

Rise

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

2023 IMPACT REPORT

RISE to Excellence: Accelerating
Math & Literacy Summer Learning



WELCOME

When it comes to high-impact summer learning, it's not merely about extending the school year—it's about achieving growth in skills and preparing for the school year to come. Drawing from our extensive curriculum and professional development expertise, our program has grown student math and reading skills year over year for three consecutive years.



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IMPACT *at a glance*

Summer school programs have evolved significantly over time, initially for credit recovery, then addressing various educational needs. In the current landscape, they're crucial in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic's learning loss.

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The RISE Summer Learning Program provides a comprehensive curriculum, professional development for teachers, and pre-/post-assessments aligned with state standards.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES


The RISE Summer Learning Program aimed to mitigate learning loss due to the pandemic by providing targeted academic support, focusing on literacy, and math skills. It emphasizes closing achievement gaps among diverse student populations.

KEY RESULTS (2022): In Indiana, the program showed substantial gains: a 15 percentage point average improvement in ELA and math, along with narrowed achievement gaps for historically marginalized students.

INDEPENDENT STUDY: Studies from the Indiana State Department of Education affirmed statistically significant learning gains in programs funded by the Student Learning Recovery Grant.


NOTABLE RESULTS INCLUDED:

A 25 percentage point increase in basic and proficient scores for English/language arts from pre- to post-assessment.




+ 25% ELA Percentage Point Increase

A 24 percentage point increase in basic and proficient scores for math from pre- to post-assessment.




+ 24% Math Percentage Point Increase

Students achieved an average ELA and math score improvement of 15 percentage points from beginning- to end-of-program.




+ 15% ELA & Math Percentage Point Increase

Enrollment increased from almost 3,000 students served in 2021 to 5,000 students served in 2022.



+ 66% Student Enrollment Increase

93% of participating families surveyed rated their experience as good or great.



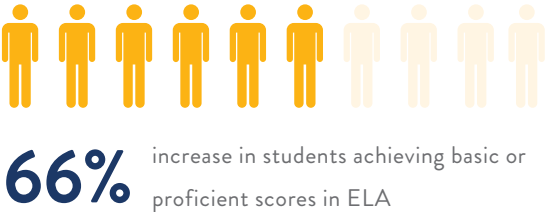
93% Reported a Good or Great Experience

EXPANDED IMPACT (2023)

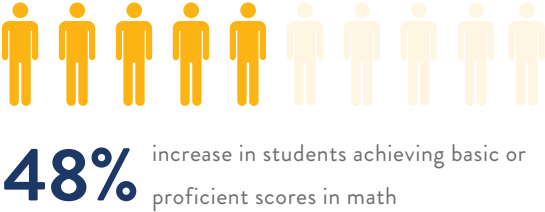
The program extended to 14 states and the District of Columbia, reaching over

25,000 STUDENTS

IMPROVED ELA SCORES



IMPROVED MATH SCORES



EXECUTIVE *Summary*

Across more than 10,000 school systems and 100,000 schools in the US, nearly 3.5 million students attend summer learning programs each year. Summer school provides these students with critical access to instruction and support. And while summer school started as a means for credit recovery at the beginning of the 20th century, the drivers behind programs have evolved significantly over the past 100 years to meet the changing educational needs and priorities in the United States.

Lavinia Group's relentless pursuit to close learning and achievement gaps has driven bold change in academic summer learning programming. Lavinia Group prioritized evidence-based methodologies that would yield substantial impact on student learning, and the rate at which students were able to improve academic achievement in math and literacy. The result was a scalable, highly impactful summer learning program.

Based on extensive research and derived from adaptable strategies developed by Lavinia Group for year-round academic success, the program sought to:

- *Close the achievement gap for all students in all subgroups*
- *Accelerate learning faster than pre-covid learning strategies*
- *Build transferable skills in students that they can carry over into the new school year*
- *Empower and prepare teachers with high-impact teaching habits they can use year-round*

Year-over-year data for the past three years has shown students have achieved on average a 15 percentage point increase each summer since the program's inception in 2021 as measured in pre- and post-assessments.

