P BAS, DIBELS) to assess student progress after the program.
5. Provide access to books via classroom libraries.

Jumpstart Program Goals

1. Decrease summer slide in literacy through the following:
    a. Maintain student engagement in reading during the summer months; and
    b. Through increased practice, improve students' reading skills, thereby improving students' reading performance, across the summer months.

Jumpstart Program Strategies/Activities

2. Identify students below benchmark in reading using F&P BAS and DIBELS.
3. Hold student and parent event, during which parents receive training in helping students maintain strong literacy habits and students are provided with choice summer reading books.
4. Families work with students at home to maintain regular reading habits that work with their busy schedules.
5. Hold several optional events during which students check in with teachers, choose new books, and/or talk to other readers.
6. Use standards-based reading assessments (F&P BAS, DIBELS) to assess student progress after the program.

Program Theory: Summer Stepping Up

The following four assumptions form the basis of Phoenixville's Summer Stepping Up program theory:

1. **Identification of students reading below benchmark** will lead to increased identification of students in need of literacy support, resulting in increased enrollment in Phoenixville's Summer Program and increased time spent reading. This will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.

    a. Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary which will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance.**

    b. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and, ultimately, improved reading performance.**

2. **Teaching standards-based instruction using whole class mini-lessons based on the Calkins Reading Units of Study** will lead to increased use of interactive and collaborative teaching practices in the classroom. This will lead to increased student participation in reading instruction, which will lead to increased student engagement with reading, resulting in increased time spent reading and increased student confidence in reading skills.

    a. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and, ultimately, improved reading performance.**

b. Increased time spent reading will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.

i. Increased student confidence in reading skills resulting in **improved reading skills and, ultimately, improved reading performance.**

ii. Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved student reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance.**

3. **Use of the Calkins workshop model for reading instruction** will lead to increased use of small group and one-to-one instruction in the classroom, then leading to increased tailoring of reading instruction for students. This will lead to increased student engagement with reading, increased teacher feedback to students on reading progress, and increased student access to need-based instruction.

a. Increased student engagement with reading will lead to increased student confidence in reading skills and increased time spent reading.

i. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**

ii. Increased time spent reading will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.

1. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**
2. Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved student reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance**.

4. **Use of standards-based reading assessments** will lead to an increased opportunity to monitor student progress, which will then lead to increased tailoring of reading instruction for students and increased teacher feedback to students on reading progress.

a. Increased tailoring of reading instruction for students will lead to increased student engagement with reading, increased student access to need-based instruction, and increased teacher feedback to students on reading progress.

i. Increased teacher feedback to students on reading progress will lead to increased student confidence in reading skills, finally leading to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**

ii. Increased student access to need-based instruction will lead to **improved reading skills, and ultimately, improved reading performance.**

iii. Increased student engagement with reading will lead to increased student confidence in reading skills and increased time spent reading.

1. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**
2. Increased time spent reading will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.
    a. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**
    b. Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved student reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance**.

5. **Stocking classroom libraries with books of varying levels and genres** will lead to increased student access to texts of their choosing during the summer months, which will lead to increased opportunity for students to practice reading independently. This will lead to increased time spent reading, which will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.

a. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**

b. **I**ncreased student exposure to academic vocabulary will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved student reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance.**

Contextual Conditions

The following contextual conditions are necessary for Summer Stepping Up implementation:

1. Facilities to house the summer program classrooms, including necessary furniture, supplies, and equipment;
2. Technological facilities in each classroom: projector, teacher computer, document camera;
3. Program funding for staff to teach the classes;
4. Program funding for training for any staff members who are external hires and are unfamiliar with core instructional programming;
5. Program funding for transportation for students to and from school in the summer months;
6. Program funding for internal evaluation to be done by the curriculum supervisor; and
7. Program funding for student books for classroom libraries

Program Theory: Jumpstart

The following four assumptions form the basis of Phoenixville's summer Jumpstart program theory:

1. **Identification of students reading below benchmark** will lead to increased identification of students in need of literacy support, resulting in increased enrollment in Phoenixville's Summer Jumpstart Program and increased time spent reading. This will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.
    a. Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary which will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance.**
    b. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and, ultimately, improved reading performance.**
2. **Stocking home libraries with books of students' choosing** will lead to increased student access to texts of their choosing during the summer months, which will lead to increased opportunity for students to practice reading independently. This will lead to increased time spent reading, which will lead to increased student exposure to academic vocabulary and increased student confidence in reading skills.
    a. Increased student confidence in reading skills will lead to **improved reading skills and improved reading performance.**

b. **I**ncreased student exposure to academic vocabulary will lead to **improved phonological awareness and improved student reading skills, ultimately leading to improved reading performance.**

Contextual Conditions

The following contextual conditions are necessary for Jumpstart implementation:

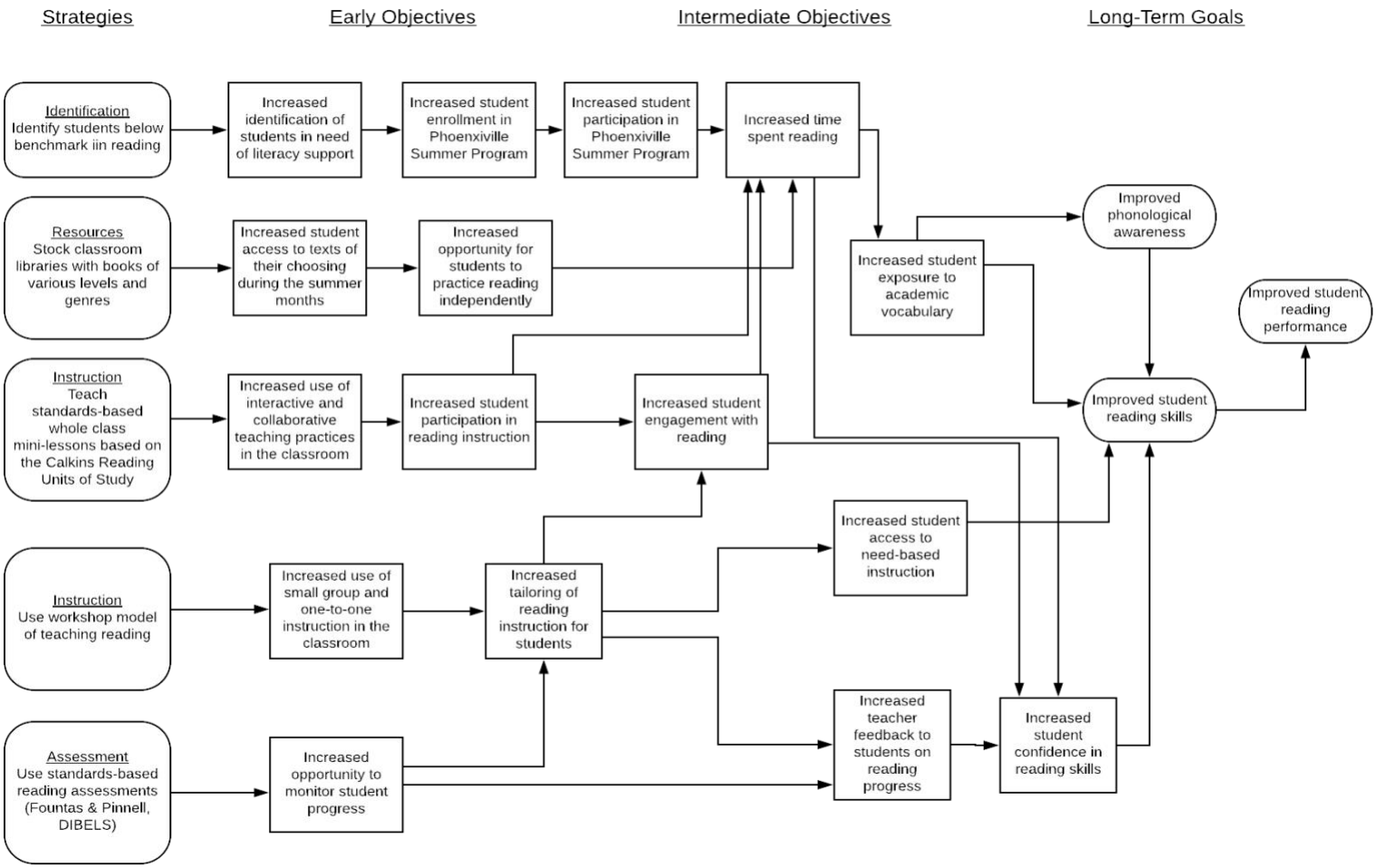
1. Program funding for new and gently used children's and young adult books, or books donated through a book drive; and
2. Program funding for internal evaluation to be done by the curriculum supervisor.

Program Logic Models

The following pages are visual representations of the logic models for the Summer Stepping Up program and Jumpstart program.

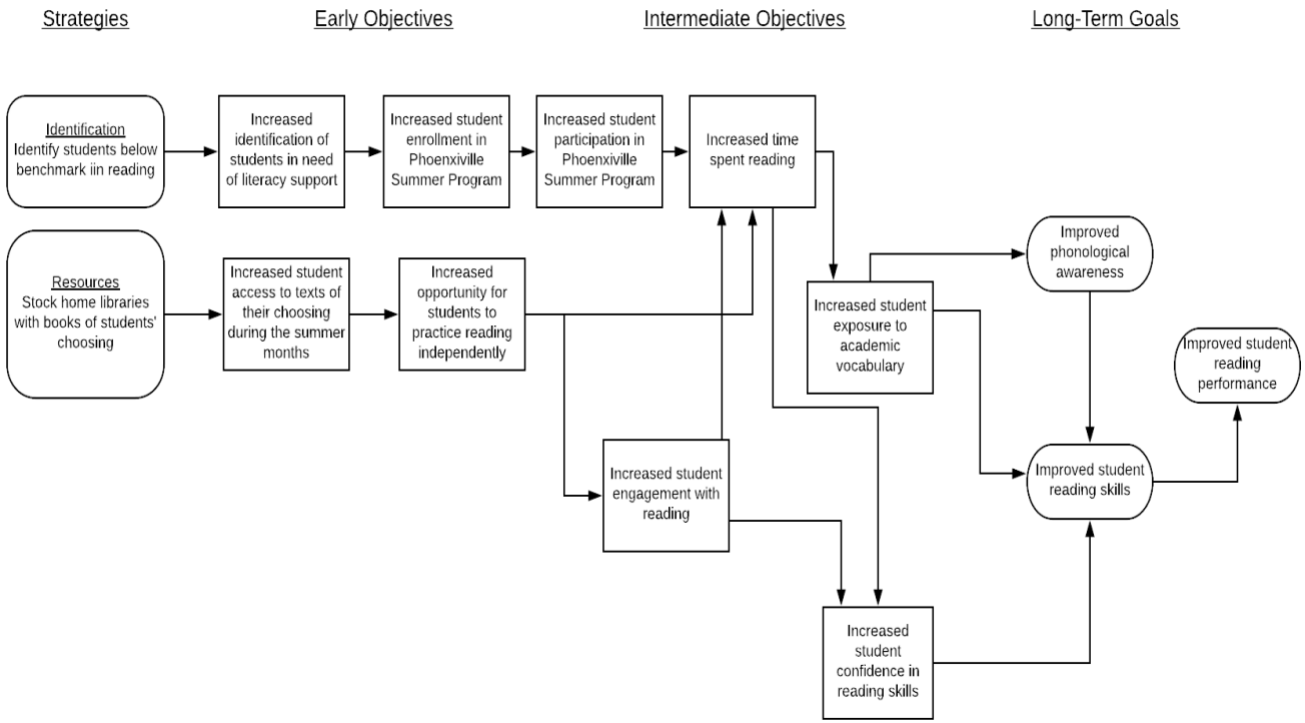
Logic Model: Phoenixville Elementary Summer Stepping Up Program

Jessica Kilmetz



Jessica Kilmetz

Logic Model: Phoenixville Elementary Summer Jumpstart Program



Evaluation Design

The following evaluation approach and design is used to conduct the program evaluation of Phoenixville Area School District's Elementary Summer programs: Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart.

Evaluation Approach

A participatory, theory-driven approach is used to evaluate PASD summer programs. Participatory evaluation, developed by J. Bradley Cousins (Cousins & Earl, 1992), empowers participants and cultivates leadership among them. It is designed to gather input from all stakeholders at any point during the evaluation process. Because there are many varied stakeholder groups involved in Phoenixville's Summer program, this approach helps to capture opinions regarding the program's impact and efficacy.

Theory-driven evaluation was designed by Huey-Tsyh Chen (Chen, 1994). Chen created theory-driven evaluation to look not only at *if* programs are effective, but *why* and *how* they are. Through an examination of the theory behind a program, evaluators can determine if the program is set up for success, and easily measure its progress towards short and long-term objectives. By using this approach, evaluators determine the theory undergirding the program and examine its logic.

Evaluation Design

To examine the impact of the Phoenixville Elementary Summer programs, a nonequivalent control group quasi-experimental design (Non R) is used in four

elementary schools in Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) in Pennsylvania. Participants at each grade level are assigned to one of three groups. Assignment is non-random, and depends upon the self-selection criteria described below.

In this six-month study, participating students are identified as reading below grade level through the use of DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010). These assessments are the pretests in the study. Students are then invited to participate in the in-person PASD summer literacy program, Summer Stepping Up. If they and their families choose to participate, they are assigned to Group 1, which is comprised of approximately 200 students. Students who decide not to attend in-person are instead invited to participate in the at-home Phoenixville Summer literacy program, Jumpstart, and comprise Group 2, approximately 60 students. Group 3 includes approximately 50 students who chose not to participate in in-person or at-home literacy programs. This grouping method ensures that each group is comprised of students who are reading below grade level. No other demographic variables are controlled for; however, this design is necessitated by PASD families' self-selection.

Nevertheless, group composition is comparable in terms of ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, age, grade level, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) status, and English Learner (EL) status. The exact sample size of each group is unknown until students select into each group. Thus, the:

1. In-Person Summer Program Group (Group 1) consists of elementary students reading below grade level who attend the in-person Phoenixville Summer literacy program, Summer Stepping Up.
2. The At-Home Summer Program Group (Group 2) consists of elementary students reading below grade level who participate in the at-home Phoenixville Summer literacy program, Jumpstart.
3. The Non-treatment Group (Group 3) consists of elementary students reading below grade level who do not participate in an intervention.

Within the nonequivalent control group research design, a mixed-method approach is used to collect data pre- and post-intervention (see Research Design).

Research Design

	May	June	July	August	September
Group 1	0	X_1		--	0
Group 2	0	X_2			0
Group 3	0	X_3			0

X_1 = In-person summer program intervention group

X_2= At-home summer program intervention group

X_3= Comparison group (no intervention)

Pre- and post-intervention measures are collected using DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002) and F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010). These measures are collected in the spring, prior to the start of the summer program. After the treatment, the same measures are collected again in the fall.

In the style of participatory evaluation, families are surveyed and interviewed in focus groups in order to examine the intention behind participation in at-home and in-person summer literacy programs, as well as their experience with the program. Surveys are distributed to all three groups to determine the reason for participation or lack thereof in either treatment group. These data are a strength of the study, as they help determine what changes need to be made in order to increase participation in beneficial summer programs. It also helps to clarify characteristic differences between the treatment and non-treatment groups.

Other strengths of the study include the control for history, maturation, regression, instrumentation, testing, and mortality, due to the use of multiple groups. Several significant internal threats to validity exist, though, because of the self-selection of participants into one of the three groups. The interaction between selection and history, maturation, mortality, and regression could threaten internal validity because of the self-selection process. For example, students/families who opt to participate in the in-person treatment may be more committed to summer reading and, accordingly, experience greater reading growth in the summer months regardless of their participation in summer school. Additionally, certain demographic characteristics may unknowingly bias participants' selection or outcomes. For example, students in

the English Language Development program may be more likely to travel out of the country in the summer, and therefore, not be available to participate in either treatment. Confounding variables may also be a threat to validity, as factors other than the presence of an intervention may account for reading growth or decline.

Enriching the Evaluation Design

As outlined above, students in each group have both pre and post assessment measurements. Also, program implementation is examined through the use of theory and logic modeling. The evaluation of strategies and early, short-term objectives determines if the program is set up to be successful from the onset. The evaluation of intermediate objectives aids in formatively evaluating the program, while long-term objectives assessment determines if the program is achieving stated outcomes.

Lastly, the use of surveys and focus groups investigate the experiences of students and families participating in the interventions. This is important in identification of the factors that influence participation or non-participation in either treatment. Information from the case studies is used to make revisions to treatments, as needed or requested by participants.

Evaluation Matrix

The following evaluation matrix will be used to conduct the program evaluation of Phoenixville Area School District's Summer Stepping Up program.

