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Supporting Quality in Summer Learning:

How Districts Plan, Develop, and Implement Programs

EDC Education Development Center

Prepared for: Wallace

PREFACE

Many district-led summer learning programs are at the intersection of in-school and out-of-school time learning. These programs play a critical role in supporting students during the summer months with enriching learning opportunities. This study pulls together information from a range of sources (e.g., school district leaders, 21st Century Community Learning Center state program staff, State Afterschool Network leads, state departments of education, program partner organizations, and information about federal funding) to better understand the systems of support that district leaders rely upon to plan and implement their summer learning programs. Conducting this study during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges. With schools closing and shifting to virtual learning, we adapted our research approach to accommodate the many challenges districts were facing across the country. We are grateful for stakeholders' contributions to this study while simultaneously addressing the many challenges states, districts, children, and families faced throughout the pandemic.

This research has uncovered some important lessons for summer learning professionals and related stakeholders. As we reflect on these lessons, we emphasize that policymakers, educators, and funders are now faced with an opportunity to reimagine schooling using safe, equitable, and student-centered approaches. Summer learning is one component of districts' overall strategy to support students' academic learning as well as their social and emotional learning (SEL). The heightened attention on meeting students' needs combined with substantial federal investments can support students' development, help them to stay connected to peers and their community, and expand their learning opportunities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are extremely grateful to The Wallace Foundation for its support of this research and its review of this report. We additionally would like to thank the district personnel, the 21st Century Community Learning Center state leads and staff, state agency staff, and other summer and out-of-school time professionals for taking time out of their busy schedules to share valuable insights into their work. We also appreciate the contributions of our study advisors and the feedback from individuals who reviewed drafts of this report. Errors and omissions in this report are our responsibility alone.

This study was commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, which seeks to support and share effective ideas and practices to foster equity and improvements in learning and enrichment for young people and in the arts for everyone. Its current objectives are to improve the quality of schools, primarily by developing and placing effective principals in high-need schools; improve the quality of and access to afterschool programs through coordinated city systems and by strengthening the financial management skills of providers; reimagine and expand learning time during the traditional school day and year, as well as during the summer months; expand access to arts learning; and develop audiences for the arts. For more information and research on these and other related topics, please visit the Foundation's Knowledge Center at www.wallacefoundation.org.

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ABBREVIATIONS

21st CCLC	21st Century Community Learning Centers
ARPA	American Recovery Plan Act
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security
CBO	community-based organization
CCDF	Child Care Development Fund
CRRSAA	Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act
ELL	English language learner
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
OST	out-of-school time
PD	professional development
SEL	social and emotional learning
STEM	science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

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INTRODUCTION

In late 2019, The Wallace Foundation (Wallace) contracted with Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) to conduct a landscape study focused on how districts ensure and improve the quality of their summer learning initiatives. The overall purpose of this study was to examine how individuals responsible for district-led, publicly funded summer learning programs in urban settings access and use professional learning and tools to improve and advance equitable outcomes for the K–8th-grade students they serve. A related goal of the study was to better understand whether and how districts, states, intermediaries, and federal funding sources support high-quality summer learning and to uncover opportunities to improve the quality of summer learning programs.

Many district-led summer learning programs are at the intersection of in-school and out-of-school time (OST) learning. These summer programs play a critical role in providing students with academic supports and enrichment during the summer months. Districts offer a range of program types, but most are motivated by district and state policies designed to support student achievement and learning. These programs can also be used as a part of a district's overall strategy to improve access to quality educational experiences and advance equitable outcomes for students.

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically shifted everyday life, including how schools and educators engage with students. The prolonged impact of COVID-19 and related school closures affected all students and widened pre-existing disparities in access and opportunity for many students, especially historically marginalized students.[1] They faced barriers to accessing and meaningfully participating in school, services, and other supports for their academic learning as well as their social and emotional learning (SEL). Repairing the damaging impact will require investments in effective programs and practices.

Our study found that summer learning programs can be a critical strategy for improving access and opportunity for students and families. In some ways, while the COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the disparities and barriers faced by students from historically marginalized groups, it also offered districts and their partners the opportunity to adjust their approach to summer learning programming in ways that just may set the stage for advancing educational equity by removing barriers and improving students' access to enriching learning opportunities.