The outcomes have remained consistent while scaling from 3,000 students in Indianapolis to 25,000 students nationwide.

And they have persisted regardless of geographical location, school type, or demographics for participating schools.

Over the last three years, meticulous progress monitoring to evaluate the program's efficacy substantiated the underlying reasons for continued success of the RISE Summer Learning Program. Research and independent third-party data confirmed the program could be replicated and scaled so that an increased number of schools could reliably meet the summer learning needs of more students.

This whitepaper examines the outcomes from the RISE Summer Learning Program to provide district leaders, charter networks, community-based education and philanthropic organizations, and state departments of education insight to the contributing factors that have consistently led to transformative growth in students. We provide four recommendations to assist stakeholders who wish to expand this crucial intervention to better serve our nation's children.

OBJECTIVES & *Goals*

After World War II and throughout the Sputnik Era, summer school programs were viewed primarily as a way to bolster national security interests by focusing on math and science education for American youth. The Supreme Court’s ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* shifted the focus of summer learning toward remediation.

Throughout the Civil Rights Era and during Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty, summer school was used as a way to address race- and poverty-based disparities. In 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its landmark report, *A Nation At Risk*, the focus once again shifted as renewed emphasis was placed on raising national learning standards and ensuring a strong foundation in literacy and math for all students.

Today, as school districts continue to address the profound learning loss caused by decreased instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic, summer school programs play a key role in the strategy to help students recover from the social, emotional, and academic toll of the most significant disruption to K-12 education in history.

Yet, never before in its history has summer been asked to do so much for so many children. In July of 2023, researchers from the Northwest Evaluation Association, a research-based not-for-profit organization that creates academic assessments for pre-K-12 students, released a report examining academic gains made during the 2022-23 school year relative to pre-pandemic years. After analyzing data from 6.7 million US public school students in third through eighth grade, the study found that learning recovery stalled in the 2022-23 school year and that the average student will need the equivalent of 4.1 additional months of school in reading and 4.5 months in math to cover lost ground.

A 2023 report from the Northwest Evaluation Association found that learning recovery stalled during the 2022-2023 school year.

The stakes are even higher for the nation’s most vulnerable students. Learning loss from the pandemic wiped out two decades worth of progress made toward closing achievement gaps. The same study found that Hispanic students in middle school need 6.7 additional months of instruction in reading, compared to White and Black students, who will require 4.9. For math, Black students require an additional 6.2 months of instruction and Hispanic students need 6.4 additional months, compared to the 5.4 months required by White students. The end of federal COVID-19 relief funding means that many districts will decrease or end summer learning programs by September 2024 despite persistent learning and achievement gaps.

The graphic below shows the additional instruction time required to close achievement gaps in each student group:

	Hispanic Students	Black Students	White Students
READING	6.7 MONTHS	4.9 MONTHS	4.9 MONTHS
MATH	6.4 MONTHS	6.2 MONTHS	5.4 MONTHS

OBJECTIVES & *Goals*

There is no debate: summer school can be highly impactful and should play a central role in learning recovery efforts. At the same time, it's important to understand that summer learning programs are not a “one-and-done” solution to learning loss. With the future of so many children at risk, educators must carefully evaluate which students make gains in summer school, what factors contribute to their success, and how to replicate and scale effective programs to meet the needs of even more of the nation's students.