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
Strategies and Activities / Initial Implementation	Identify students below benchmark in reading	In what ways were students identified as reading below benchmark?	Implementation of the identification process	Fidelity of implementation by the end of the mid-year benchmark window	Mid-year program records	Program records examined after the mid-year benchmark collection in February	Program records analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Teach standards-based whole class mini-lessons based on the Calkins Reading Units of Study	In what ways were whole class mini-lessons taught?	Implementation of whole class mini-lessons	Fidelity of implementation by the start of the program	Classroom observation checklist	Throughout the summer program, data will be collected for each teacher using the observation checklist one time	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Use workshop model of teaching reading	In what ways was the workshop model of teaching reading implemented?	Implementation of small group and one-to-one instruction	Fidelity of implementation by the start of the program	Classroom observation checklist	Throughout the summer program, data will be collected for each teacher using the observation checklist one time	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Use standards-based reading assessments (Fountas & Pinnell, DIBELS)	How were standards-based reading assessments used?	Implementation of assessment/ feedback process	Fidelity of implementation by the end of the benchmark window	Summer Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment and DIBELS results Teacher anecdotal records	Throughout the summer program and during the fall benchmark window, assessment data will be collected for each student Teacher anecdotal	Program records analyzed for implementation fidelity

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
						records on each student collected at the end of the program	
	Stock classroom libraries with books of various levels and genres	How were classroom libraries stocked with varied books?	Implementation of classroom library collections	Fidelity of implementation by the start of the summer program	Teacher-completed inventory of classroom libraries Lists of purchased books	Inventory completed by the start of the summer program	Data analyzed for implementation fidelity
Short-term/Early and Intermediate Objectives	Increased identification of students in need of literacy support	To what extent was the identification of students in need of literacy support increased?	Number of students identified for literacy support	By the end of the mid-year benchmark window, the identification process is completed.	Mid-year program records	Program records examined after the mid-year benchmark collection in February	Program records analyzed for implementation practices

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Increased student enrollment in Phoenixville Summer Program	To what extent was student enrollment in the summer program increased?	Number of students enrolled in summer program increases	75% of the students who were invited to the summer program will enroll	Parent-signed permission slips to enroll in summer program	Data collection occurs in April, after invitations were sent to parents but prior to confirmation letters being mailed	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics
	Increased student participation in Phoenixville Summer Program	To what extent was student participation in the summer program increased?	Percentage of invited students attending the summer program increases	85% of the students who enrolled in the the summer program will attend	Attendance data counts collected by summer program secretary and classroom teachers	Attendance sheets collected and reviewed each week	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics
	Increased time spent reading	To what extent was student time spent reading increased?	Number of minutes students read over	Students will read a minimum of 80 minutes per week	Student reading logs	Student reading logs collected and reviewed each week	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
			the summer months				
	Increased student exposure to academic vocabulary	In what ways was student exposure to academic vocabulary increased?	Fidelity of implementation of interactive, content-area read alouds	100% of teachers deliver an interactive, content-area read aloud each week of the summer program	Teacher self-report checklist	Data will be collected for each teacher using the self-report checklist one time at the end of the summer program	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Increased use of interactive and collaborative teaching practices in the classroom	In what ways was the use of interactive and collaborative teaching practices increased?	Fidelity of implementation of interactive, collaborative teaching practices	100% of teachers use interactive, collaborative teaching practices (Kagan structures) each day of	Teacher self-report checklist	Data will be collected for each teacher using the self-report checklist one time at the end of the summer program	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
				the summer program			
	Increased student participation in reading instruction	In what ways did student participation in reading instruction increase?	Fidelity of implementation of small group and one-to-one instruction	100% of teachers follow Research-Decide-Compliment-Teach model	Teacher self-report checklist	Data will be collected for each teacher using the self-report checklist one time at the end of the summer program	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Increased student engagement with reading	To what extent did students' engagement with reading increase?	Students' self-reported engagement with reading	100% of students read independently on a daily basis	Student survey	Pre and post summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure changes over time

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Increased use of small group and one-to-one instruction in the classroom	To what extent did the use of small group and one-to-one instruction increase?	Fidelity of implementation of small group and one-to-one instruction	100% of teachers spend at least 30 minutes on small group and one-to-one instruction on a daily basis	Classroom observation checklist	Throughout the summer program, data will be collected for each teacher using the observation checklist one time	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Increased tailoring of reading instruction for students	In what ways did the tailoring of reading instruction increase?	Fidelity of implementation of small group and one-to-one instruction	100% of teachers follow Research-Decide-Compliment-Teach model	Teacher self-report checklist	Data will be collected for each teacher using the self-report checklist one time at the end of the summer program	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Increased student access to need-based instruction	To what extent did students' access to need-based instruction increase?	Minutes spent on small group and one-to-one instruction	100% of teachers spend at least 30 minutes on small group and one-to-one instruction for each child on a weekly basis	Teacher self-report checklist	Data will be collected for each teacher using the self-report checklist one time at the end of the summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics
	Increased opportunity to monitor student progress	To what extent did teachers' opportunity to monitor student progress increase?	Fidelity of implementation of running record assessments	Teachers assess 100% of students at least 2 times per summer	Running record assessments	Data collected post summer program for each student	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Increased teacher feedback to students on reading progress	To what extent did teachers' feedback to students on reading progress increase?	Number of times students received feedback on their reading progress	100% of students receive feedback on their reading progress at least 2 times per summer	Self-report teacher checklist	Post summer program	Checklist data analyzed for implementation fidelity
	Increased student confidence in reading skills	To what extent did students' confidence in their reading skills increase?	Students' self-reported confidence in their reading skills	75% of students grow their confidence in their reading skills	Self-report student survey	Pre and post summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure changes over time
	Increased student access to texts of their choosing during the	To what extent did students' access to texts increase?	Difference between number of books students have at home vs.	Each enrolled student reads at least three books over the course	Self-report student survey	Pre and post summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	summer months		those read during the summer program	of the summer program			changes over time
	Increased opportunity for students to practice reading independently	To what extent did the amount of students' independent reading increase?	Number of minutes students read over the summer months	Each enrolled student reads at least 80 minutes per week	Student reading logs	Post summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics
Long-term Goals	Improved phonological awareness	To what extent did students phonological awareness improve?	Teacher reported improvements in phonological awareness	At least 50% of students will grow their segmenting and blending skills	DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency test	Post summer program	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure changes over time

Phoenixville Summer Stepping Up Program Evaluation Matrix							
	Logic Model Component	**Evaluation Questions**	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Data Source**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**
	Improved student reading skills	In what ways and to what extent students' reading skills improve?	Skills improvement in fluency, accuracy, literal and inferential comprehension	100% of summer program students will grow or maintain reading skill levels from May to September	Fountas & Pinnell, DIBELS	Prior to the start of summer school (May/June), and after summer school is over (September)	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure changes over time
	Improved student reading performance	In what ways and to what extent did student reading performance improve?	Performance growth on benchmark reading assessments	100% of summer program students will grow or maintain reading levels from May to September	Fountas & Pinnell BAS and DIBELS	Prior to the start of summer school (May/June), and after summer school is over (September)	Data analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure changes over time

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Appendix C

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artifact 2

Literature Review

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Background

At the forefront of educators' minds is the importance of student literacy. Reading and writing are critical to the success of Americans, and these skills must be developed early – "A person who is not at least a moderately skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school" (Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998, p. 21). Knowing this, schools often place emphasis on strong reading programs and supports in the primary grades.

The gap in reading achievement between high-income and low-income students, and students who speak English as their native language and those who do not, continues to grow, however. Currently, 44 percent of the nation's children live in low-income households, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey (Sillers, 2015). Many of these families are ethnic minorities, some of whom are learning English as an additional language. With the changing demographic of the United States, narrowing the achievement gap is a national focus, but more work must be done to close it. Examination of data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reveals that low-income students and English language learners (ELLs) fall far behind their peers in reading achievement. Additionally, fourth and eighth grade data for the last fifteen years indicate that gaps in achievement have unfortunately remained relatively stable (NAEP, 2016).

Compounding the growing achievement gap described above is the

colloquially described *summer slump* or *summer slide*. Low-income students, especially, can lose months of hard-won progress over the summer. By fifth grade, low-income students may be two or three years behind their peers due to summer learning loss (Slates, Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2012). Interestingly, when school is in session, however, students from both low and high socioeconomic status (SES) populations make similar gains (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2001).

Researchers suggest that this discrepancy has something to do with reading activity over the summer months (Heyns,1978), and more specifically, access to books. Middle- and high-income students are often surrounded by text at home, whereas low-income students are often not (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Entwisle et al., 2001; Heyns, 1978). Low-income students, without access to any of these resources, will continue to lose the gains they made over the school year, and the achievement gap can widen further. This paper will investigate selected responses to the problem of summer slide. The main question I am to address in this review is: Are there programs that demonstrate efficacy with certain student populations, and are these scalable outside of experimental designs to inform school districts' intent to design summer programming that works?

Students' Summer Access to Texts: Drinking from the Resource Faucet

Many students do not have access to the "resource faucet" during the summer months (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2000). This lack of access often means they lose library access, may have few books to read for practice in the home, and do not have access to literacy instruction. For low-income students, this is particularly

noteworthy and may explain the findings on the increased severity of summer slide for this demographic group (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003). This principle undergirds the research on a treatment for summer reading loss that has been oft espoused in the literature: voluntary access to books, particularly those that are self-chosen and matched to student reading levels (Allington, McGill-Franzen, Camilli, Williams, Graff, Zeig, Zmach, & Nowak, 2010; Kim et al., 2016).

Because research has clearly shown that students who read the most are typically our best readers, many studies have examined the effects of voluntary reading interventions (National Reading Panel, 2000). Voluntary reading interventions are less structured than summer school programs, can be done entirely at home, and involve student choice in reading materials. While the National Reading Panel's (NRP) meta-analysis (2000) did not show significant effect sizes for this type of treatment, researchers have been building on the National Reading Panel's recommendations to create programs that work. Included in these recommendations are the following: a) use experimental design; b) focus on students in upper elementary grades, or students who can already decode text; c) provide students with leveled texts; d) provide minimal instruction on oral reading and comprehension strategies. Since the release of the NRP report, researchers have reformed their studies and some new patterns have emerged.

When comparing the effects of treatments from the last decade of research, the findings are clear. Effect sizes are not large, but generally consistent and positive (Allington et al., 2010; Kim, 2006; White, Kim, Kingston, & Foster, 2013). Students

from low income and minority homes make greater gains during voluntary summer reading programs (Allington et al., 2010; Kim, 2006; White et al., 2013). In Kim's 2006 study of fourth-grade students, he found effect sizes ranging from .13 to .22 for minority students, readers considered to be less fluent, and students who reported owning fewer than 50 books at home. Similarly, another study found effect sizes of .14 and .21 for students overall and economically disadvantaged students, respectively (Allington et al., 2010).

The research suggests several reasons behind these gains. Theories of reading development advocate for students to spend significant periods of time reading both familiar and new texts. Just as athletes and musicians require hours of time on task to grow their practice, so do readers (Allington and McGill-Franzen, 2003; National Reading Panel, 2000). If children do not have access to texts at home, they must frequent public libraries, since regular reading practice is key to continued development (Chall, 1996; Slates et al., 2012). Through this stage of reading development, students gain confidence in their fluency and word recognition in context, leading to gains in reading accuracy and automaticity (Allington and McGill-Franzen, 2003; Chall, 1996; LaBerge and Samuels, 1974).

Additional research in favor of reading self-selected texts is supported by theories of vocabulary development. Several principles of vocabulary instruction require students to: personalize vocabulary learning (such as when students read text matched to their reading levels); be immersed in text; and receive repeated exposure to new words (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000). Voluntary summer reading programs can

help to meet these goals.

Lastly, independent reading practice has the ability to increase student literacy gains through self-teaching (Allington et al., 2010; Stanovich, 1986). The act of reading helps readers make gains in reading comprehension, syntax, vocabulary, and content knowledge (Stanovich, 1986). Additionally, when readers experience some success with reading, their engagement, confidence, and courage grow (Allington et al., 2010; Chall, 1986). Reading experience, therefore, has a bootstrapping effect on reading growth (Allington and McGill-Franzen, 2003; Stanovich, 1986).

Consequently, students who make literacy gains are then are apt to make more gains, a consequence known as the Matthew effect (Stanovich, 1986). Summer slide disproportionally affects children from low SES households and children of color, contributing to the widening of the achievement gap (Alexander, Entwisle & Olson, 2007). The results for voluntary summer reading programs, then, are promising. They show the suggested benefits for minority and low SES students, especially as compared with traditional summer school programs, explored in the following section.

Another benefit of summer reading programs that provide increased access to books is the scalability of the intervention. Traditional summer school programs can cost thousands of dollars per pupil, while school districts providing ten to fifteen books for summer reading might only incur the expense of a few hundred dollars per student (Gorard, Siddiqui, & See, 2015). School districts can also implement summer reading programs more easily than summer school programs. No staff are needed to provide either summer instructional sessions or access to library books.

Traditional Summer School: Friend or Foe?

Programs that provide instruction at school are traditionally what school districts have implemented during the summer months to remediate learning difficulties. These programs are expensive and intensive, serving multiple purposes over their tenure (Cooper, Charlton, Valentine, Muhlenbruck & Borman, 2000). They are the common-sense solution for school districts wanting to serve children with learning deficits, since many educators believe that more instruction must certainly equate to better learning for students (Borman, Benson, & Overman, 2005).

There is a large and growing body of research on summer schools. In their meta-analysis Cooper and colleagues (2000) distilled several important findings as they relate to summer literacy intervention. These have been echoed in subsequent literature as well. First, parent involvement is key. When parents took part in the summer learning in some way, the programs had greater effect sizes (Cooper et al., 2000; Almus & Dogan, 2016). This effect may be due to increased student participation or attendance, but more research is needed to determine specific levers (Almus & Dogan, 2016).

Second, studies that use delayed post-tests showed smaller effect sizes. This indicates that the measured achievement results for students may lessen over time, but Cooper and his colleagues (2000) caution not to equate this with lessened academic benefits for summer school attendees over time. The timing of interventions and assessment may be a confounding factor. Treatments might occur at the beginning, middle, or end of a summer, which may cause summer slide before or after treatment

and affect results (Cooper et al., 2000; Zvoch & Stevens, 2015). Research also suggests that parsing out the effects of previous schooling versus summer school-specific learning may be difficult (Zvoch & Stevens, 2015). Additionally, summer interventions tend to involve upper elementary students more often than primary, which means participants likely have greater gaps in achievement that may be harder to remedy or have naturally compounded over time (Entwisle et al., 2001). As evidence of these hypotheses, the smaller effect sizes evident in studies utilizing delayed post-assessment are not evident in longitudinal studies, wherein students participate in summer programs for multiple years (Borman and Dowling, 2006).

Third, elementary and high school students receive the greatest benefits from summer instruction. Cooper and his colleagues (2000) believe that perhaps this is because of teacher attitudes and perceptions about the purpose of summer school. Many high schools use summer programming as credit recovery or "bridges" to participation in honors or Advanced Placement courses. Elementary students in summer school receive skill-based instruction. In contrast, many middle schoolers receive study habits instruction (Cooper et al., 2000). The connection to the core curriculum at both the elementary and high school levels may help with both the measurement and attainment of student progress.

Finally, program monitoring is especially important. Programs should be monitored for student attendance. As any administrator who has run a summer school program knows, lack of consistent attendance can prevent growth for individuals or groups of students. Usually, the population of students that school districts intend to

serve compared with the number of students who actually agree to attend are vastly different (Gorard et al., 2015). After the program begins, some students do not regularly attend, reducing the treated population even further (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Gorard et al., 2015). Ironically and disputably, summer school programs with compulsory attendance may have stronger effects than voluntary ones, although voluntary programs still have positive effects on student achievement (Allington and McGill-Franzen, 2003; Almus & Dogan, 2016; Borman, Benson, and Overman, 2005; Cooper et al., 2000).

Community or Family Involvement: The Missing Link

Many factors affect parental involvement in education. The correlation between lack of student academic success and low socioeconomic status is certainly well documented (Elish-Pier, 1996; Kim & Quinn, 2013; Vale et al., 2013; Almus & Dogan, 2016). Researchers have questioned whether this connection is due to family access to academic resources, little time to spend with children or in schools, lack of knowledge on instructional practices that could be used in the home, or myriad other reasons.

The importance of parental reading involvement in the summer was first noted by Heyns (1978). She held that parental encouragement of reading was significantly correlated with gains in student achievement over the summer months. Building on this, Borman, Benson, and Overman (2005) operationalized *encouragement* as the frequency of parent-child reading, the number of books children read over the summer, book check-out from the library, and book purchases. These researchers did

not find that encouragement of reading was as important as the emerging concept of social capital defined as, "the strength of ties among members of the community and the quality of social support available, both in terms of informal relationships among people and through formal institutions, such as churches and schools" (Borman et al., 2005, p. 148). Borman and colleagues found that families who are more likely to engage in relationships with community organizations and resources will often take advantage of summer school opportunities. It follows then that summer program attendance may also affected by parental engagement (Almus & Dogan, 2016; Borman et al., 2005; Cooper et al., 2000; Gorard et al., 2015; Heyns, 1978).

For decades, researchers have theorized that social capital resources have a compensatory and protective effect. Recent research on children from low SES families who consistently achieve at the same rate as higher-SES peers suggests that these families enjoy within-family social capital that other low SES families do not have (Slates et al., 2012). Using Coleman and Hoffer's conceptual framework (1987), Slates and colleagues operationalized social capital variables (see Appendix A). They found significant differences between low SES students who exhibit exceptional summer learning (ESLs) and typical low SES students. ESLs were significantly more likely to come from two-parent households or have additional adults who help to parent. Families of ESLs also were significantly more likely to check out library books, read to their children, and check students' homework. Corresponding discoveries demonstrate the lack of opportunity for recreational reading in many low income families, where families often use literacy for survival, organizational,

required, or religious purposes (Elish-Piper, 1996). These findings may be particularly helpful to school districts who conduct parent trainings, and will be further discussed in the subsequent section.

Research supports the idea that voluntary summer reading interventions which place leveled texts in the hands of students may be further enhanced by parent involvement (Cooper et al., 2000; Heyns, 1978; Kim, Guryan, White, Quinn, Capotosto, & Kingston, 2016). Pagan and Senechal (2014) conducted a study to measure the effects of parental involvement in a summer book reading intervention for upper elementary students. After pre-treatment training, parents participated in paired reading with their children, designed to enhance fluency and comprehension. Weekly book kits and phone calls helped to facilitate and encourage program fidelity. Effects sizes were significant: .30 for reading comprehension; .44 for reading fluency; and .29 for receptive vocabulary. These effect sizes are greater than those demonstrated in studies that do not include parent training (e.g., Allington et al., 2010; Kim, 2006; Kim et al., 2016; O'Brien, Paratore, Leighton, Cassano, Krol-Sinclar, & Green, 2014; White et al., 2013). There appears to be a delineation between too much parent involvement and too little, however. Programs that require too much direction or engagement (as perceived by parents) may be difficult to implement (Parker & Reid, 2017).

Family-based programs that hone in on specific literacy skills may also help children reap academic success. Family literacy programs, often geared toward English learners (ELs) and their families, have been around for decades. Research

suggests that programs tailored toward the development of specific skills, such as vocabulary development, show promise (O'Brien et al., 2014). As students are exposed to new vocabulary, they categorize terms based on morphological and phonological data. In this way they extend their knowledge, and prior learning leads to new learning (Metsala, 2011). In this way, family literacy programs may have bootstrapping effects on student literacy skills.

Summary and Conclusions: Moving Towards Comprehensive Summer Interventions to Best Serve Students and Families

The deficits in the existing research on summer learning interventions were best summarized by Cooper and colleagues (2000). The common problems they found throughout the research on summer school actually applied to research on all summer interventions. Many researchers use dubious or even spurious criteria for evaluation, such as the mastery of learning objectives. These criteria may or may not be tied to program goals. Often, the progress of students who did not receive treatment is not compared to students receiving the treatment. Thus, normal summer growth cannot be ruled out as contributing to the treatment results. Additionally, many summer interventions only involve students with learning deficits, leading to a difference between the control and treatment groups. Evaluation criteria may not account for a lack of learning loss either, since typical summer slide can be difficult to predict. Lastly, student attendance or participation varies and accounting for this in a study is difficult (Cooper et. al, 2000; Gorard et al., 2015; Kim, 2006; White et al., 2014).

Despite these common problems, the research clearly suggests certain courses

of action for school districts. The median effect size that Cooper and his colleagues distilled from the existing summer school research in 2000 was .19. Other research on summer programs examined herein found similar effect sizes (Gorard et al., 2015; Almus & Dogan, 2016). When compared with the effect size found in the voluntary summer reading programs reviewed, results are, on average, equivalent. Once again, through a cost-benefit analysis lens, voluntary summer reading programs yield similar results with much less spending.

For districts who have the resources to tackle in-person summer instruction, educators have recently sought to revitalize summer school by creating programs that diverge from the traditional model of school instruction. For example, kindergarten students in Baltimore received instruction that integrated art and science into literacy activities. Results were strong, with measured effect sizes of .27 for sight word growth and .40 for reading growth, as measured by the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (Borman, Goetz, & Dowling, 2009). Given the increasing importance of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) initiatives, programs of an interdisciplinary nature may receive greater funding from internal and external sources. Another innovative program, Continued Connections, brought reading instruction in the summer months to students' neighborhoods. Seventy-six percent of these participants grew or maintained their reading growth during the summer (Malach & Rutter, 2002).

Moreover, greater gains in student achievement might well be made by school district programs that combine traditional summer school and voluntary summer

reading. Since meta-analytic review suggests traditional summer school best serves middle-income students (Cooper et al., 2000), a district might consider scaling a traditional summer school to serve the majority of its students who fall into this demographic. Similarly, analysis of voluntary summer reading programs has shown greater effects on students in poverty (Kim, 2006; Kim & Quinn, 2013; White et al., 2014). School districts might therefore benefit from focusing summer reading programming on students from low SES backgrounds, students who have not demonstrated growth with traditional summer school, and/or students who cannot attend traditional summer school.