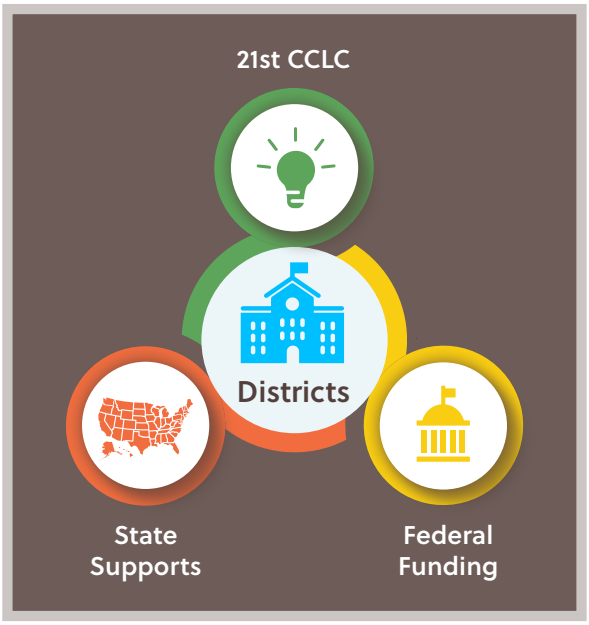
Federal stimulus funding is one major aspect of the pandemic recovery effort, and due to specific carve-outs for summer programs, one way that districts are encouraged to focus on summer learning. The increased attention on meeting students' needs combined with substantial federal investments can support students' development, help them to stay connected to peers and their community, and expand their learning opportunities. The unprecedented and significant influx of funding could have a lasting impact on the field if invested wisely. While this funding is considerable, it is a short-term solution. Therefore, policymakers are seeking effective approaches that can be sustained well beyond this period.

This study compiles information from numerous sources that, taken together, form a new understanding of how districts access and use resources to ensure quality in their summer learning offerings. Drawing on existing research as well as insights from district- and state-level stakeholders, this report offers information that can be used to support decision-making and quality improvement for district-led summer programs.

[1] U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2021). *Education in a pandemic: The disparate impacts of COVID-19 on America's students.* https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/20210608-impacts-of-covid19.pdf

Approach

Our study centered on programs run by urban school districts, including those programs implemented in partnership with community- or youth-serving organizations. In our examination of district-led programs, we also were attentive to families' perspectives regarding the value of summer learning programs and how district leaders incorporate parents' priorities into the design and implementation of summer learning programs.



With districts at the center of our inquiry, we focused on three main systems of support that layer together to inform district decision-making regarding summer learning:

1) **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC):** We investigated the ways in which district-led summer learning programming is funded and supported by states' 21st CCLC programs, including related summer program requirements and state-led professional learning opportunities. The 21st CCLC program is a federally funded OST program that is administered by state-level staff (typically within a state's department of education) and implemented at the local level (usually at a school or a community-based organization [CBO]). Including 21st CCLC in our inquiry into district-led summer programs was critical to understanding this distinct intersection of federal, state, and local supports for summer learning.

2) **State resources and supports:** We examined policies and practices in a select group of states to understand the extent to which state-level coordination, funding, and other resources exist and offer support for district-led summer learning programs. This aspect of the research helped to clarify and deepen our understanding of the issues influencing district-level decision-making about summer programs, related professional development (PD), funding, and other supports.

3) **Federal funding streams:** In addition to the 21st CCLC program, we documented three major traditional federal funding streams for summer learning as well as more recent supplemental funding sources. Federal funding sources are relevant in as much as they provide guidance to and support for district-level summer learning programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic compelled us to modify the overall approach to the study. The study shifted from one focused on a snapshot in time to one focused on capturing the changing state of support for summer learning and the lessons resulting from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Research Questions

Our inquiry was guided by research questions that sought to capture insights relevant across three different time periods (summers of 2019, 2020, and 2021) as well as overarching insights that span the time frame and beyond.

1) **What district-level policies and practices inform the planning, development, and implementation of publicly funded summer learning programs serving K–8-aged youth?** With this question, we sought to understand in more detail who in the districts makes decisions about summer learning, what kinds of programs are offered, who implements them, who is being served, what funding sources are used, how families' voices are incorporated into decision-making, and how districts address state and federal requirements.

2) **Other than funding, what external supports (e.g., professional development, resources, and tools) are being used to implement or strengthen such summer learning programs?** Beyond learning more about what districts do, we also wanted to know about how they access and leverage opportunities for professional learning to improve their summer learning programs. In particular, we were interested in which resources are accessed, how they are perceived, and the ways in which these resources are used by districts.

3) **What do district stakeholders perceive as key needs, gaps, and opportunities regarding improving summer learning programs?** We also explored how well existing supports meet districts' and implementers' needs, what gaps and unmet needs exist, and how district leaders and program partners could be supported better.

4) **What do families look for in a summer learning program, and how do they access the right program for them?** We additionally sought to incorporate information about families' priorities when choosing a summer learning program, how they obtain information about summer learning opportunities, and what barriers they face in accessing summer learning offerings.

Methodology

To address the research questions described above, we used a combination of secondary research, or what we called *foundational research*, along with primary research. Throughout the study, we were in close consultation with Wallace and study advisors,[2] who helped inform the research design, identify issues to explore, and frame our analyses and findings.

- **Foundational research:** We conducted online research and reviewed relevant literature, which informed our understanding of the articulated needs, gaps, and issues facing summer learning programs. Rooting this study in current literature helped to ensure that it expands the knowledge base and addresses gaps in what we know about equitable access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. For example, there is extensive research documenting the value of summer programs and their effect on student outcomes.[3] We additionally drew on emerging findings related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.[4] This early and ongoing phase of the research also helped us determine the sample frames, identify key contacts, and develop the interview and survey protocols.