The objectives and goals of the RISE Impact Study aimed to evaluate the program's effect on learning recovery. Specifically, the extent to which the program had mitigated the profound learning loss experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing targeted academic support and opportunities for students to catch up on missed instruction. The study focused on evaluating two key program components:

- *The effect of a comprehensive and engaging curriculum that not only reinforces core academic skills in literacy and mathematics but also integrates innovative teaching methodologies to enhance learning experiences.*
- *The impact of offering robust training and support for educators, equipping them with the tools, resources, and strategies necessary to facilitate impactful instruction tailored to students' diverse needs.*

The study also sought to identify the extent to which persistent achievement gaps were bridged among diverse student populations, particularly targeting the needs of vulnerable groups, such as students from low-income backgrounds or historically marginalized communities.



The APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

OF LAVINIA GROUP'S RISE SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

In considering the efficacy of summer school programs aimed at addressing learning loss, a crucial question arises: how can limited resources be optimally utilized to empower educators and drive significant gains for students?

For the past three years, Lavinia Group has partnered with schools and districts to improve the quality and outcomes of academic summer school programming. Our experience working in schools has shown us that summer school is often ad hoc instead of a well-conceived programmatic decision.

In contrast, Lavinia set out to create a comprehensive program that equips teachers to meet the many challenges associated with unfinished learning from

the academic year. Leveraging extensive research and drawing from our own deep expertise, we created a program capable of producing a measurable impact on closing achievement and opportunity gaps for students. And equipped teachers and leaders with ready-to-use instructional materials and data analysis tools.

The RISE Summer Learning Program provided:

- *5 Weeks of Literacy and Math Curriculum*
- *All student handouts and teacher planning tools*
- *Onboarding and weekly professional development in PLCs*
- *Standard aligned pre- and post-assessments*
- *Progress monitoring and data analysis tools*

Rise

ABOVE WITH LAVINIA GROUP



5 WEEKS OF
LITERACY + MATH
CURRICULUM



STUDENT MATERIALS
+ TEACHER PLANNING
RESOURCES



PRE AND POST
ASSESSMENTS + DATA
ANALYSIS TOOLS



ONBOARDING
+ PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



Pre-and post-assessments were designed by Lavinia Group, mapped to state priority standards, and vetted by an independent third party

The **APPROACH & METHODOLOGY** OF LAVINIA GROUP'S RISE SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

The program offered ELA and math curriculum inclusive of pacing guidelines and daily lessons for a 5-week program. Additionally, it equipped summer school teachers with three days of onboarding and training at the beginning of the summer. Educators also participated in ongoing professional development throughout the duration of their five-week program twice per week, facilitated virtually by instructional coaches.

Pre-and post-assessments were designed by Lavinia Group, mapped to state priority standards, and vetted by an independent third party. Both math and ELA assessments consisted of a combination of multiple-choice and open-response questions. The assessments are administered on a digital platform, and teachers were provided with scoring guides, example responses, and aligned rubrics.

All students completed a pre-assessment in both math and ELA at the beginning of the program to establish a baseline. Post-assessments were administered at the end of the program to determine growth.

Pre- and post-assessment student scores were sorted into proficiency brackets:

BELOW BASIC

Scores well below the expected grade level

APPROACHING

Scores near the expected grade-level

BASIC

Scores demonstrating on-grade-level performance

PROFICIENT

Scores demonstrating the ability to apply on-grade-level concepts

KEY RESULTS *and Findings*

FROM THE 2022 RISE SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

During the summer of 2022, the Indiana Learning Lab program partnered with Lavinia Group for the second consecutive year to provide 5,000 students, primarily students of color and in poverty, in Marion County, Indiana, access to a high-quality summer learning program. The program operated at 39 different schools and community learning centers using Lavinia's RISE Summer Learning Program curriculum aligned with Indiana State ELA and math standards.