An additional recommendation for school districts may run concurrent with summer programs for students. Parent trainings that aid parents in helping their children succeed in academics can be informed by the research on within-family social capital and family reading (O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Slates et al., 2012). Family behaviors correlated with students who make strong summer gains despite low SES include: taking children to the library and checking out books, reading to children, and checking homework. Learning the characteristics of families with students who defy the typical pattern of summer slide may be instructive for all families. Similarly, parents may benefit from understanding what strategies they can use with their children while reading together (Elish-Piper, 1996; O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Parker & Reid, 2017). Parents can coach children by asking *wh*- questions; asking children to reread, summarize, and predict; and helping children with unfamiliar words. They can create environments that positively encourage

reading by placing literacy games, storytelling, and reading for recreation (Elish-Piper, 1996; O'Brien et al., 2014; Pagan & Senechal, 2014; Parker & Reid, 2017).

School districts must find ways to incorporate the best practices in summer intervention identified in the research: engaging families, encouraging at-home reading, targeting elementary skill development, and incentivizing attendance. While there are many ways to accomplish this, a strong program will incorporate all four. In this way, practice and research can collide to facilitate greater student achievement and growth.

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Structural	Functional
• *Mother not working*	• *Went to library in summer*
• *Two parent household*	• *Checked out books from library in summer*
• *Mother not parenting alone*	• *Parent read to child yesterday*
• *Mother not a teenager at birth of her first child*	• Number of summer activities
• Number of siblings	• Summer care outside of home
	• Amount of pre-K attended
	• *Amount of kindergarten attended*
	• Amount of TV child watches
	• *Parent checks homework*
	• Number of siblings
	• *Parent expects at least mid-level conduct grade*
	• *Parent believes he/she is most responsible for how student does in school*
	• Parent's assessment of child's relative ability compared to peers
	• Parent expectations for child's educational attainment
	• Parent expectations for child's subject-specific grades
	• Parent expectations for child's average grades
	• Parent expectations for child's educational attainment
	• *Family stress below low SES mean*
	• Parental depression

(Slates et al., 2012, p. 173)

Appendix D

RESEARCH BRIEF

Artifact 3

Research Brief

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Overview

An analysis of the Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) elementary summer literacy programs was conducted to look at the results of Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart students, as compared with non-participating students who did not attend either program but were invited to do so. All students who were invited to the PASD elementary summer programs were students who were classified as receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction in the 2018 school year within the PASD Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) system. On average, students receiving Tier 2/3 instruction are typically performing eight months or more below grade level in reading. Table 1 shows the counts of students invited and participating in each program by school.

PASD Students Invited to, and Participating in, Elementary Summer Literacy Programs in 2018

Program	Total Invited	PAELC	Manavon	Barkley	Schuylkill	Nonpublic
Invite Only (non-participants)	214	67	1	63	83	0
Jumpstart participants	59	17	14	5	23	0
Summer Stepping Up participants	227	65	51	48	62	1
Totals	500	149	66	116	168	1

Data were collected in the late spring of 2018, and again in the fall of 2018 to measure whether students maintained, increased, or decreased reading levels during the summer months. If students grew one reading level or more from spring to fall, they were coded as *increased* with respect to reading level. Students with levels coded as *maintained* stayed at the same reading level from spring to fall. Students coded as *decreased* had reading levels that declined one reading level or more, or were not able to reach the assessment for the same reading level they attained in the spring.

Issues Related to Data Collection

There are some notable discrepancies in the data that were collected. Specific discrepancies are listed below and summarized in Tables 2 and 3. Most discrepancies are likely due to mismatches with the building-level spreadsheets and district-level records.

a) There is a difference in the total number of Summer Stepping Up students for whom data was collected (227) versus the number of Summer Stepping Up registrants from spreadsheets maintained by the buildings (231). More specifically:
    a. The number of students recorded as registered for SSU on Schuylkill's spreadsheet was 63, versus 62 recorded by the district.
    b. The number of students recorded as registered for SSU on Manavon Elementary's spreadsheet was 53 versus 51 recorded by the district.

c. The number of students recorded as registered for SSU on the Early Learning Center's spreadsheets was 66 versus 65 recorded by the district.

b) The total number of Summer Stepping Up registrants recorded by the district office is off by one, two, or three students in kindergarten through 4th grade when compared with building-maintained spreadsheets. This discrepancy is likely due to students who signed up but did not attend any sessions being withdrawn from the program, and the addition of last-minute registrants.

It should also be noted that students moving from 5th into 6th grade may not have had a fall 2018 data collection, due to their move to middle school. Once students enter 6th grade, teachers may or may not assess their beginning-of-year reading level, depending on the teacher and/or literacy class in which students are enrolled.

Students Originally Reported as Enrolled in SSU 2018 from PASD Schools and Non-Public Schools.

Grade	Total Enrolled	PAELC	Manavon	Barkley	Schuylkill	Nonpublic
K-1st grade	30	30	0	0	0	0
1st grade-2nd grade	36	36	0	0	0	0
2nd grade-3rd grade	38	0	15	14	9	0
3rd grade-4th grade	47	0	15	11	20	1

4th grade-5th grade	47	0	14	14	19	0
5th grade-6th grade	33	0	9	9	15	0
Totals	231	66	53	48	63	1

Note. Under Grade, cohorts are represented by spring grade level followed by the subsequent fall grade level.

Students Enrolled in SSU 2018 from PASD Schools and Non-Public Schools by Grade

Grade	Total Enrolled
K-1st grade	27
1st grade-2nd grade	38
2nd grade-3rd grade	37
3rd grade-4th grade	46
4th grade-5th grade	46
5th grade-6th grade	33
Totals	227

Note. Under Grade, cohorts are represented by spring grade level followed by the subsequent fall grade level.

Results

Student reading results, as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS; Fountas & Pinnell, 2010), for students who participated in Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up are positive. After eliminating data from students who withdrew from PASD before the fall 2018 testing window, or

students whose data was not collected in fall 2018, data from a total of 147 non-participating students, 55 Jumpstart students, and 204 Summer Stepping Up students from grades K-5 were analyzed. Just 65% of non-participating students maintained or increased their reading levels from spring 2018 to fall 2018. This is in contrast with 84% of Jumpstart students and 84% of Summer Stepping Up students who maintained or increased their reading levels (see Results table).

2018 Results for Students Eligible for Summer Programs by Program and Non-Participating Students

	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Maintained or increased reading level	Total students with Spring and Fall data	% maintained or increased reading level
Nonparticipating students	77	19	96	147	65.3%
Jumpstart students	33	13	46	55	83.6%
Summer Stepping Up students	128	43	171	204	83.8%

Participating student results are compared with students who were invited but did not participate. Tables 5, 6, and 7 contain results for non-participating students, Stepping SSU Up students, and Jumpstart students, respectively. In summarizing results across the three groups, the data for students enrolled in Jumpstart and Summer

Stepping Up show the treatments had an effect on student success. Table 5 shows that 77 students (52%) who were invited but did not attend any summer program (non-participating students) maintained their reading level, compared with 33 Jumpstart students (60%) and 128 Summer Stepping Up (63%) students. Few non-participating students – just 19 (13%) –increased their reading level, compared to 13 Jumpstart students (24%) and 43 Summer Stepping Up students (21%). Conversely, 51 non-participating students (35%), 9 Jumpstart students (16%), and 33 Summer Stepping Up students (16%) had reading levels decrease over the summer months. Overall, 96 non-participating students (65%) maintained or increased their reading levels, while 46 Jumpstart students (84%) and 171 Summer Stepping Up students (84%) maintained or increased reading levels.

2018 Non-Participating Student Results

	Withdrawn from PASD	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Decreased reading level	Data not collected	Totals
K-1st grade	6	8	3	11	0	28
1st grade-2nd grade	5	12	1	19	2	39
2nd grade-3rd grade	4	15	6	8	0	33
3rd grade-4th grade	5	19	4	6	0	34
4th grade-5th grade	3	23	5	7	0	38
5th grade-6th grade	2	0	0	0	40	42

2018 Jumpstart Student Results

	Withdrawn from PASD	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Decreased reading level	Data not collected	Totals
K-1st grade	0	4	0	4	0	8
1st grade-2nd grade	1	5	2	1	0	9
2nd grade-3rd grade	1	8	1	2	0	12
3rd grade-4th grade	0	6	3	2	0	11
4th grade-5th grade	0	6	5	0	0	11
5th grade-6th grade	0	4	2	0	2	8

2018 Summer Stepping Up Student Results

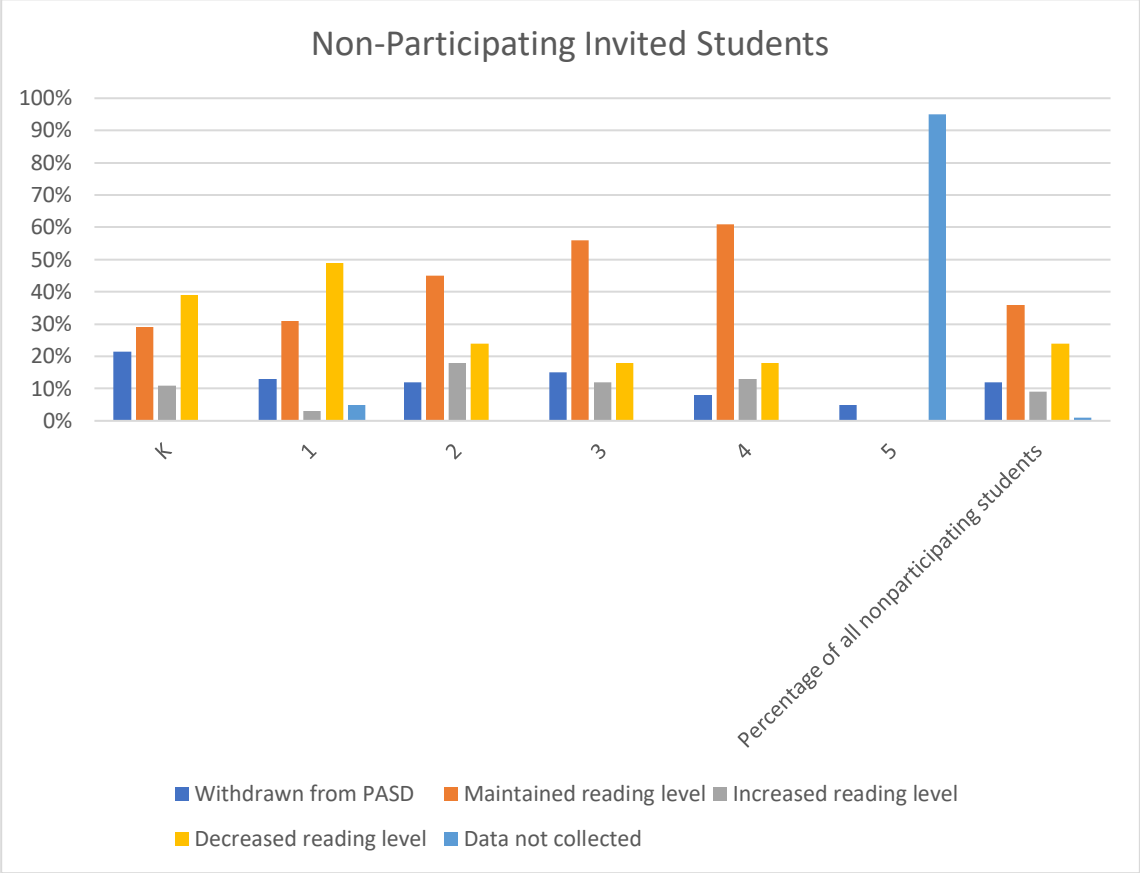
	Withdrawn from PASD	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Decreased reading level	Data not collected	Totals
K-1st grade	2	16	5	4	0	27
1st grade-2nd grade	3	16	5	14	0	38
2nd grade-3rd grade	1	28	4	4	0	37
3rd grade-4th grade	1	27	12	5	1	46

4th grade-5th grade	0	28	15	3	0	46
5th grade-6th grade	0	13	2	3	15	33

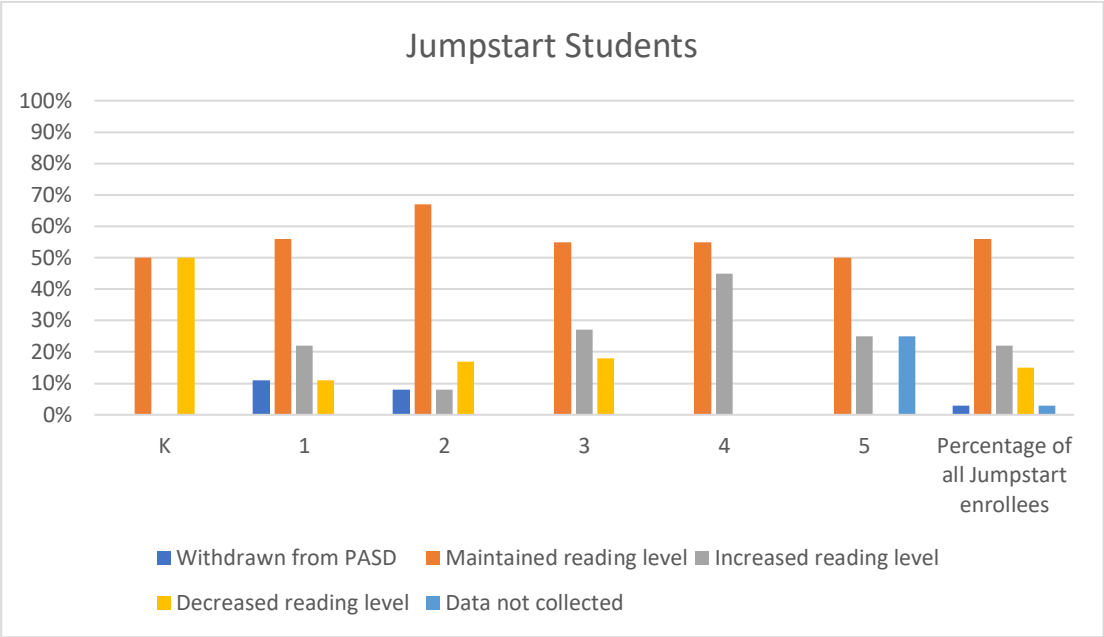
Figures below representing the non-participating, Jumpstart, and Summer Stepping Up students, respectively, are disaggregated by grade level. These figures show the percentages of students who decreased, increased, or maintained reading, as well as the percentages of students who withdrew from PASD or did not have data collected for an unknown reason. Of note is the higher percentage of students in the 1st grade-2nd grade cohort whose reading levels decreased – 49% of non-participating students, 22% of Jumpstart students, and 37% of Summer Stepping Up students. No matter what program this cohort participated in the decline in reading scores was higher than students in other grades. One possible explanation for this decline is that all PASD students in Kindergarten and 1st grade attend the Phoenixville Area Early Learning Center. Students then split up into their designated elementary schools for 2nd through 5th grades. It may be that the perceived decline in reading skills from the end of 1st grade to the beginning of 2nd grade is due to students' transition to a new building. Perhaps students who enter a new building for 2nd grade may not feel comfortable during the September testing window with their new teachers, or the new environment. This might contribute to lower reading scores in the fall. Alternately, there may be a district concern with interrater reliability. Teachers in the Early Learning Center may be inflating scores for their exiting first graders, or second grade

teachers may be scoring students too harshly. This is something that could be addressed with refresher workshops on scoring F&P BAS (Fountas & Pinnell, 2010) using the provided rubrics.

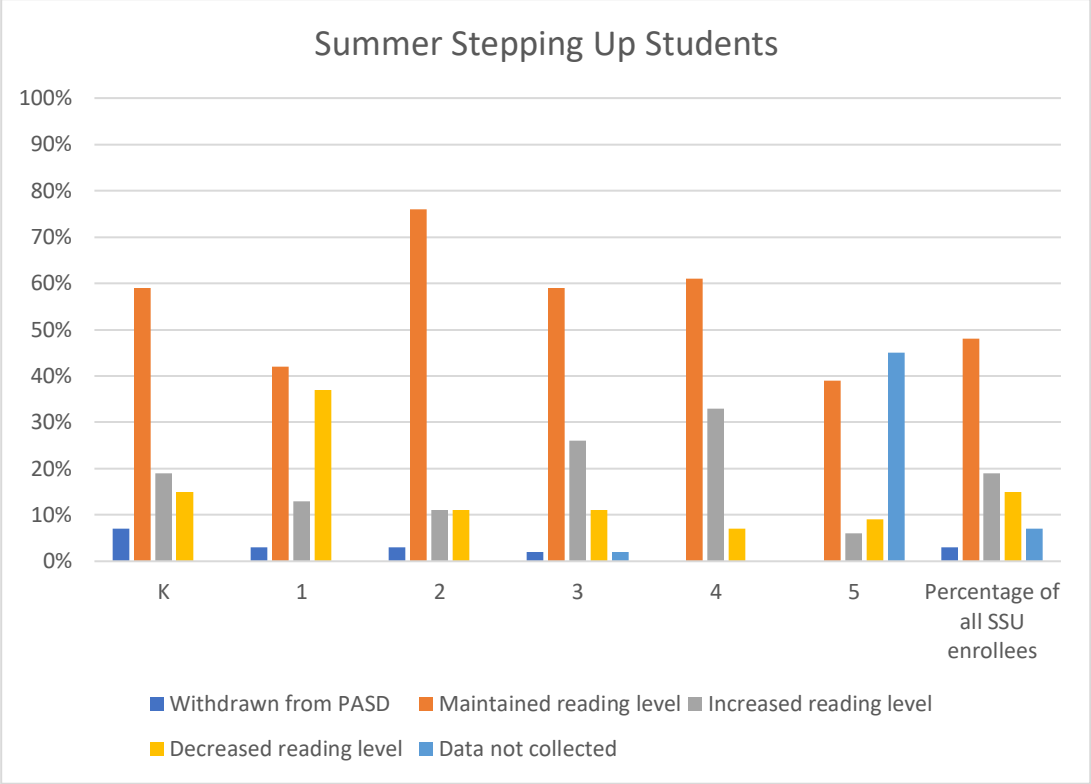
Both Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up students performed better than non-participating students. While Jumpstart appears to have strong results, the program also had a significantly smaller sample size. To verify these results, at least three years of data and increased Jumpstart numbers are needed.



Results for students eligible and invited to summer literacy programs in 2018 but did not participate



Results for students who attended Jumpstart in 2018



Results for students who participated in Summer Stepping Up in 2018

Appendix E

PARENT SURVEY

Artifact 4

Parent Survey and Focus Group Questions

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Parent Survey - Elementary Summer Literacy Programs

Survey Flow

Block: Block 1 (4 Questions)

Branch: New Branch
If
If Did your child(ren) participate in any of Phoenixville Area School District's elementary summer l... No, I did not receive an invitation/information about any summer programs. Is Selected

EndSurvey:

Branch: New Branch
If
If Did your child(ren) participate in any of Phoenixville Area School District's elementary summer l... No, I did not want my child to participate. Is Selected
Or Did your child(ren) participate in any of Phoenixville Area School District's elementary summer l... No, my child did not want to participate. Is Selected

Block: Block 4 - None (4 Questions)

Branch: New Branch
If
If In which program did your child(ren) participate? (Select all that apply.) Jumpstart Program (provided free books) Is Selected

Block: Block 3 - Jumpstart (4 Questions)

Branch: New Branch
If
If In which program did your child(ren) participate? (Select all that apply.) Summer Stepping Up at Manavon/Early Learning Center Is Selected

Block: Block 2-SSU (4 Questions)

Standard: Block 5 - Final questions (5 Questions)

Start of Block: Block 1

Q1.1 This survey focuses on Phoenixville's Elementary summer literacy programs, Stepping Up and Jumpstart. Information obtained from this survey will be used by the Phoenixville Area School District to improve the programs. Responses to this survey are anonymous and cannot be connected to the person completing the survey. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Jessica Kilmetz at 484-927-5071 or jkilmetz@udel.edu. Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback!