To be eligible for participation, schools were required to:

- *Provide at least 20 days of instruction*
- *Provide 3+ hours of high-quality cumulative English/Language Arts and Math instruction*
- *Ensure a student-to-teacher ratio of no more than 25-to-1*
- *Conduct in-person instruction*
- *Administer pre- and post-assessments provided by Lavinia Group*

Pre- and post-assessment data from students who participated in the Indiana Summer Learning Lab program showed students had achieved:

- *A 25 percentage point increase in basic and proficient scores for ELA arts from pre- to post-assessment.*
- *A 24 percentage point increase in basic and proficient scores for math from pre- to post-assessment.*
- *Students achieved an average ELA and math score improvement of 15 percentage points from the beginning- to the end of the program.*

Lavinia Group Partners with Indiana Summer Learning Labs
39 different schools and community learning centers.

5,000+ students served

15 percentage point average
improvement in Math and ELA



KEY RESULTS *and Findings*

FROM THE 2022 RISE SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM

BLACK
STUDENTS

24%
GAIN IN ELA

22%
GAIN IN MATH

LATINO
STUDENTS

30%
GAIN IN ELA

29%
GAIN IN MATH

FREE/REDUCED-PRICE
LUNCH RECIPIENTS

23%
GAIN IN ELA

22%
GAIN IN MATH

Moreover, the program showed evidence of narrowing of achievement gaps between historically marginalized students and their peers.

Black students achieved:

- A 24 percentage point gain in basic and proficient scores for ELA and
- A 22 percentage point gain in math.

Latino students achieved:

- A 30 percentage point gain in basic and proficient scores for ELA and
- A 29 percentage point gain in math.

Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch achieved:

- A 23 percentage point gain in basic and proficient scores for ELA and
- A 22 percentage point gain in math.

Results measured in percentage point gains from pre- to post-assessment.

INDEPENDENT STUDY SHOWS STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT GAINS FROM INDIANA SUMMER LEARNING LABS PARTNERSHIP

An independent study completed by the Indiana State Department of Education analyzed learning growth data for students who attended programs funded by the Student Learning Recovery Grant administered in 2021. The study analysis focused on the rate of learning for students participating in the Indy Summer Learning Labs. Students who participated in Indy Summer Learning Labs during the summer of 2021 indicated statistically significant gains in learning above pre-pandemic rates of learning.



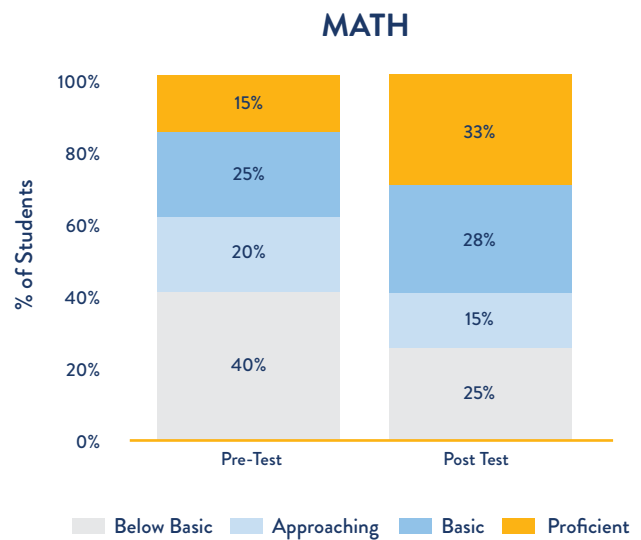
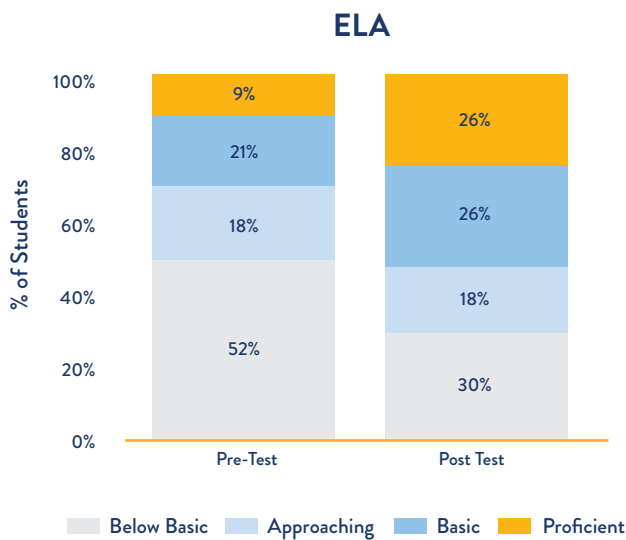
IMPACT

During the summer of 2023, Lavinia Group provided support to schools across 14 states and the District of Columbia. More than 25,000 students participated in the RISE Summer Learning Program:



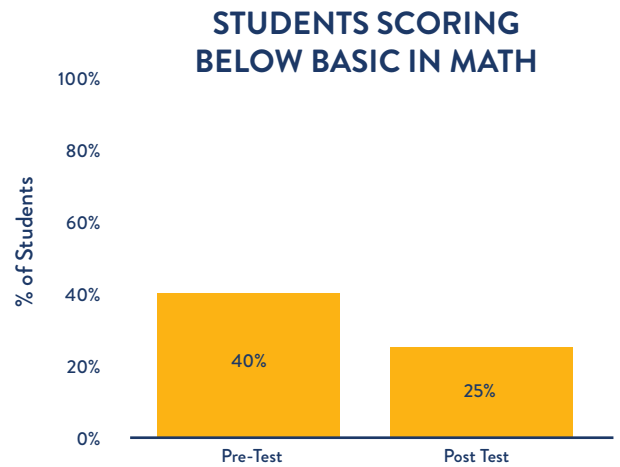
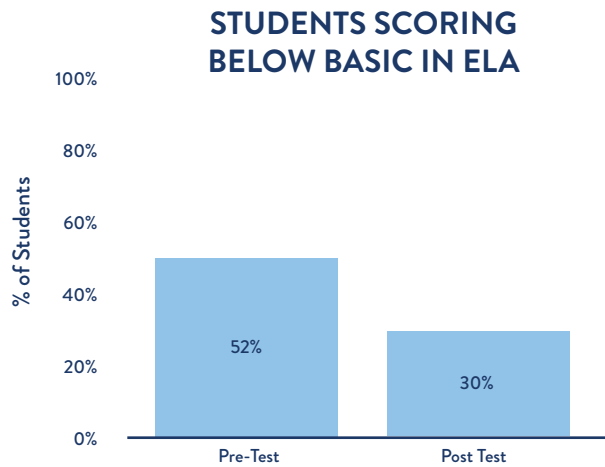
- Baltimore, MD
- Birmingham, AL
- Boston, MA
- Chattanooga, TN
- Chicago, IL
- Dos Palos, CA
- Detroit, MI
- Grand Forks, ND
- Houston, TX
- Indianapolis, IN
- Los Angeles, CA
- Lynwood, IL
- Memphis, TN
- Mount Vernon, NY
- Nashville, TN
- New York City, NY
- Newark, NJ
- Paterson, NJ
- Plainfield, NJ
- Providence, RI
- Rochester, NY
- San Antonio, TX
- St. Louis, MO
- Stanley, NC
- Washington D.C.
- Waterbury, CT

The data revealed a 66 percent increase in the number of students who achieved a score of basic or proficient from the pre- to the post-assessment in ELA and a 48 percent increase in Math.



IMPACT

A decline in the number of students categorized as “below basic” following the successful completion of a summer learning program serves as compelling evidence of a program’s ability to remediate learning gaps, enhance skills, and set students firmly on the road to academic achievement. Further analysis of the pre- and post-assessment data from the summer of 2023 found the number of students scoring below basic in ELA decreased by 22 percentage points and in Math by 15 percentage point decrease was realized.