Q1.2 Last spring, did the school/teacher communicate with you about summer learning opportunities for your child(ren)?

- Yes, I was well informed. (2)
- Yes. I was informed, but some things were confusing. (3)
- No, I was not informed. (5)

Q1.3 Did your child(ren) participate in any of Phoenixville Area School District's elementary summer literacy programs (Stepping Up or Jumpstart)?

- Yes (1)
- No, I did not want my child to participate. (2)
- No, my child did not want to participate. (5)
- No, I did not receive an invitation/information about any summer programs. (4)

Q1.4 In which program did your child(ren) participate? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Summer Stepping Up at Manavon/Early Learning Center (1)
- ☐ Jumpstart Program (provided free books) (2)
- ☐ Other (5) _____
- ☐ None (4)

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 4 - None

Q2.1 Why did you choose **not to participate** in summer programs? Choose all that apply.

- ☐ My child was invited, but had too many other summer commitments (1)
- ☐ My child was invited, but I did not want him/her to participate in school-related activities over the summer (2)
- ☐ My child was invited, but he/she did not want to participate in school-related activities over the summer (6)
- ☐ My child was invited, but I did not feel he/she needed the summer program (7)
- ☐ My child was invited, but travel plans interfered (3)
- ☐ I wasn't aware of the summer programs, Stepping Up and Jumpstart (5)
- ☐ Other (please write in) (4) _____

Q2.2 Is there anything Phoenixville Area School District might do to encourage you to consider summer school or reading programs for your child(ren)?

_____

Q2.3 How much did your child(ren) read independently during the summer months?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Enter average number of books your child read per week ()	
Enter average number of books your child read per month ()	

Q2.4 How much did **you** read **with** your child(ren) this summer?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Enter average number of books read with your child per week ()	
Enter average number of books read with your child per month ()	

End of Block: Block 4 - None

Start of Block: Block 3 - Jumpstart

Q3.1 Why did you choose the Jumpstart Program for your child(ren)? Please rank the following in order of most important (1) to least important (5).

_____ Did not have to attend school (1)
_____ Free books (2)
_____ Summer meet-ups at the library and Petrucci's (3)
_____ Flexibility to fit with my summer schedule (5)
_____ Other (please write in) (4)

Q3.2 How much did your child(ren) read independently during the summer months?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Enter average number of books your child read per week ()	
Enter average number of your child books read per month ()	

Q3.3 How much did **you** read **with** your child(ren) this summer?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Enter average number of books read with your child per week ()	
Enter average number of books read with your child per month ()	

Q3.4 Please answer the following.

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly disagree (4)
My child(ren) enjoyed the Jumpstart book access program. (1)	○	○	○	○
I wanted my child(ren) to participate in Jumpstart. (2)	○	○	○	○

My child(ren) wanted to participate in Jumpstart. (11)	○	○	○	○
My child(ren) improved his/her reading as a result of Jumpstart. (3)	○	○	○	○
My child(ren) read more over the summer because of Jumpstart. (4)	○	○	○	○
Jumpstart was a positive educational opportunity for my student. (5)	○	○	○	○
The enrollment process for Jumpstart was easy. (6)	○	○	○	○
My child had plenty of books to read this summer. (7)	○	○	○	○
We attended the optional Jumpstart book chat at the public library. (8)	○	○	○	○
We attended the optional Jumpstart book chat at Petrucci's. (9)	○	○	○	○

I was not informed about the optional book chats. (10)	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 3 - Jumpstart

Start of Block: Block 2-SSU

Q4.1 Why did you choose the Summer Stepping Up Program for your child(ren)? Please rank the following in order of most important (1) to least important (6).

_____ Transportation provided (1)
_____ Attend school and receive instruction (2)
_____ See friends at school (3)
_____ Maintain school routine (4)
_____ Other (please write in) (5)
_____ Breakfast provided (6)

Q4.2 How much did your child(ren) read independently during the summer months?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Enter average number of books your child read per week ()	
Enter average number of books your child read per month ()	

Q4.3 How much did **you** read **with** your child(ren) this summer?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Enter average number of books read with your child per week ()	
Enter average number of books read with your child per month ()	

Q4.4 Please answer the following.

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly disagree (4)
My child(ren) enjoyed Stepping Up. (1)	○	○	○	○
I wanted my child(ren) to participate in Stepping Up. (2)	○	○	○	○
My child(ren) wanted to participate in Stepping Up. (10)	○	○	○	○
My child(ren) improved his/her reading as a result of Stepping Up. (3)	○	○	○	○
My child(ren) read more over the summer because of Stepping Up. (4)	○	○	○	○

Stepping Up was a positive educational opportunity for my student. (5)	○	○	○	○
The enrollment process for Stepping Up was easy to understand. (6)	○	○	○	○
The Stepping Up schedule was convenient. (7)	○	○	○	○
The transportation information (i.e. - bus number, pick up time, drop off time, etc.) I received for summer school was accurate. (8)	○	○	○	○
My child had access to the cafeteria to get breakfast. (9)	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 2-SSU

Start of Block: Block 5 - Final questions

Q5.1 Were you aware of the summer reading incentives offered by the Phoenixville Area School District?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)
- ○ I'm not sure (3)

Q5.2 Do you feel the summer reading incentives (Petrucci's coupons) for students are:

- ○ Great! (1)
- ○ Need improvement (2)

Q5.3 What suggestions do you have for incentives to encourage your child(ren) to read over the summer?

_____

Q5.4 What recommendations would you make for future summer programs to increase student literacy? (Choose all that apply.)

- ☐ Longer summer school program (1)
- ☐ Access to school libraries during the summer (2)
- ☐ Shorter summer school program (3)
- ☐ Lunch provided at summer school program (4)
- ☐ Move summer school program to another school building. Please enter preferred school building. (5)

_____

- ☐ No changes requested (6)
- ☐ Other. Please write in (7)

_____

Q5.5 Do you have any other questions, comments, or concerns about elementary summer literacy programs?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

End of Block: Block 5 - Final questions

Focus Group Interest Survey (linked within parent survey)

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Are you interested in participating in a focus group interview to discuss the summer programs?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ Maybe (2)
- ○ No (3)

Skip To: Q2 If Are you interested in participating in a focus group interview to discuss the summer programs? = Yes

Skip To: Q2 If Are you interested in participating in a focus group interview to discuss the summer programs? = Maybe

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you interested in participating in a focus group interview to discuss the summer programs? = No

---

Q2
Thank you for your interest in participating in a focus group interview to discuss the summer programs. Please enter your contact information here.

- ○ Name: (1) _____
- ○ Phone: (2) _____
- ○ Email: (3) _____
- ○ Preferred method of contact: (4) _____

End of Block: Default Question Block

Parent Focus Group - Elementary Summer Literacy Programs

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Did you decide to have your child participate in Jumpstart or Stepping Up?

_____

Q1.A If yes, which one? Why did you decide to have your child participate?

If no, why did you decide to not have your child participate?

Q1.B Why did you decide to have your child participate in _____ and not _____ program?

Q2 Do you think the District should encourage student participation in the elementary summer literacy programs?

_____

Q2.A If yes, why?
If no, why not?

Q2.B What do you think the district can do to encourage student participation in the elementary summer literacy programs?

Q3 How did you hear about Jumpstart and/or Stepping Up?

Q3.A How informed did you feel about the programs?

Q3.B Is there anything you didn't know going into it that you wish you did? If so, what?

Q4 If your child participated, do you know how your child felt about the program?

Q4.A Did he/she enjoy it?

Q4.B Did you see him/her read more than usual?

Q4.C Do you think he/she would want to do it again? Why or why not?

Q4.D If your child participated, how did you feel about the program?

Q4.E Do you think it encouraged your child to read more? In what ways?

Q4.F Do you think it improved his/her reading? In what ways?

Q4.G Would you have your child participate again? Why or why not?

Q5 Do you know about the District's summer reading incentives, and how do you feel about them?

Q6 If you could give one piece of advice to the district to improve the program, what would it be?

Q7 Any additional comments?

End of Block: Default Question Block

Appendix F

SUMMARY OF SURVEY AND PARENT FOCUS GROUPS

Summary of Parent Survey and Focus Groups

Artifact 5

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Overview

Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) parents were anonymously surveyed regarding the elementary summer literacy programs, Summer Stepping Up (SSU) and Jumpstart in Qualtrics. In late November 2019, the survey was distributed via PASD's electronic messaging system to parents of students who were invited to the summer programs. One reminder was sent a week later via the same system. These surveys were followed up with five separate focus group sessions conducted on December 10 and 19, 2018 comprised of volunteers who self-identified for participation during the survey.

A total of 127 surveys were returned by parents out of 463 that were distributed, for a return rate of 27%. I examined the results of the parent survey using reporting features in Qualtrics. This work studied common themes that emerged from the collected data: communication, student participation, and at-home summer reading.

A total of 12 parents participated in the five focus group sessions. I had each session transcribed by Rev.com, and I imported the transcripts into NVivo 12 for analysis. In NVivo, I coded each transcript by highlighting for nodes, or themes, that I identified. The themes I identified after examining the transcripts were:

- climate and culture at SSU;
- communication;
- summer reading incentives;

- data/student progress;
- finances;
- schedule;
- instructional support; and
- transportation.

Survey Results

Communication

The survey data showed that PASD communication regarding the summer programs needed some improvement, with 81% of respondents feeling well informed and 22% feeling that some things were confusing. Parents' focus group comments about communication prior to the summer programs were similar. Parents wanted to be informed earlier in the year, so they could make decisions about summer camp participation. They wanted to have more open conversations with classroom teachers about their children's reading difficulties. One parent noted she never received the invitation during conferences.

> February 28th, in my son's folder came home the letter which had to be back March 1st, and when I called they said, 'I don't know. You should have been at conferences,' and I said, 'I was at conferences, so where has this letter been for the last two weeks and now I have a day to decide?' Obviously we wanted to do it because it was recommended but where was it for the two weeks and why did the reading teacher not indicate anything to us that it was going to be

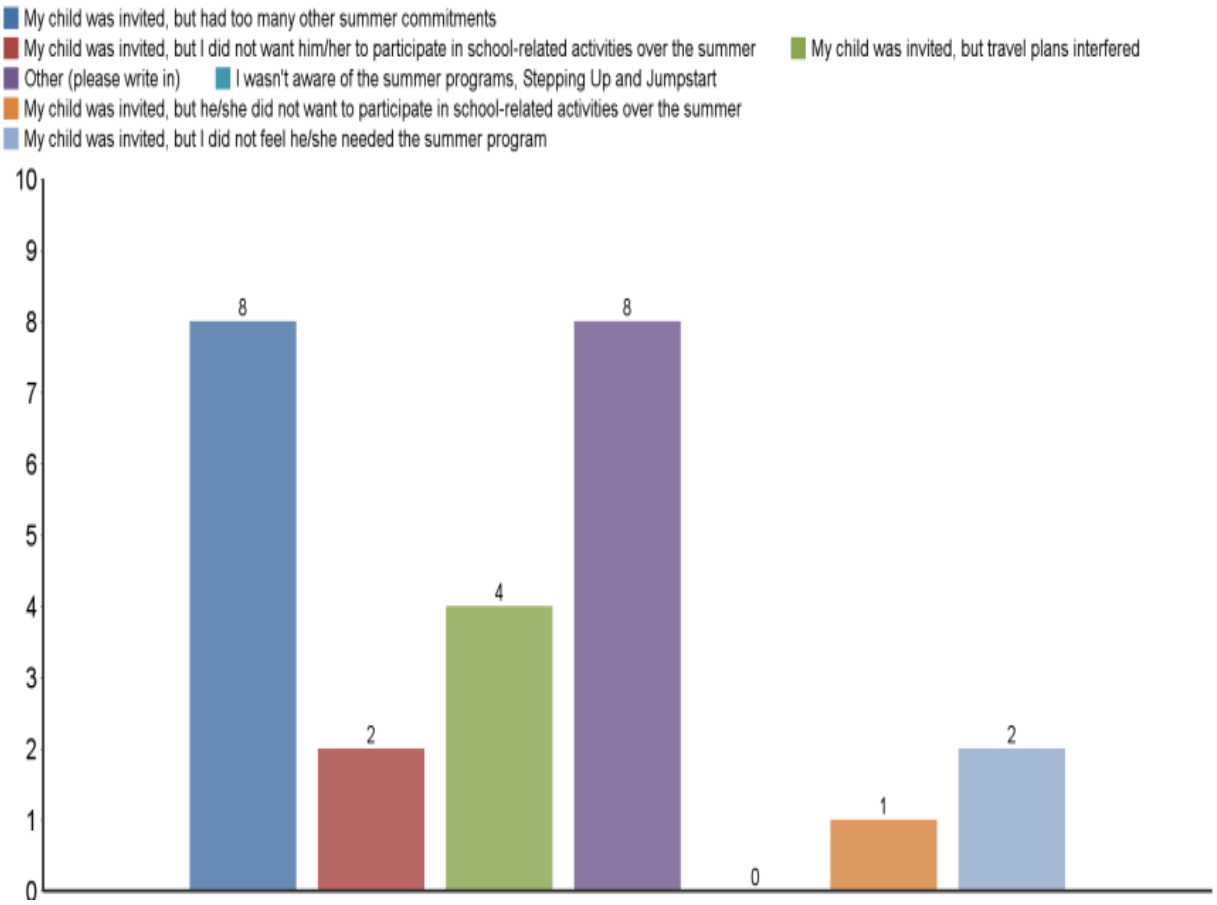
coming, because it was a big surprise because we thought we had made great strides last year with him catching up with everyone else.

Concerns regarding communication during the summer program were illuminated during the focus groups sessions as well. Parents stated that they were not informed about the day's schedule or assignments from SSU teachers. Some received a welcome email from their children's teachers, while others said they received nothing. Others noted they did not know how their child performed during the program. One parent stated, "I would like to see what the goals of the program were. Did they meet the goals?" The mandate for improved communication between SSU teachers and parents was clear.

Participation and Non-Participation

Respondents whose children did not participate in a summer literacy program did so for a variety of reasons, and from the survey responses, it does not appear as though there is much PASD can do to encourage more participation within this group. Eight survey respondents said their children had other summer commitments that prevented them from attending SSU and four had interfering summer travel plans. One parent did not feel his/her child needed SSU, two parents said their children did not want to participate, and two other parents said they did not want their children to participate. From the text entries outlined in the table below, survey respondents wrote in suggestions that already occur, such as transportation. Other suggestions made in both the survey and the focus group sessions, like full day options, are not feasible due to increased cost for the school district. Some parents in both focus group sessions and

the survey indicated that their children just needed down time away from school, implying that they would not consider sending their children to any program.

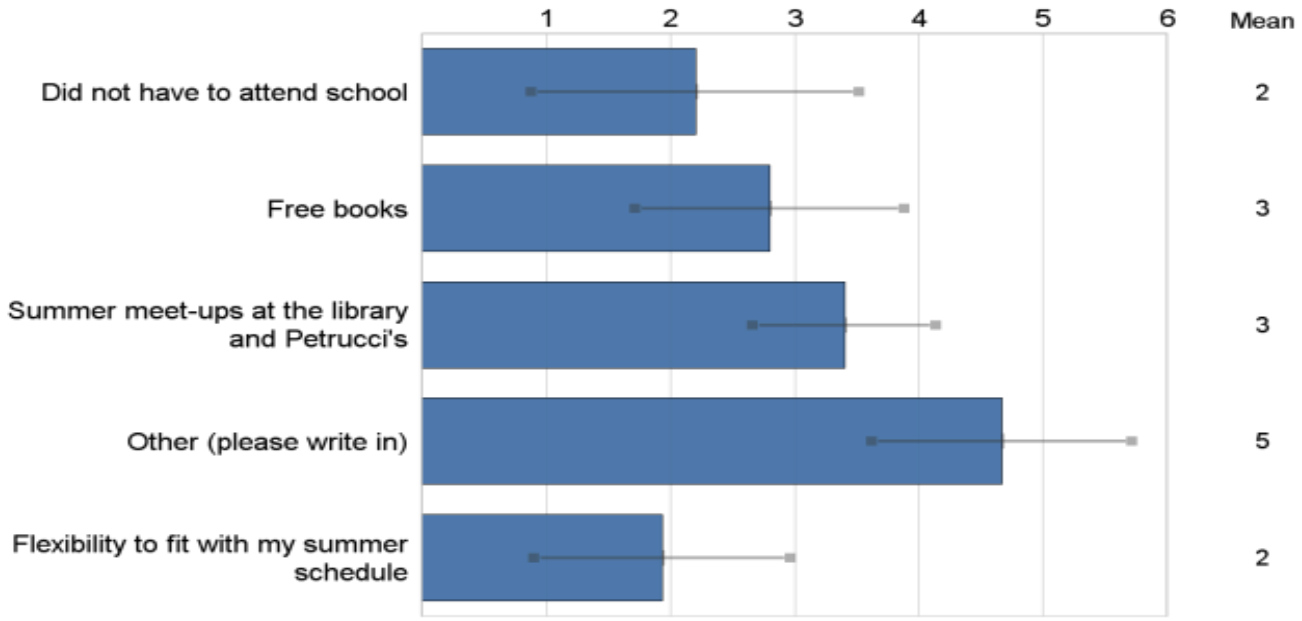


Parent and guardian responses to the survey question, "Why did you choose not to participate in summer programs? Choose all that apply."

Text Entry: Why did you choose not to participate in summer programs?
Maybe a list of "If you like ____, try these" so choosing books isn't so overwhelming
provide transporaton
If something like this is offered in the future, it should be full day so that working parents can make accommodations for the child.
offer multiple times or transportation
Later start time
No, all students grow at their own pace, it’s not a one size fits all. As long as my child is making a steady improvement, absolutely not. Children need down time.
My child's teacher believed his reading comprehension was lagging. We strongly disagreed & suspected what was being observed by the teacher was undiagnosed ADHD. The teacher disagreed, saying she didn't believe he exhibited ADHD symptoms. Our child subsequently was diagnosed with ADHD by a neurologist. We wholeheartedly would consider any educational program if relevant, but this did not qualify.
It needs to be communicated earlier. This program is not conducive for families with 2 working parents. Have an aftercare and Friday option.
It's too long of a committment amd interferes with other summer activities.
Provide care for the entire day, the half day program does not work for working parents.

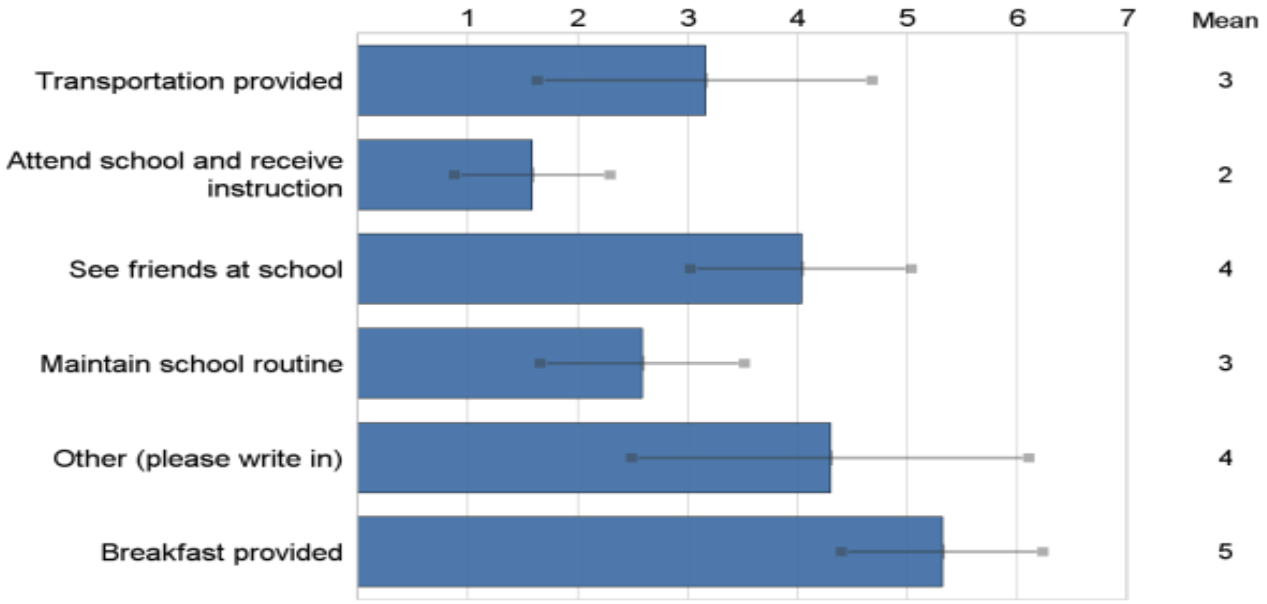
Parent and guardian text entries to the survey question, “Why did you choose not to participate in summer programs?”

Jumpstart was not as popular a choice as Summer Stepping Up, but it was a better fit for some families for the reasons outlined in Figure 2. Some respondents valued the flexibility of Jumpstart. Other enjoyed the off-campus gatherings and the free books.



Parent and guardian responses to the survey question, "Why did you choose the Jumpstart Program for your child(ren)? Please rank the following in order of most important (1) to least important (5)."

The Summer Stepping Up (SSU) program was chosen by parents of SSU students for the reasons outlined in Figure 3. These decisions were echoed in the focus group sessions, during which parents claimed that they like the "camp" atmosphere and were grateful for the opportunity to improve their children's reading abilities. Parents stated, "Because it's a good way to keep them reading. All the reasons that it's a positive. It allows them to stay at the same level and not decline. It gives them choice and opportunity."



Parent and guardian responses to the survey question, "Why did you choose the Summer Stepping Up Program for your child(ren)? Please rank the following in order of most important (1) to least important (5)."

At-Home Reading

There was no discernable difference in the amount of at-home reading done by students in one of the PASD summer literacy programs and those who were not. Respondents reported that non-participating children read two books per week and five books per month. Jumpstart students read three books per week and seven per month. SSU students read three books per week and six books per month. Parents of non-participating children read four books per week with their children, and six books per month. Parents of Jumpstart students read on average three books per week with

their children, and six per month. Parents of SSU students read three books per week with their children, and five books per month.

All respondents answered questions about the summer reading incentive, which was a coupon to a local water ice place. Forty-three respondents were aware of the incentive, twenty-nine were not, and sixteen were unsure. Fifty-four people thought the incentive was fine, while thirty-one thought it needed improvement.

The focus group sessions provided a deeper investigation into this topic. One parent noted that water ice coupons were overused, and therefore not much of an incentive for students. Some parents were unhappy with a food-based incentive. One parent said, "I don't know if there's any way we can incentivize them like through school, like when they come back…a free homework night." Other parents suggested a free ice cream at school with the return of their Bingo Board, free pizza, or a free book.

Recommendations for Improvement

All survey respondents answered a question about ways to improve the elementary summery literacy programs. Results were mixed. Nineteen respondents wanted a longer summer school program, thirteen wanted a shorter program, and thirty-two respondents wanted no change. Four respondents wanted to move the summer program to another building, and twenty-four wanted access to school libraries during the summer program.

During focus group sessions, parents who wanted to see enhancements to the summer programs usually sought out communication improvements. Earlier

communication before the programs started and more communication during the SSU program were common requests. Other parents wanted aftercare improvements to the childcare options. Some parents liked the Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives aftercare program on-site, but others did not. Some parents noted that the local YMCA provided a good option for aftercare, and they liked that PASD transports students to the YMCA from SSU. Parents were dissatisfied, however, that the YMCA weekly fee for SSU students transported to the YMCA for the afternoon only is the same as for children who attend the full day YMCA camp. A possible partnership between PASD and the YMCA may bear result in cost savings for participating SSU families.

Both in the online survey and focus group sessions the schedule of the SSU program was classified as both a positive and negative. Eight survey respondents noted that their children had too many other summer commitments to participate in SSU. Four survey respondents said their travel plans interfered. One focus group participant said the weeks of SSU, "conflicted with our family vacations [for two years in a row]." Some parents "like[d] that [SSU] is only part of the day and it is Monday through Thursday." Other parents said, "As working parents, it's tough to figure out four days a week of my daughter being finished by noon. I'd rather have the program be two weeks five days a week, done." Improvements to the scheduling of the programs are consequently unclear.

Appendix G

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Artifact 6

Communication Plan for PASD Elementary Summer Literacy Programs

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

The Communication Plan is designed to help students and their families make informed decisions regarding their participation in either of the summer literacy programs, Summer Stepping Up or Jumpstart, offered to elementary students by Phoenixville Area School District (PASD). Table 1, below, provides an overview of the Communication Plan, including type of communication, audience, medium, timeline, and responsible person(s). Below the table I provide an explication of the plan related to many of the associated ELP artifacts, which are noted throughout.

Communication Plan for PASD Summer Literacy Programs

Communication	**Audience**	**Medium**	**Timeline**	**Person Responsible**
SSU and Jumpstart invitation process, including responsibilities	Building level teachers and reading specialists	Email	January	District Curriculum & Instruction office
Invitation to Summer Stepping Up (SSU) and/or Jumpstart	Parents of qualifying students	Invitation letter (Artifact 8, Appendix I), infographic (Artifact 7, Appendix H), registration form sent prior to Parent-Teacher conferences, and in-person conversation during Parent-Teacher conferences	Early February; repeat letters sent home in April to families who have not yet signed up	Building level teachers and reading specialists

Invitation to presentation about SSU and Jumpstart	Parents of qualifying students	Flyer (Appendix G.A), posted on website/social media	May	Building level teachers and reading specialists
Benefits of participation in SSU and Jumpstart; program logistics	Parents of qualifying students	Presentation and infographic	May	District Curriculum & Instruction Office/ Building level reading specialists and other volunteers
Confirmation letter for SSU and/or Jumpstart	Parents of registered SSU and/or Jumpstart students	Letter	Ongoing throughout April and May as invitations are returned	District Curriculum & Instruction Office
Summer reading assignments and incentives for elementary students	Parents of all PASD students	Website information (Appendix G.B)	May-August	District Curriculum & Instruction Office
Book choice event	Parents of registered Jumpstart students	Skylert electronic messaging system	June	District Curriculum & Instruction Office/ Building level reading specialists and other volunteers
Bus information	Parents of registered SSU students	Postcard	June	District Transportation Office/District Curriculum & Instruction Office

Teacher name, contact information, and first day information	Parents of registered SSU students	Skylert electronic messaging system	June	District Curriculum & Instruction Office/SSU secretary
Welcome/introduction letter	Parents of registered SSU students, CC Supervisor of Summer Programs	Skylert electronic messaging system	June	SSU teachers
Individualized transition phone call	Parents of registered SSU students with IEPs or allergy concerns	Phone	June	SSU teachers
Biweekly updates, including past and upcoming classwork, suggestions for practice at home	Parents of registered SSU students, CC Supervisor of Summer Programs	Skylert electronic messaging system	June and July	SSU teachers
Book Swap & Chat event invitations	Parents of registered Jumpstart students	Flyer (Appendix G.C), Skylert electronic messaging system, posted to website/social media	June and July	District Curriculum & Instruction Office
Summer progress report	Parents of registered SSU students	Letter	Late July	SSU teachers

As part of this ELP I led PASD in revising the 2018-2019 elementary summer literacy communication plan to better meet parent needs as conveyed during the 2017-2018 school year. Jumpstart was a new program in 2017-18, one that was only introduced to families after the SSU invitations had been sent home. Parents were not clear about the differences between Jumpstart and Summer Stepping Up, causing confusion during the registration process. To more clearly inform families about their options, we have made several changes to communication. PASD also wanted to identify what worked throughout the process and ensure these practices were kept in place.

Last year, teachers began handing out invitations to Summer Stepping Up during spring Parent-Teacher conferences. This proved very effective in increasing the number of registered students, since parents could complete the registration form during conferences. This year, the practice will be modified. Summer Program invitation letters will be mailed by February 5th, prior to conferences (see Artifact 8, Appendix I). Invitations will present **both** the SSU and Jumpstart programs to families of each qualifying students. Consequently, parents will then be able to come to conferences with their questions. Teachers will be able to address parent questions in person, helping families to choose the option(s) that best meet their needs. To aid in communication, teachers will be provided with an infographic to share with families (see Artifact 7, Appendix H). The infographic will visually represent the benefits of both programs as well as the differences between them.

Families may return the registration form indicating their interest in either program during Parent-Teacher conferences or afterward, by sending the form into their child's teacher. As forms are returned throughout March, April and May, letters confirming students' participation will then be sent home by the District Office (see Artifact 8, Appendix I). Enclosed within the confirmation mailing will be a flyer invitation to an evening event to discuss the Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs (see Artifact 8, Appendix I). Students who were invited to the programs but are not yet registered will also be invited to this event via flyer, and it will be posted to the PASD website.

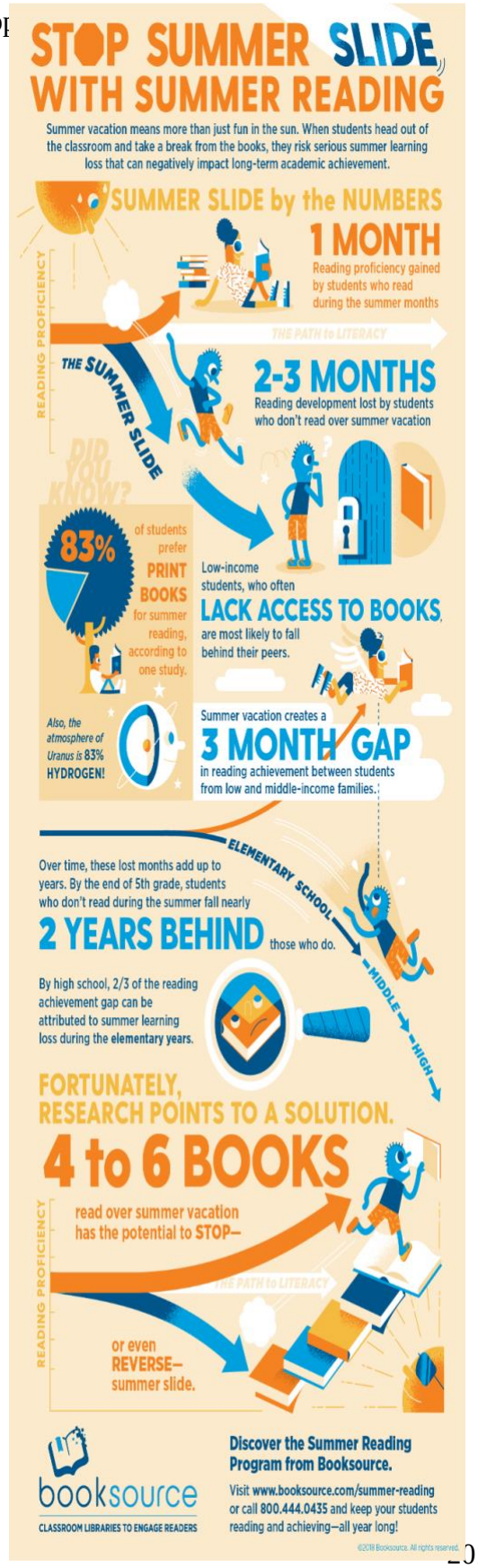
The evening presentation will take place in May. Its purpose is twofold: to inform families about program logistics and to encourage families who have not yet registered to do so. The PowerPoint presentation will include the infographic previously disseminated during Parent-Teacher conferences (see Artifact 9, Appendix J). Additional registration forms will be available so families can register for SSU and/or Jumpstart on site. Around this same time, the PASD summer reading assignment for all students will be posted to the website (see Appendix G.B).

The Jumpstart book choice event, held in early June, kicks off the Jumpstart program. Students are provided an opportunity to choose books they would like to take home to read over the summer months. To keep up momentum for reading, Jumpstart participants are then invited to two Book Swap and Chat events during June and July (see attached flyer in Appendix G.C).

SSU participants are informed of bussing and summer teacher information through postcard and the Skylert messaging system, respectively. During the program, teachers will send welcome letters and biweekly email updates to keep parents well informed. At the end of the program, teachers will complete reports of students' summer progress to send home with students.

Through this plan, parents of qualifying students will be informed about both SSU and Jumpstart in the winter, while still allowing for ongoing reminders and future conversations throughout the spring. With clear, regular communication, PASD hopes to enroll at least 90% of invited students in either SSU or Jumpstart. This will thereby provide book access in the summer months to all students reading below grade level, and supplemental instruction to those who desire it, with the end goal of raising reading achievement at the elementary level.

App



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Summer reading should be fun! That's why there's *Jumpstart* and *Summer Stepping Up*, two invitation-only programs for PASD elementary students!
Research shows how vital it is for children to stay engaged with reading over the summer months (see infographic to the left). Your family can choose between two programs to help your family with this important mission.

Option 1: **Jumpstart**, an at-home book access program
With your participation, your child will receive free books of his/her choosing, and you will receive material to help keep your child motivated to read all summer long at home!

Option 2: **Summer Stepping Up,** PASD's traditional summer school program
Taught by our PASD teachers, your child will receive literacy instruction, practice time, and books to keep him/her engaged in literacy activities. The program runs from June 24-July 18. Transportation and breakfast are provided.

Informational meeting **for all elementary summer programs:**
May 1st from 6-6:30 p.m.
PAELC/Manavon Building
RSVP @ https://bit.ly/2Kp7UiG

We hope you have an enjoyable summer reading to and with your child! Please use the resources posted here to help maintain strong literacy habits this summer, and don't forget to have your child complete the PASD Summer Reading Bingo Card! For more information, contact Jessica

Appendix G.B: PASD Summer Reading Assignment

Name:

PASD ELEMENTARY SUMMER READING BINGO

Directions: As you read this summer, complete 5 consecutive squares; or all 4 corners of this Bingo card. Cover all squares to be entered into a drawing for a grand prize! **You must read a different book for each square and include the title and author's last name.**

READ TO A STUFFED ANIMAL Title:	**READ WITH A FRIEND** Title: Author:	**READ A FAIRYTALE OR FOLKTALE** Title: Author:	**READ FOR 20 MINUTES** Title: Author:	**READ OUT LOUD** Title: Author:
READ IN A BLANKET FORT Title:	**READ FOR 60 MINUTES** Title: Author:	**READ IN THE DARK WITH A FLASHLIGHT** Title:	**READ TO A PARENT** Title: Author:	**READ A NON-FICTION BOOK** Title:
READ WHILE EATING ICE CREAM Title:	**READ OUTSIDE** Title: Author:	**FREE CHOICE** Title: Author:	**READ FOR 30 MINUTES** Title: Author:	**READ IN YOUR PAJAMAS** Title: Author:
READ TO A SIBLING OR PET Title: Author:	**READ A BOOK ABOUT ANIMALS** Title:	**READ FOR 10 MINUTES** Title:	**READ A MAGAZINE** Title: Author:	**READ UNDER THE TABLE** Title:

READ FOR 40 MINUTES	RE-READ A FAVORITE BOOK	READ ON A RAINY DAY	READ A MYSTERY BOOK	READ IN YOUR SWIMSUIT
Title: Author:	Title: Author:	Title: Author:	Title: Author:	Title: Author:

Appendix G.C.: Book Swap and Chat Flyer

Jumpstart Book Swap & Chat Events

New books! **New friends!**

Visit PASD's Jumpstart:

June 18th, 4-5 p.m. @ Phoenixville Public Library

July 19th, 4-5 p.m. @ Petrucci's

For more info:

Jessica Kilmetz

484-927-5071

kilmetzj@pasd.com

Appendix H

INFOGRAPHIC

Artifact 7

Infographic

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Overview

From parent survey and focus group results, as well as my informal conversations with teachers, it was clear that parents did not understand the differences between the 2018 Summer Stepping Up Program and the Jumpstart Program. Because of this, I modified my original plan as submitted in my Educational Leadership Portfolio Proposal. I had originally proposed the following:

> The infographic will include information from parent surveys, student growth data, and the literature review in order to provide a rationale for Jumpstart. This artifact will include a written document with detailed explanations of data represented in the infographic.

With the express need to compare the two programs, I instead created an infographic that presents parents with the two summer program options. As proposed, I included quotes from the parent survey and focus group data, as well as student growth data. I did not include detailed explanations of these data, as these were described in Artifact 5, the summary of parent survey and focus groups. The essential components of the programs, drawn from the literature review, are detailed for parents. This document will be included in a parent mailing with the invitation to Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart.

Phoenixville Area School District's Summer Literacy Programs: Which One is Right for You?

Option 1: Summer Stepping Up: June 24-July 18, 2019

In-Person Instruction

Monday-Thursday mornings we provide literacy instruction with PASD teachers, and weekly supplemental STEM classes.

Bussing & Breakfast

Free transportation to all students who normally ride the bus. Breakfast is free for all. PAPA aftercare available 'til 3 p.m.

Book Access

Students have daily access to reading material, & will be provided with two new books of their choice to continue reading after Summer Stepping Up is over!

84% of 2018 Stepping Up students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.

Parents say:

"He would've stayed all day. He was disappointed that it wasn't on Fridays and Saturdays too!"

Option 2: Jumpstart: June-August, 2019

Book Access

Research suggests that students who read avoid summer slide. Jumpstart will provide your child with the books (s)he needs to keep growing his/her literacy skills!

Flexible, At-Home

With Jumpstart, your child does not attend school - the program is flexible enough to work with any schedule! All that's required is regular reading.

Swap & Chat Events

Need new books or help to encourage summer reading? Want to chat with other readers? To keep motivation high, PASD hosts Book Swap & Chat events over the summer, with free water ice!

84% of 2018 Jumpstart students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.

Parents say:

"[My children] weren't behind when they came back to school."