RECOMMENDATIONS

In analyzing the consistent and significant academic progress seen in schools utilizing the RISE summer program, we conducted a comprehensive assessment of the distinguishing features inherent in Lavinia’s program. Our scrutiny identified four pivotal components within the Lavinia RISE summer program that we firmly attribute to the acceleration of student learning and the facilitation of substantial achievement gains. To better understand why schools using the RISE summer program have consistently demonstrated significant gains for students, we looked at the characteristics that make Lavinia’s program distinct. We’ve identified 4 key components of the Lavinia RISE summer program that we believe are responsible for accelerating student learning and enabling greater achievement gains.

4 KEY COMPONENTS

of Lavinia RISE summer program responsible for accelerated student learning:

- 1 A focus on conceptual and transferable learning

- 2 A dedicated summer curriculum

- 3 Professional development practices focused on peer learning and student work

- 4 Systematic assessment practices

“These strategies can’t be applied sporadically or on an individual teacher basis and produce the same consistent results.”

Undoubtedly, individual teachers and schools participating in school-selected summer school programs often integrate similar components and strategies found within the RISE Summer Learning Program. Drawing from extensive research, the RISE program adopts best practices commonly implemented by many educators nationwide, both during the school year and during summer sessions.

However, research affirms that these strategies can’t be applied sporadically or on an individual teacher basis and produce the same consistent results as evidenced by the RISE Summer Learning Program. Instead, data and research supports the finding that all four strategies must be applied concurrently, consistently, and at scale.

1 RECOMMENDATION #1: Move from drills, tricks, and procedures to conceptual and transferable learning

Tips, tricks, and routines are prioritized over conceptual and transferable learning frequently in year-round instruction — and especially during summer school. Too often, and for understandable reasons, educators search for the most expedient way to move students to a place of understanding. Yet, in reality, memorization and procedural methods simply don't work. Students may get the answer right in the moment, but when it comes to applying that learning at a later point in time, the learning doesn't stick.

In fact, a 2022 study analyzing more than 200-word problems from the PARCC Assessment and Smarter Balanced math tests in elementary and middle school grades found that using a keyword strategy, such as teaching kids to hunt for words like “less and more,” leads students to choose the right operation less than half the time for single-step problems and less than 10% of the time for multi-step problems.

Furthermore, research conducted by the EdWeek Research Center found that math teachers in elementary and middle grades are less comfortable with and receive less training in how to approach teaching applied mathematics, such as probability and spatial concepts, than they do with other kinds of math, like number sense or algebraic thinking. Data indicates that student performance has suffered as a result, especially among disadvantaged kids. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores show that the average 8th grader's performance fell 16 scale points from 2011 to 2022 in probability and statistics and 9 points in geometry.

For the highest impact for your summer program, replace instruction based on drills, tricks, and procedures with instruction that focuses on conceptual and transferable learning.



“Research conducted by the EdWeek Research Center found that math teachers in elementary and middle grades are less comfortable with and receive less training in how to approach teaching applied mathematics, such as probability and spatial concepts, than they do with other kinds of math, like number sense or algebraic thinking.”

2 RECOMMENDATION #2:

Move from adapting year-round curriculum to using a dedicated summer curriculum

To make a significant impact in a short amount of time, teachers need the right tools for the job. At the top of the list sits a high-quality, evidence-based curriculum designed to meet the specific needs of summer learners. Yet, schools often reuse regular school-year units and lessons or leave it up to individual teachers to decide what to teach.

Both of these approaches can backfire. Funding constraints, HR practices, contract negotiations, and other logistical issues mean that summer school staffing often only falls into place right before the program starts. Asking teachers who already report feeling overwhelmed by the number of things on their plate and who lack formal training in curriculum development to create a meaningful and effective summer school program at the last minute – and without any data to guide their efforts – doesn't set anyone up for success.