For more information, contact Jessica Kilmetz, Supervisor of Summer Programs: 484-927-5071 or kilmetzj@pasd.com

Appendix I

PARENT MAILING

Artifact 8

Parent Mailing

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
386 CITY LINE AVENUE
PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460
484-927-5000
FAX 610-933-3189
BUSINESS OFFICE FAX
610-933-3707

Summer Literacy Program Invitation

February 14, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child,_____ , is invited to participate in the Summer Stepping Up and/or Jumpstart Program. He/she is eligible to participate in either program based on criteria that include current achievement levels in literacy which indicate the need for summer support. The Phoenixville Area School District and the Phoenixville Community Education Foundation (PCEF) have worked together to provide these summer literacy opportunities for eligible elementary students in grades K-5.

Option 1: Summer Stepping Up
Students who attend the Summer Stepping Up Program will receive intensive, small group literacy instruction by certified elementary teachers. This program includes bus transportation, breakfast, and is free of charge!

Dates:	June 24th – July 18th on Mondays through Thursdays only (school cancelled on July 4)
Times:	8:30am – 12:00pm
Location:	Early Learning Center (PAELC)/Manavon Elementary School

Option 2: Jumpstart
Students who participate in Jumpstart will receive free books of their choosing to read all summer long. Parents will receive informational materials to keep their children motivated to read at home throughout the summer months. Optional get-togethers will encourage reading and provide fresh texts to read.

Sincerely,

Jessica Kilmetz

Supervisor of Curriculum
(484) 927-5071
kilmetzj@pasd.com

INFORMATIONAL MEETING - Please RSVP electronically (https://bit.ly/2Kp7UiG) or via this form.

Child's Name: _____

Grade: _____

Parent's Name: _____

☐Yes, I will attend the informational session on May 1st from 6-6:30 p.m. at PAELC/Manavon.

Phoenixville Area School District's Summer Literacy Programs: Which One is Right for You?

Option 1: Summer Stepping Up: June 24-July 18, 2019

In-Person Instruction

Monday-Thursday mornings we provide literacy instruction with PASD teachers, and weekly supplemental STEM classes.

Bussing & Breakfast

Free transportation to all students who normally ride the bus. Breakfast is free for all. PAPA aftercare available 'til 3 p.m.

Book Access

Students have daily access to reading material, & will be provided with two new books of their choice to continue reading after Summer Stepping Up is over!

84% of 2018 Stepping Up students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.

Parents say:

"He would've stayed all day. He was disappointed that it wasn't on Fridays and Saturdays too!"

Option 2: Jumpstart: June-August, 2019

Book Access

Research suggests that students who read avoid summer slide. Jumpstart will provide your child with the books (s)he needs to keep growing his/her literacy skills!

Flexible, At-Home

With Jumpstart, your child does not attend school - the program is flexible enough to work with any schedule! All that's required is regular reading.

Swap & Chat Events

Need new books or help to encourage summer reading? Want to chat with other readers? To keep motivation high, PASD hosts Book Swap & Chat events over the summer, with free water ice!

84% of 2018 Jumpstart students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.

Parents say:

"[My children] weren't behind when they came back to school."

For more information, contact Jessica Kilmetz, Supervisor of Summer Programs: 484-927-5071 or kilmetzj@pasd.com

SAVE THE DATE

You're invited to

Elementary Summer Literacy Programs Parent Informational Meeting

PAELC/Manavon
6-6:30 p.m.

May 1, 2019

Option 1: Summer Stepping Up Program Registration Form Directions: Please return this form, or register online at https://bit.ly/2DPI7R5 by April 4.

Student Name _____
Date of Birth _____ Grade _____
School _____.
_____
_____

Home Address _____
_____
Parent/Guardian Name _____
Phone _____ Email _____

(Other)

Allergies or Health Information _____
_____

Transportation - ARRIVAL (**8:30 am**)

- ☐ My child will walk to PAELC/Manavon.
- ☐ I will drop off my child at PAELC/Manavon.
- ☐ My child will need bus transportation to PAELC/Manavon in the morning. Pick-up location (*select one*):
  - ☐**Home**
  - ☐**Childcare:**

Emergency Contact:
Name #1 _____
Phone _____
Relationship_____
Name #2 _____
Phone _____
Relationship_____

Transportation - DISMISSAL (**12:00 pm**)

- ☐ My child will attend the PAPA aftercare until 3 p.m.
- ☐ My child will walk home from PAELC/Manavon at 12 p.m.
- ☐ I will pick up my child from PAELC/Manavon promptly at 12 p.m.
- ☐ My child will need bus transportation at 12 p.m. Drop-off location (*select one*):
  - ☐**Home**
  - ☐**Childcare:** _____

☐ I give permission for my child to be picked up from Phoenixville Area School District Summer Program by the following individuals:

Please print the names of those individuals who have your permission to pick up your child. When picking up a child, be prepared to show photo identification, such as a driver's license.

Name: _____**Phone:** _____

Name: _____**Phone:** _____

I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in all activities related to the Summer Stepping Up Program to be held at Early Learning Center/Manavon Elementary School from June 24th – July 18th on Mondays through Thursdays from 8:30am – 12:00pm. I understand that students will receive instruction by certified elementary teachers in the Summer Stepping Up Program.

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature **Date**

PAPA: Optional After-Care Program for Summer Stepping Up Students in Grades 2-5

In addition to the Summer Stepping Up Program, PAPA offers a summer program from 12:00-3:00 p.m. This program is open to students in grades 2-5 only.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no bus transportation home at 3:00 if your child participates.

- Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (PAPA) runs an aftercare program from 12-3 p.m. at Manavon.
- This program is not run by Phoenixville Area School District.
- It is free of charge to the first 50 responders on a first-come, first served basis. PAPA will send registration information to you separately.
- Free lunch is provided to participants.
- **Bus transportation will not be available at 3:00 pm, so students must be picked up at that time.**
- PAPA's program is for students who have completed grades 2-5 only.
- Questions? Contact: Alexis Boswell – papa19460@gmail.com – 610-983-4110

☐ Yes, I would like for my child to attend PAPA's summer program from 12:00-3:00 p.m. daily.
☐ I, or one of my designees, will pick up my child at 3:00 each day.

Student Name_____
Grade_____
Parent/Guardian Name _____
Phone _____ Cell _____ Other_____

Option 2: Jumpstart Program Registration Form

Directions: Please return this form, or register online at https://bit.ly/2DPI7R5 by April 4.

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____ School _____	Home Address _____ _____ Parent/Guardian Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____ (Other)

I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in the Jumpstart book access program. I understand that students will receive free books, and parents will receive informational materials to help motivate their children to read at home all summer long. I will attend the informational meeting on May 1st from 6-6:30 pm at PAELC/Manavon.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature **Date**

PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
386 CITY LINE AVENUE
PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460
484-927-5000
FAX 610-933-3189
BUSINESS OFFICE FAX
610-933-3707

Elementary Summer Stepping Up Confirmation Letter

April 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are looking forward to your child, _____, attending the 2019 Summer Stepping Up program.

Dates: June 24th – July 18th on Mondays through Thursdays ONLY (no class on July 4)

There is NO Summer Program and NO bus transportation on Fridays.

Times: 8:30am – 12:00pm
Location: Early Learning Center (PAELC)/Manavon Elementary School

Important Notes:

- Students will have a snack break, so you may send a snack and water bottle.
- **If your child is being picked-up for dismissal**, your child must be picked-up **promptly at 12:00pm**. If you registered your child to be picked-up at dismissal time, you will receive a sign (*enclosed with this letter*) to display on the passenger side of your vehicle's dashboard. **Enter PAELC/Manavon from Pothouse Road at 12:00. Drive to the "Parent Pick-up Area" at the front of the building.** A staff member will bring your child to the vehicle.
- **If your child rides the bus at dismissal**, you will receive information from Transportation before the start of the program.

- Questions about **Stepping Up/ELD? Jessica Kilmetz: kilmetzj@pasd.com or 484-927-5071**
- Questions about **PAPA? Alexis Boswell**: papa19460@gmail.com or **610-983-4110**
- Questions about **Bus Transportation? Anne Wince at wincea@pasd.com** or **484-927-5026**

Sincerely,

Jessica Kilmetz
Supervisor of Curriculum

Appendix J

PARENT PRESENTATION

Artifact 9

Parent Presentation

Jessica Kilmetz

Educational Leadership Portfolio

University of Delaware

Overview

The parent presentation, to be initially delivered early in May 2019, explains the Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart programs to Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) parents. The PowerPoint slides and handouts follow. Handouts include the following and will be available in hard copy for all parents in attendance (attached below):

- Literacy Websites for Kids handout,
- Summer Reading Calendar,
- Reading charts,
- Bookmarks, and
- PASD Summer Reading Assignment, including Bingo Board and suggested reading lists

PowerPoint Presentation

Parent Informational Session

Phoenixville Area School District
Elementary Literacy Programs
Summer 2019

Stop Summer Slide!

A student can lose 2-3 months of reading progress in one summer without reading.

By 5th grade, he or she could be up to two years behind due to missed reading practice during the summer months.

In high school, 2/3 of his or her achievement gap can be attributed to summer learning loss from the elementary years.

By reading 4-6 books read over summer vacation that student has the ability to **STOP**, or even reverse, summer slide!

Maintaining Literacy Habits

KEEP READING FUN AND ENGAGING!

- Use a reading calendar
- Use a reading log and reward your child when he or she meets goals
- Read in different places, or listen to audiobooks in the car
- Interact with your child
  - Read to and with him/her, or listen to him/her read
  - Talk about the text

We have resource handouts to help!

2 Options Exist for Your Child this Summer

- Summer Stepping Up Program
- Jumpstart Book Access Program

Sign up today!

Book Exchange/ Chat Meeting Dates

Stop by your school building any time this summer to grab new books!

Jumpstart Book Swap & Chat Events

New books! New friends!

Visit PASD's Jumpstart:
June 18th, 4-5 p.m. @ Phoenixville Public Library
July 19th, 4-5 p.m. @ Petrucci's

For more info:
Jessica Kilmetz
484-927-5071
kilmetzj@pasd.com

Incentives

In addition to the reading incentives you use at home:

- Complete your PASD Bingo form
  - Top 30 readers from Jumpstart will earn a pizza party
  - Eligible for school-based prizes
- Barnes & Noble
  - Free book in exchange for your log
- Public library
  - Summer reading program events
  - Possible free ticket to the Renaissance Faire

Resources

As part of our Summer Reading Program, we encourage you to check out the websites on the handout for fun ways to include reading and writing in your child's summer routine.

Check out fun websites such as:

- http://www.starfall.com
- http://www.funbrain.com

Results

- 84% of students in PASD summer literacy programs increased or maintained their reading levels during the summer months. Results were similar for both Summer Stepping Up and Jumpstart.
- Students in either Jumpstart or Summer Stepping Up have almost a 20% greater chance of maintaining or increasing reading levels over the summer.
- Sign up your child(ren) for Summer Stepping Up and/or Jumpstart today!

Contact Information

Jessica Kilmetz
Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction
484-927-5071
kilmetzj@pasd.com

Visit our website: pasd.com

Literacy Websites for Kids

Games

- http://www.starfall.com/
  Starfall.com is a free game to teach children to read with phonics.
- http://www.funbrain.com/brain/ReadingBrain/ReadingBrain.html
  Funbrain has free educational math and literacy games, online books, and comics for kids age preschool through grade 8. Plus, kids can read a variety of popular books and comics on the site, including Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Amelia Writes Again, and Brewster Rocket.
- http://www.jumpstart.com/
  JumpStart World of Learning is an educational software that transforms math, reading and critical thinking lessons into adventures for early elementary students.
- http://abcya.com
  ABCYa is a free educational kids' website with computer games and activities for elementary students. All children's educational computer activities were created or approved by certified school teachers. Games are free and interactive.

Online Reading Materials

- http://teacher.scholastic.com/clifford1/
  Interactive Storybooks! Games and stories for early readers.
- http://storynory.com/
  Storynory has published a new audio story every week since November 2005.
- https://www.highlightskids.com/
  The Highlights kids magazine in an online website form with stories, jokes, kids news, current events, and reading and language arts games.
- http://www.storylineonline.net/
  Developed by The Screen Actors Guild Foundation, Storyline Online features actors and actresses reading some of their favorite children's books. Each story comes with a free Activity Guide and can be viewed on YouTube or SchoolTube.
- https://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/online-storytime/_/N-ryw
  From The Kissing Hand read by author Audrey Wood to Pinkalicious read by Victoria Kann, Barnes and Noble's Online Storytime has popular read alouds.
- http://tumblebooks.com/
  Children can follow along as text is read them to help improve comprehension and fluency. Choose from picture books to chapter books. (Must link to Chester County Library)

Summer Reading Calendar

Here are some ideas to help keep reading habits on track this summer!

JUNE • 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3	4	5	6	7 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL	8
9	10 Read outside	11 Read to a grandparent or family friend	12 Read in pajamas	13 Read a fairy tale	14 Read for 10 minutes	15
16 Read a text about a father	17 Read a cookbook	18 Meet us at Phoenixville Public Library from 4-5 p.m.	19 Read to a friend	20 Read in a swimsuit	21 Read for 15 minutes	22
23	24 Read a mystery	25 Read to a pet or sibling	26 Read during breakfast	27 Read a comic book or graphic novel	28 Read for 20 minutes	29
30						

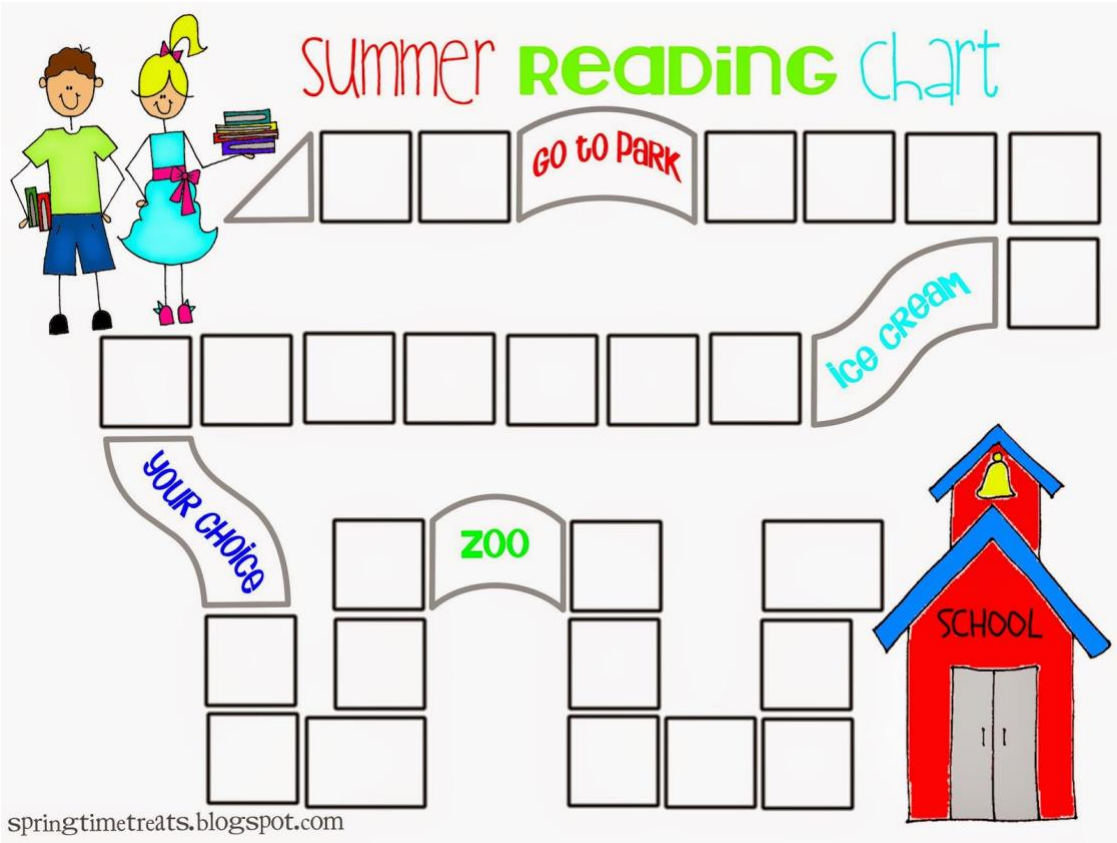
JULY • 2019

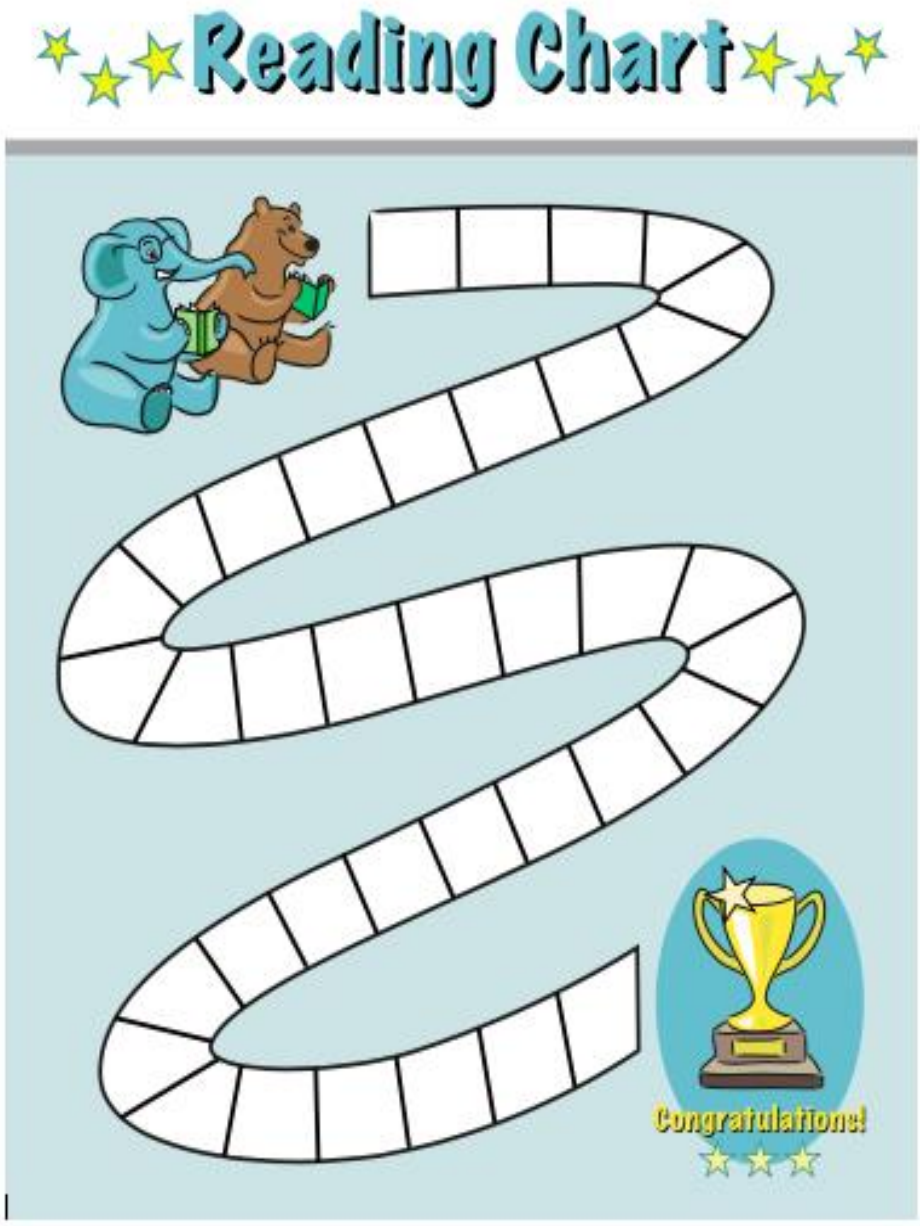
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Read in bed	2 Read to a stuffed animal	3 Read in the dark with a flashlight	4 Independence Day	5 Read a magazine	6
7	8 Read in a fort or under the table	9 Read in a fort or under the table	10 Read and make a recipe	11 Read an online article	12 Read for 25 minutes	13
14	15 Read to a sibling or friend	16 Read in the car	17 Read out loud	18 Read on an electronic device	19 Come to Petrucci's Book Swap & Chat for water ice, friends, and books! 4-5 p.m.	20
21	22 Read by or in a tree	23 Read game directions; then play	24 Read about an animal	25 Read a fantasy or science fiction book	26 Read for 30 minutes	27
28	29 Read by the water	30 Read to a (grand) parent	31 Reread a favorite book, even if it's super easy			

AUGUST • 2019

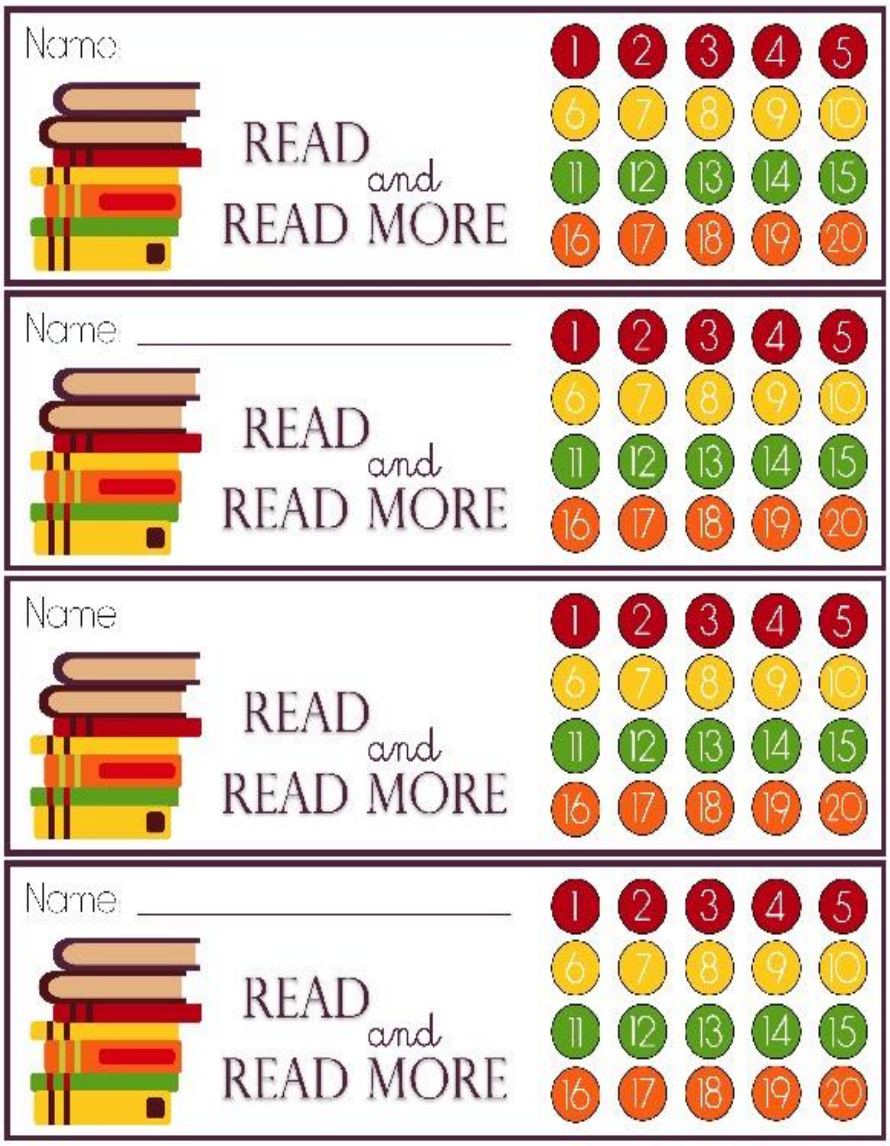
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Read a really hard book	2 Read for 35 minutes	3
4	5 Read an article online	6 Read a graphic novel or comic book	7 Whisper read	8 Read at the library	9 Read about a sport; then play	10
11	12 Read a funny book	13 Read on the couch	14 Read while eating a tasty snack	15 Read realistic fiction	16 Fill in your Summer Reading Bingo Board	17
18	19 Read the back of a cereal box	20 Write your own short story	21 Read historical fiction or nonfiction	22 Read a news story	23 Read in the shade outside	24
25	26 First day of school! Welcome back!	27	28	29	30	

Reading Charts




Reading Chart
Congratulations!

Reading Bookmarks



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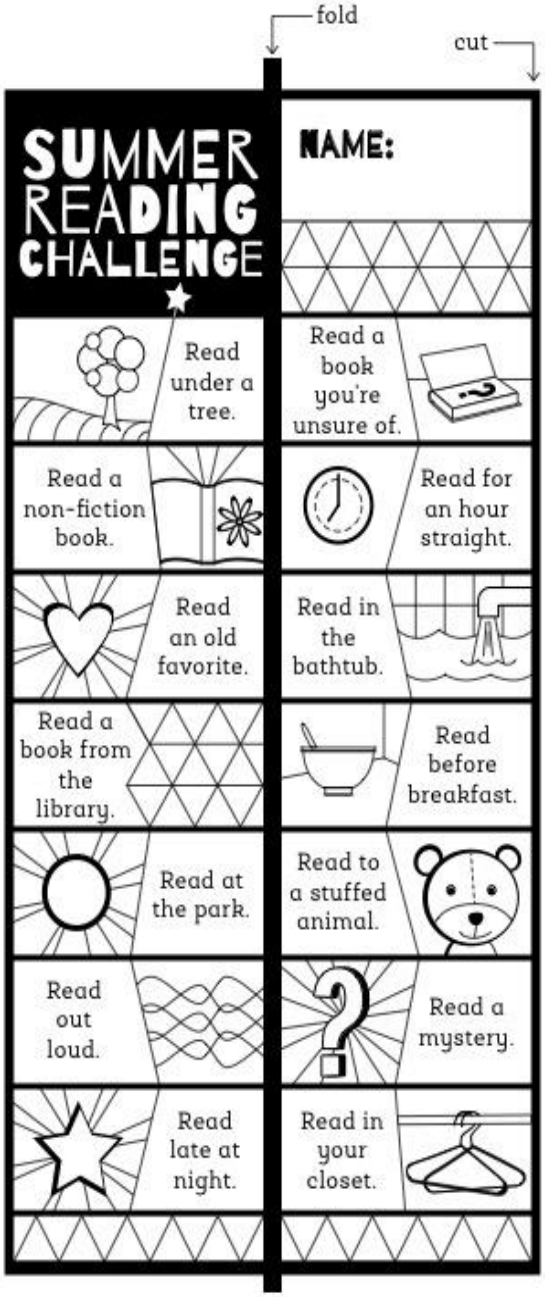
WWW.OVERTHEBIGMOON.COM

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE BOOKMARK COLORING

WE ARE TEACHERS



PASD Summer Reading Assignment and Suggested Reading Lists

Name: _____

PASD ELEMENTARY SUMMER READING BINGO

Directions: As you read this summer, complete 5 consecutive squares; or all 4 corners of this Bingo card. Cover all squares to be entered into a drawing for a grand prize! **You must read a different book for each square and include the title and author's last name.**

READ TO A STUFFED ANIMAL Title: Author:	READ WITH A FRIEND Title: Author:	READ A FAIRYTALE OR FOLKTALE Title: Author:	READ FOR 20 MINUTES Title: Author:	READ OUT LOUD Title: Author:
READ IN A BLANKET FORT Title: Author:	READ FOR 60 MINUTES Title: Author:	READ IN THE DARK WITH A FLASHLIGHT Title: Author:	READ TO A PARENT Title: Author:	READ A NON-FICTION BOOK Title: Author:
READ WHILE EATING ICE CREAM Title: Author:	READ OUTSIDE Title: Author:	FREE CHOICE Title: Author:	READ FOR 30 MINUTES Title: Author:	READ IN YOUR PAJAMAS Title: Author:
READ TO A SIBLING OR PET Title: Author:	READ A BOOK ABOUT ANIMALS Title: Author:	READ FOR 10 MINUTES Title: Author:	READ A MAGAZINE Title: Author:	READ UNDER THE TABLE Title: Author:
READ FOR 40 MINUTES Title: Author:	RE-READ A FAVORITE BOOK Title: Author:	READ ON A RAINY DAY Title: Author:	READ A MYSTERY BOOK Title: Author:	READ IN YOUR SWIMSUIT Title: Author:

Return to your teacher by August 30th, 2019.

Phoenixville Area School District
Kindergarten Suggested Summer Reading List

Note: The following books are only suggestions. Please feel free to add any books that are appropriate for your reader. The staff in the children's area of the public library will also have many wonderful suggestions for you. Happy reading!

Research has shown that the single greatest factor in predicting reading success is whether a child is read to when young. Here are some titles to get you started!

Books About Me
- *I Like Me!* by Nancy L. Carlson
- *I Like to Be Little* by Charlotte Zolotow
- *The Mixed-Up Chameleon* by Eric Carle
- *My Five Senses* by Aliki
- *Owen* by Kevin Henkes
- *When I Get Bigger* by Mercer Mayer

Family Stories
- Just Me Books by Mercer Mayer
- *Mama Do You Love Me?* by Barbara M. Joosse

Predictable Books
(Stories with a pattern using rhyme or rhythm.)
- *Curious George* by H. A. Rey
- *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
- *The Gingerbread Boy* by Paul Galdone
- *Gregory the Terrible Eater* by Mitchell Sharmat
- *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown
- *Millions of Cats* by Wanda Gag
- *What's in Fox's Sack?* by Paul Galdone

Beginning, Middle, and End Concept
- *Bony-Legs* by Joanna Cole
- *A Camping Spree with Mr. Magee* by Chris Van Dusen
- *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch
- *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins
- *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown

Color and Counting Books
- *Each Orange Had Eight Slices: A Counting Book* by Paul Giganti Jr.
- *Fish Eyes: A Book You Can Count On* by Lois Ehlert
- *Frog Counts to Ten* by John Lichter
- *Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni
- *Is it Red? Is it Yellow? Is it Blue?* by Tana Hoban
- *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert
- *Ten Bears in My Bed: A Goodnight Countdown* by Stanley Mack
- *Ten Little Fish* by Audrey Wood
- *26 Letters and 99 Cents* by Tana Hoban

Caldecott Winners and Honor Books
- *Color Zoo* by Lois Ehlert
- *Madeline* by Ludwig Bemelmans
- *More, More, More Said the Baby* by Vera B. Williams
- *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathman
- *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni
- *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens

Mother Goose and Nursery Rhymes
- *James Marshall's Mother Goose* by James Marshall
- *My Very First Mother Goose* by Iona Opie and Rosemary Wells
- *Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose* by Tomie dePaola

Folktales and Fairy Tales
- *Chicken Little* by Steven Kellogg
- *Cinderella* by Marcia Brown
- *The Hare and the Tortoise* by Brian Wildsmith
- *Henny Penny* by H. Werner Zimmermann
- *The Little Red Hen* by Margot Zemach
- *The Three Bears* by Paul Galdone
- *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* by Peter Christen Asbjornsen
- *Three Little Pigs* by James Marshall
- *The Three Little Pigs* by Rodney Peppe
- *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen

Stories in Rhyme
- *All the Colors of the Earth* by Sheila Hamanaka
- *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* by Verna Aardema
- *Miss Spider's Tea Party* by David Kirk

Friends
- *Benjamin and Tulip* by Rosemary Wells
- *We Are Best Friends* by Aliki
- *Who Will Be My Friends?* by Syd Hoff

Fabulous Science Books
- *Cars and How they Go* by Joanna Cole
- *Eyewitness Juniors Amazing Frogs and Toads* by Barry Clarke
- *Magic School Bus On the Ocean Floor* by Joanna Cole

Non-Fiction
- *Time for Kids Non-fiction Readers*
- *Pebble Plus – Capstone Press Publishing*
- *National Geographic Kids Readers*

Phoenixville Area School District
First Grade Suggested Summer Reading List

Note: The following books are only suggestions. Please feel free to add any books that are appropriate for your reader. The staff in the children's area of the public library will also have many wonderful suggestions for you. Happy reading!

Research has shown that the single greatest factor in predicting reading success is whether a child is read to when young. Here are some titles to get you started! Please note that the reading level of the books suggested varies. Have your child read a page of the book aloud to you to see if it is a good fit. If they struggle with more than a few words on the page, it is probably too difficult, but the book would still be a great book to read aloud to your child.

Fun Books to Share

- *And I Mean It, Stanley* by Crosby Bonsall
- Arthur series by Marc Brown
- *A Bad Case of the Stripes* by David Shannon
- Berenstain Bear series by Jan and Stan Berenstain
- Clifford series by Norman Bridwell
- *Dinosaur Time* by Peggy Parish
- *The Eye Book* by Theo LeSieg
- Franklin series by Paulette Bourgeois
- Froggy series by Jonathan London
- *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss
- *Hi! Fly Guy* by Tedd Arnold
- *How I Became a Pirate* by Melinda Long
- Junie B. Jones series by Barbara Park
- Little Critter series by Mercer Mayer
- *Morris the Mouse* by Bernard Wiseman
- Nate the Great series by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat
- *Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister
- *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carle

Learning to Read Series

- Hello Reader!
- I Can Read Books
- Puffin Easy-to-Read
- Step Into Reading Levels 1–4

Alphabet Books

- *Animalia* by Graeme Base
- *The Icky Bug Alphabet Book* by Jerry Pallotta
- *Z Was Zapped* by Chris Van Allsburg

Math in Picture Books

- *How Much Is a Million?* by David M. Schwartz
- *One Potato: A Counting Book of Potato Prints* by Diana Pomeroy
- *Ten Sly Piranhas: A Counting Story in Reverse, (A Tale of Wickedness—and Worse!)* by William Wise
- *When Sheep Cannot Sleep* by Satoshi Kitamura

Classics to Read to a First Grader

- *Leo the Late Bloomer* by Robert Kraus
- *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton
- *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey
- *When Will I Read?* by Miriam Cohen

Caldecott Awards and Honor Books

- *Alphabet City* by Stephen Johnson
- *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions* by Margaret Musgrove
- *The Hello, Goodbye Window* by Norton Juster and Chris Raschka
- *Owen* by Kevin Henkes
- *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg
- *A Story, A Story* by Gail E. Haley

Non-Fiction

- *Time for Kids Non-fiction Readers*
- *Pebble Plus – Capstone Press Publishing*
- *National Geographic Kids Readers*

Enjoy!

Phoenixville Area School District
Second & Third Grade Suggested Summer Reading List

Note: The following books are only suggestions. Please feel free to add any books that are appropriate for your reader. The staff in the children's area of the public library will also have many wonderful suggestions for you. Happy reading!

Nonfiction Authors

- Gail Gibbons
- Steve Jenkins
- Bobbie Kalman
- Seymour Simon
- Judith St. George

Nonfiction Series

- Eyewitness Readers
- Magic School Bus
- Magic Tree House Fact Trackers
- National Geographic Kids
- Nature's Children
- True or False
- Who Would Win
- What Was?
- Where Is?
- Who Was?
- Time for Kids
- True Books
- You Choose

Graphic Novel Series

- Babymouse
- The Bad Guys
- Bone
- The Dodgeball Chronicles
- Comics Squad
- Dog Man
- Dragonbreath
- Press Start!
- Secret Coders
- Squish
- Toon Books

Fiction Authors

- Tedd Arnold
- Jan Brett
- Eric Carle
- Beverly Cleary
- Andrew Clements
- Doreen Cronin
- Roald Dahl
- Kate DiCamillo
- Dan Gutman
- Kevin Henkes
- Jake Maddox
- Laura Numeroff
- Dav Pilkey
- Patricia Polacco
- Cynthia Rylant
- Dr. Seuss
- David Shannon
- Mo Willems

Fiction Series

- According to Humphrey
- Amelia Bedelia
- Bad Kitty
- Black Lagoon Adventures
- Captain Awesome
- Captain Underpants
- Chicken Squad
- Diary of a Wimpy Kid
- Dork Diaries
- Flat Stanley
- Fly Guy
- Frank Einstein
- Geronimo/Thea Stilton
- Goosebumps
- I Survived
- Ivy & Bean
- Judy Moody
- Junie B. Jones
- Lemonade War
- Magic Tree House
- Mercy Watson
- Mermaid Tales
- My Weird School
- Nancy Drew and the Crew Clue
- Owl Diaries
- Pete the Cat
- Princess in Black
- Puppy Place
- Rainbow Magic Fairies
- Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot
- Roscoe Riley Rules
- Rotten School
- Secrets of Droon
- Stink

Phoenixville Area School District
Fourth & Fifth Grade Suggested Summer Reading List

Note: The following books are only suggestions. Please feel free to add any books that are appropriate for your reader. The staff in the children's area of the public library will also have many wonderful suggestions for you. Happy reading!