Research conducted by RAND and The Wallace Foundation found that leaders who decide on a summer school program in the fall and begin planning no later than January run a smoother summer program with less disruption to instruction. Their research identified that when district curriculum experts develop an in-house curriculum, it should be done over the course of several months. This ensures that the curriculum is coherent, comprehensive, and aligned with school-year standards. It should focus on key grade-level standards and grade-appropriate assignments and should be accompanied by high-quality resources, like detailed lesson plans, student materials, book lists, pacing guides, assessments, and rubrics, so teachers can focus on execution rather than material preparation. All of the resources should be provided to teachers far before the start of the summer program and ample time and support should be provided to the staff before the summer session begins.

If schools decide to purchase curricula instead, it's important to ensure that the program they select can be easily adapted to the amount of instructional time available during their summer session and aligns with appropriate grade-level content. It must also align with district curriculum school-year standards and be flexible enough to meet student needs based on identifiable learning gaps through differentiation of instruction. Effective strategies for differentiation must be included in the professional development provided.



“Summer learning curriculum should focus on key grade-level standards and grade-appropriate assignments and should be accompanied by high-quality resources, like detailed lesson plans, student materials, book lists, pacing guides, assessments, and rubrics, so teachers can focus on execution rather than material preparation.”

3 RECOMMENDATION #3:

Move from just giving teachers prep time to providing intentional teacher development

An extensive body of research has found that the single greatest factor that impacts learning outcomes is the quality of instruction students receive. However, teachers often receive minimal, if any, structured support, instructional guidance, or professional development in instruction for struggling students. Research suggests that the training teachers receive prior to the start of a summer learning program typically focuses exclusively on logistics.

This is not surprising, given that research conducted by The New Teacher Project found that, in general, school systems have been largely ineffective at helping teachers understand how to improve their instructional practice. The study found that as many as half of teachers in their tenth year or beyond were rated below “effective” in core instructional practices, such as developing students’ critical thinking skills.

Shifting from only providing teachers with prep time to providing high-quality professional development during summer school programs supports teachers in building transferable instructional skills they can use to maximize the impact of instruction year-round.

During the course of a summer school program, teachers should have the opportunity to gather weekly in peer learning communities and receive coaching on how to effectively evaluate student work together to improve rigor and outcomes.



Another key component of high-quality, continuous professional development is intellectual preparation. Intellectual preparation gives teachers an opportunity to internalize and differentiate lesson plans to deliver high-quality instruction to all students. These professional development meetings should be facilitated by a content expert, such as an instructional coach, department chair, school leader, or outside partner, and should take place on a weekly basis.

4 RECOMMENDATION #4:

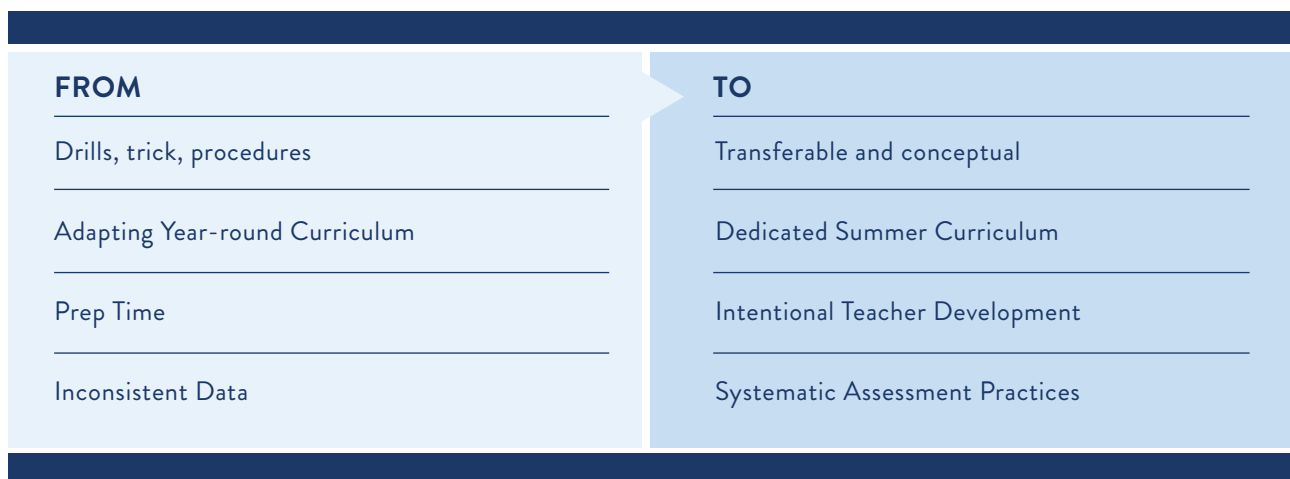
Move from relying on inconsistent data to systematic assessment practices