Graphic Novels

Bad Island by Doug TenNapel

Invisible Emmie by Terri Libenson

Giants Beware! by Jorge Aguirre

El Deafo by Cece Bell

Captain Raptor and the Space Pirates by Kevin O'Malley

Hilo: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth by Judd Winick

The Babysitters Club - Ann M Martin and Raina Telgemeier

Zeus: King of the Gods by George O'Connor

Smile, Drama, Ghosts by Raina Telgemeier

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson

Secret Hero Series by Derek Fridolfs and Dustin Nguyen

Fantasy

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

The Last Kids on Earth by Max Brallier

The Iron Trial by Holly Black

Snow and Rose by Emily Winfield Martin

The Wild Robot by Peter Brown

Where the Mountain Meets the Moon by Grace Lin

Gregor the Overlander by Suzanne Collins

Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH by Robert O'Brian

The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynn Reid Banks

Word of Mouse by James Patterson

Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt*

Realistic

Soar by Joan Bauer

Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

Hello, Universe by Erin Entrada Kelly

Wonder by R.J. Palacio*

Fast Break by Mike Lupica

Pottymouth and Stupid by James Patterson

Fish in a Tree by Linda Mullaly Hunt

How to Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell

Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Exotic Farmer by Kelly Jones

Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan

Wish by Barbara O'Connor

Full of Beans by Jennifer L. Holm

The Friendship Experiment by Erin Teagan

Slacker by Gordon Korman

Horror

100 Cupboards by N.D. Wilson

Took: A Ghost Story by Mary Downing Hahn

City of the Dead by Tony Abbott

Hook moon night : spooky tales from the Georgia Mountains by Faye Gibbons

Nightmares! : The Sleepwalker Tonic by Jason Segel, Kirsten Miller

Mystery

Book Scavenger by Jennifer Buxbaum

13 Treasures by Michelle Harrison

Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer by John Grisham

Pieces and players by Blue Balliett

The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd

Science Fiction

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle*

Spaceheads by Jon Scieszka

Jedi Academy by Jeffrey Brown

The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trent Lee Stewart

The Time Hackers by Gary Paulsen
Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix

STAR WARS Science #1: Emergency in Escape Pod Four by Jude Watson , K. D. Burkett

Adventure Loot by Jude Watson Binny for Short by Hilary McKay Project Blastoff by Mark Kelly The 13-Story Treehouse by Andy Griffiths My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George Hatchet by Gary Paulsen Desert Survivor's Guide By Rory Storm	**Non-Fiction** Orangutan Orphanage by Suzi Eszterhas Girls Who Code by Reshma Saujani Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11 by Brian Floca Amazing Leonardo da Vinci Inventions You Can Build Yourself by Maxine Anderson Flying Frogs and Walking Fish by Steve Jenkins Shark Week by Martha Brockenbrough 125 Cool Inventions by National Geographic for Kids	**Authors** Jennifer L. Holm - (Fourteenth Goldfish, Turtle in Paradise) Kwame Alexander - (The Crossover, Booked) Rick Riordan - (Percy Jackson and Magnus Chase series) Jason Reynolds - (Track Book Series) National Geographic for Kids Judy Blume (Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing) Jerry Spinelli (Fourth Grade Rats, Maniac Magee) Beverly Cleary (Ramona series) Andrew Clements (Frindle, About Average)
Biography Hope Solo: My Story by Hope Solo The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard by Tim Howard The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau by Dan Yaccarino Basketball Belles: How Two Teams and One Scrappy Player Put Women's Hoops on the Map by Sue Macy. Bad News for Outlaws Vaunda Michaux Nelson A Spy called James: True Story of James Lafayette by Anne Rockwell Fascinating: the Life of Leonard Nimoy by Richard Michaelson Some Writer!: the Story of E.B. White by Melissa Sweet	**Historical** Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson Echo by Pam Muñoz Ryan The War that Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg by W.R. Philbrick Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick* In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Bao Lord	**Books in a Series** 39 Clues- various authors A Series of Unfortunate Events- Lemony Snicket Lego Ninja Go! Pony Pals by Jeanne Betancourt Rainbow Magic by Daisy Meadows The Babysitters Club- Ann M Martin Who Would Win- Jerry Pallotta True or False by Scholastic Animal Ark by Ben Baglio Goosebumps by R.L. Stine The Secrets of Droon by Tony Abbott Who is/ Who Was_____- various biographies- published by Penguin Group I Survived - Lauren Tarshis

*Books that are also movies

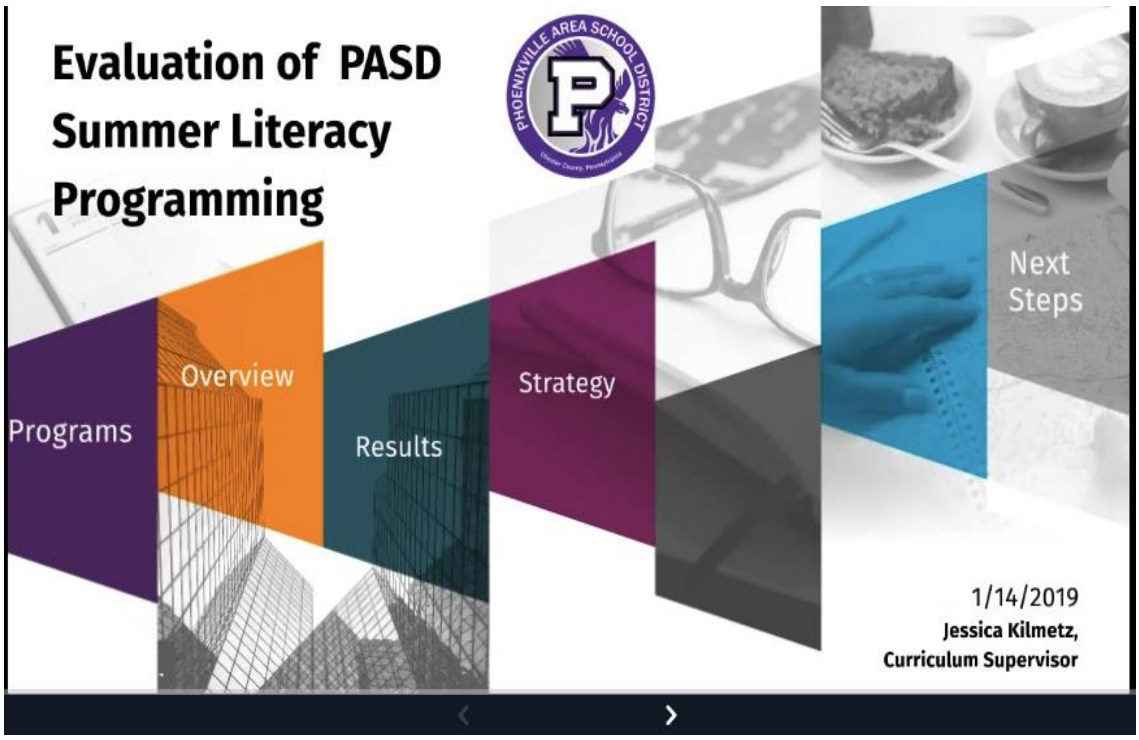
Appendix K

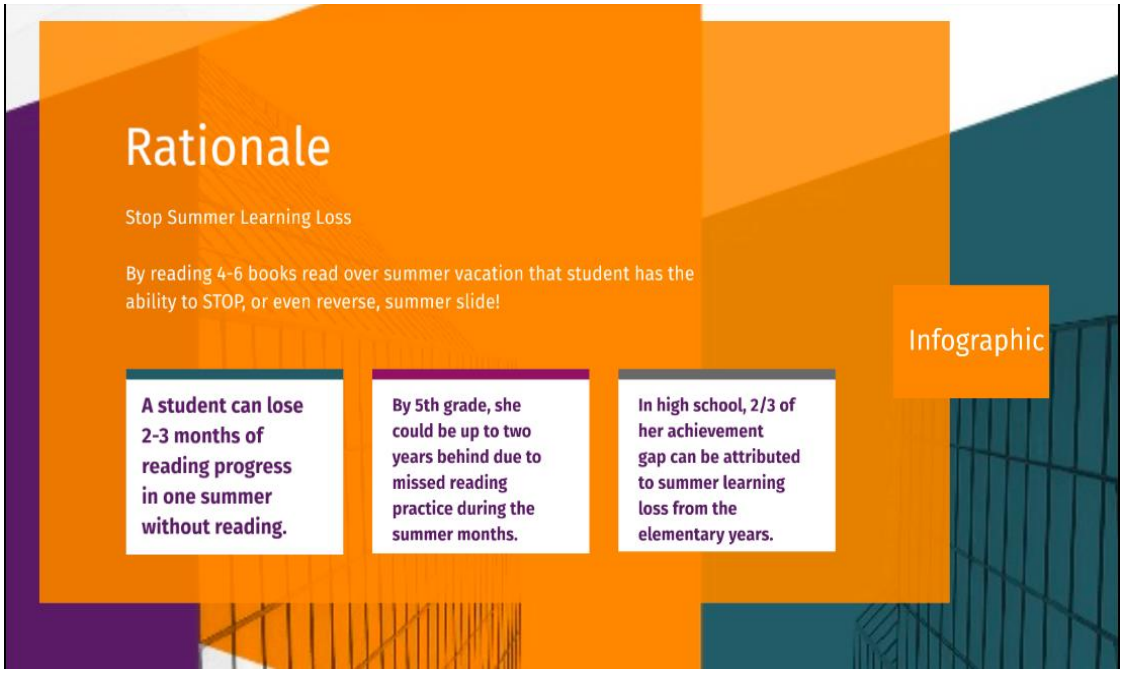
EVALUATION

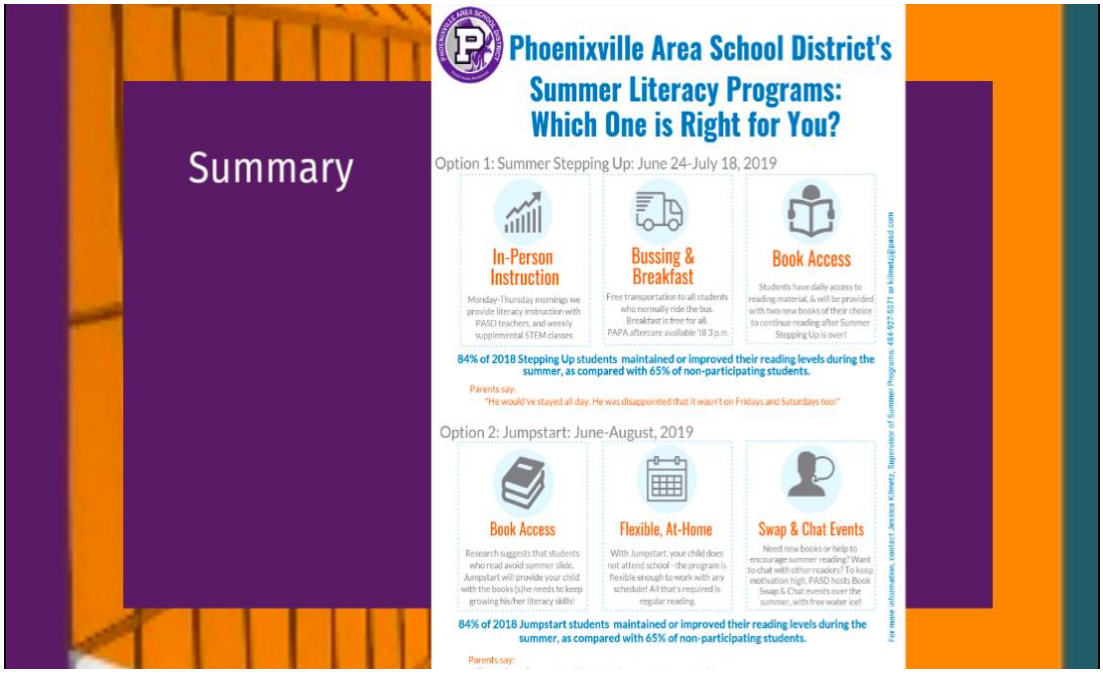
This presentation was created to share with the superintendent of Phoenixville Area School District (PASD). In the presentation I provide an evaluation of the PASD summer programs, including an overview, student achievement results, strategy for the future, and next steps. The presentation is designed to be a "bird's eye" summary, so as to not burden the audience with too many unnecessary details. The presentation was a necessary component of this ELP because clear communication about the results of the summer programs will help to ensure these evidence-based programs are funded in the summers to come. Static versions of the slides and the link to the presentation are provided below.

Prezi presentation:
https://prezi.com/view/V4jP3dM1FBgeCGDbdNyH/

Elementary Summer Literacy Programs
Stepping Up
Jumpstart
Summary


Evaluation of PASD Summer Literacy Programming
PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Programs
Overview
Results
Strategy
Next Steps
1/14/2019
Jessica Kilmetz,
Curriculum Supervisor

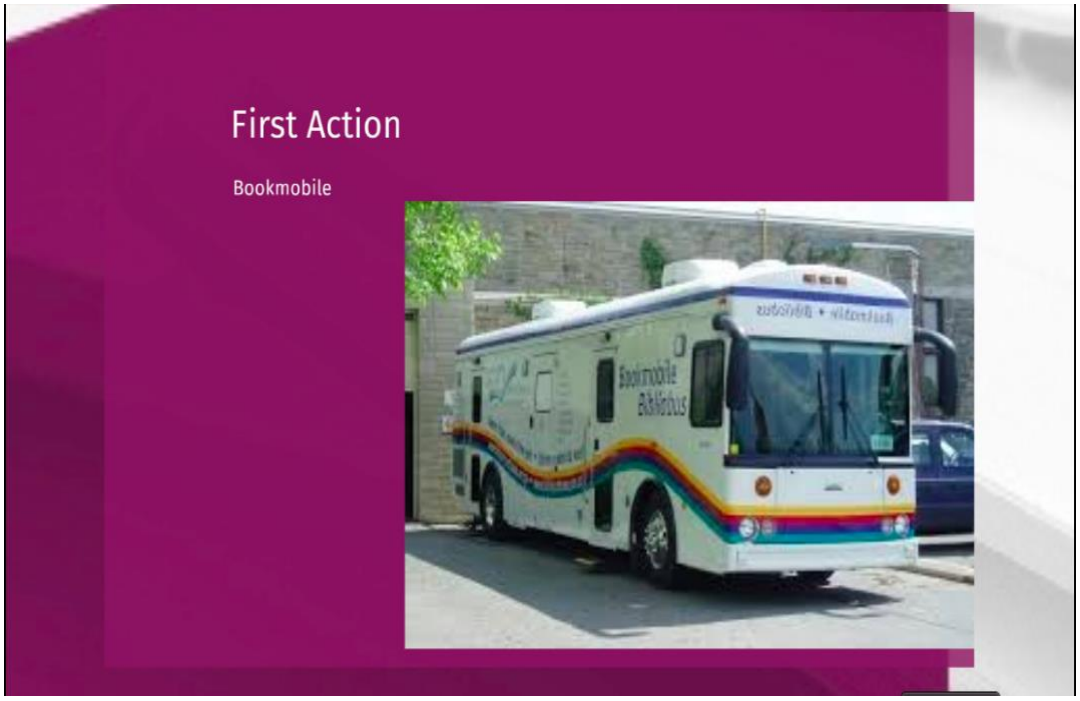

Rationale
Stop Summer Learning Loss
By reading 4-6 books read over summer vacation that student has the ability to STOP, or even reverse, summer slide!
Infographic
A student can lose 2-3 months of reading progress in one summer without reading.
By 5th grade, she could be up to two years behind due to missed reading practice during the summer months.
In high school, 2/3 of her achievement gap can be attributed to summer learning loss from the elementary years.


Summary
Phoenixville Area School District's
Summer Literacy Programs:
Which One is Right for You?
Option 1: Summer Stepping Up: June 24-July 18, 2019
In-Person Instruction
Monday-Thursday mornings we provide literacy instruction with PASD teachers, and weekly supplemental STEM classes.
Bussing & Breakfast
Free transportation to all students who normally ride the bus. Breakfast is free for all. PAPA aftercare available 'til 3 p.m.
Book Access
Students have daily access to reading material, & will be provided with two new books of their choice to continue reading after Summer Stepping Up is over!
84% of 2018 Stepping Up students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.
Parents say:
"He would've stayed all day. He was disappointed that it wasn't on Fridays and Saturdays too!"
Option 2: Jumpstart: June-August, 2019
Book Access
Research suggests that students who read avoid summer slide. Jumpstart will provide your child with the books (s)he needs to keep growing his/her literacy skills!
Flexible, At-Home
With Jumpstart, your child does not attend school - the program is flexible enough to work with any schedule! All that's required is regular reading.
Swap & Chat Events
Need new books or help to encourage summer reading? Want to chat with other readers? To keep motivation high, PASD hosts Book Swap & Chat events over the summer, with free water ice!
84% of 2018 Jumpstart students maintained or improved their reading levels during the summer, as compared with 65% of non-participating students.
Parents say:
For more information, contact Jessica Kimelz, Supervisor of Summer Programs: 484-927-5571 or kimelzj@pasd.com

2018 Results

	Maintained reading level	Increased reading level	Maintained or increased reading level	Total students with Spring and Fall data	% maintained or increased reading level
Nonparticipating students	77	19	96	147	65.3%
Jumpstart students	33	13	46	55	83.6%
Stepping Up students	128	43	171	204	83.8%

Strategy
1
2
3
4
5
6

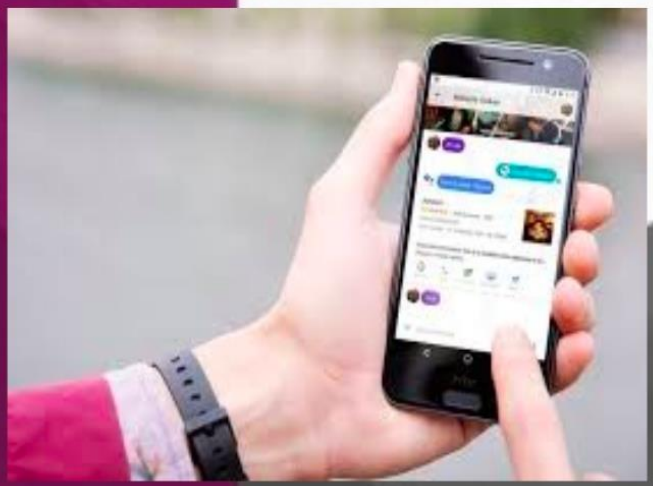

First Action
Bookmobile

Second Action

Revamped and expanded aftercare options

Third Action

Improved communication



Fourth Action

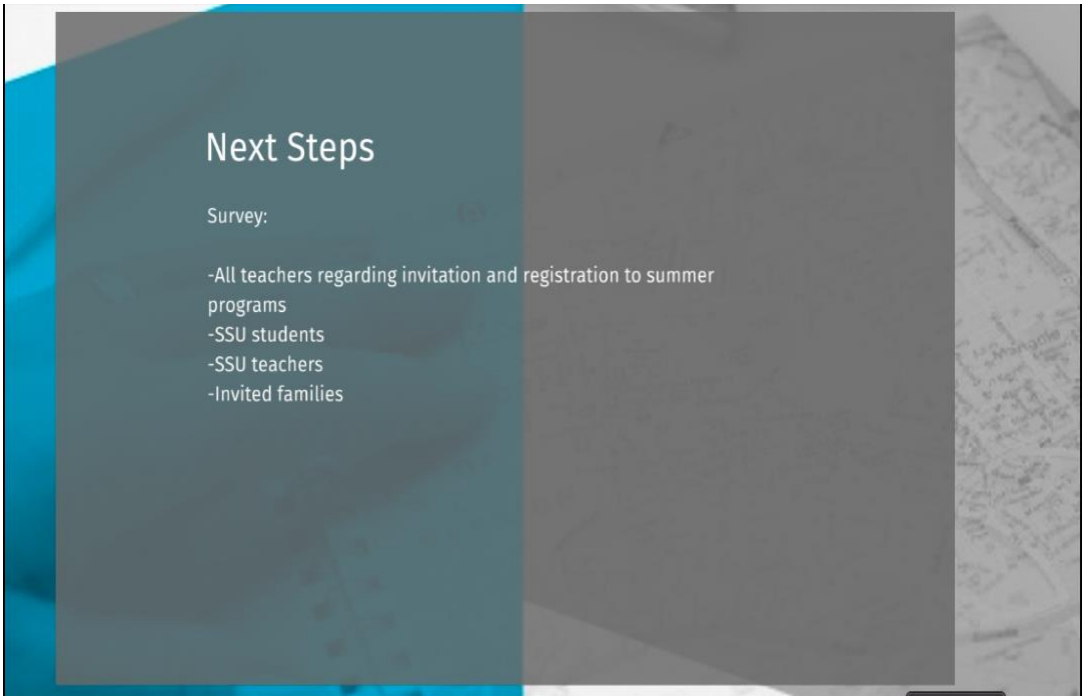
Outdoor learning and recreational activities

Fifth Action

Professional development for teachers

Sixth Action

Improved methods of data collection and analysis


Next Steps
Survey:
-All teachers regarding invitation and registration to summer programs
-SSU students
-SSU teachers
-Invited families