Research shows that a large number of educators still rely on conventional practices and heuristic approaches rather than adopting evidence-based tools and methods to advance student achievement. Notably, summer school teachers have rarely been provided with data collection and analysis tools. Standardized state assessment results are rarely provided prior to or even by the end of the summer term, leaving teachers with only a vague understanding of what students need and no targeted information to differentiate instruction for individual students. As a result, program leaders also lack a clear understanding of whether the program was effective.

Research from 23 studies comparing teachers who were considered to be effective and teachers who were considered to be ineffective cites the difference between these two groups as the use of systematic processes for keeping and interpreting data on student performance.

Summer learning pre-assessments have proven to be particularly valuable for teachers to identify trends within their classrooms and to pinpoint learning gaps. Post-assessments serve as a crucial tool for determining student progress and devising a plan to respond to any persistent learning gaps that remain as a student starts the new school year.

Identifying a consistent artifact of learning within the curriculum allows teachers to monitor weekly progress. This artifact can take the form of an exit ticket or independent practice. Teachers should be provided with clear guidance on how to score and track this data throughout the summer program.



CONCLUSION

In August of 2023, McKinsey & Company published a report titled *What it would take for US schools to fully recover from COVID-19*. The report identifies that nationwide, approximately 17 million students have more than half a year of pandemic-related learning delay.

The report also acknowledges that “districts are under extraordinary pressure—pressure to deliver results for students, many of whom have missed significant learning milestones, and pressure to do so with limited (and potentially diminishing) funds with the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) funding window closing by September 2024.”

McKinsey’s research recognizes that summer learning programs must play an integral role in recovering lost learning for students. The report asserts that “several states and districts have seen accelerated rates of learning recovery after adopting high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and aligned professional development; providing high-quality, high-intensity tutoring; and extending the school year through summer or intensive-learning academies.” McKinsey dubs these types of programs “bright spots” and believes they are the key to helping US schools fully recover.

Similar to McKinsey’s perspective, we firmly advocate moving beyond debates over intervention effectiveness or seeking novel shortcuts to solve the highly complex and high-stakes challenges facing our nation’s schools. Instead, schools must prioritize the rapid and widespread scaling of established, research-backed, evidence-based programs – like the Lavina RISE Summer Learning Program.

“Several states and districts have seen accelerated rates of learning recovery after adopting high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and aligned professional development; providing high-quality, high-intensity tutoring; and extending the school year through summer or intensive-learning academies.”

About LAVINIA GROUP

At Lavinia Group, we inspire transformative change by offering a full suite of services to support academic growth in math and literacy. We're passionate about creating equitable opportunities for all students and developing the skills needed to tackle grade-level content. Our services include consulting and instructional coaching, math and literacy curriculum (core & supplemental), professional development institutes, and our comprehensive, ready-to-implement RISE Summer School Program. Our team works to build capacity that is sustainable long after working with Lavinia Group and our approach to working with school leaders and teachers offers hands-on, immersive, side-by-side support.





Rise is a summer program designed for students entering 1st - 9th grade.

Learn more

LAVINIAGROUP.ORG