- **Primary research:** After an initial phase of the foundational research, we developed samples and data collection strategies for the focus areas that involved primary data collection with stakeholders. Primary research included interviews with district contacts, 21st CCLC state leads, and other state-level respondents in fall 2020 and in spring 2021.

This study drew upon both the foundational and primary research to better understand how districts make decisions about summer learning initiatives and what supports they use to ensure those initiatives are high quality. More details on the methods for the primary data collection for the district, 21st CCLC, and state research areas are includedin Appendix A: Detailed Methodology for Primary Research. Table 1 outlines the research activities and foci.

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[2] To inform all of our work, we consulted with our study advisors early and often, individually and in groups. The advisors included practitioners, researchers, and representatives from national OST organizations. They provided guidance on the overall study, including ways to potentially share findings with the field.

[3] For example, (1) Schwartz, H. L., McCombs, J. S., Augustine, C. H., & Leschitz, J. T. (2018). *Getting to work on summer learning: Recommended practices for success* (2nd ed). RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR366-1.html; (2) National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *Shaping summertime experiences: Opportunities to promote healthy development and well-being for children and youth.* The National Academies Press.

[4] For example, Afterschool Alliance. (2021a). *A return to normal? Not quite. What summer programming looks like for 2021.* https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/COVID-19-Survey-Wave-5.pdf.

Initially, we planned two rounds of primary data collection with district contacts, 21st CCLC state leads, and other state-level respondents in fall 2020 and in spring 2021. As districts made decisions about remote, hybrid, or in-person learning, many district staff simply did not have the time or attention to devote to our requests. As a result, we decided to conduct one extended round of data collection starting in October 2020 and continuing through early May 2021 (Figure 1).

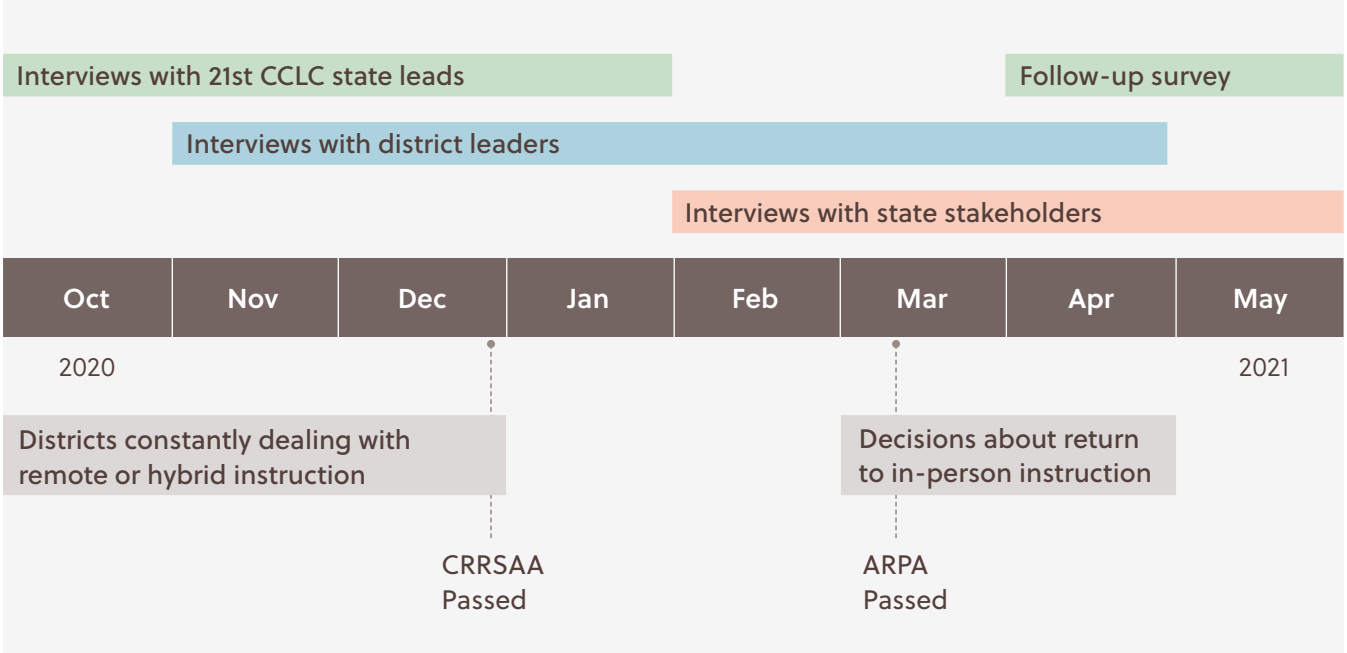
Table 1. **Research Activities**

Focus Area	Foundational Research*	Primary Data Collection	Sampling Frame	Final Sample
Districts	✓	Interviews	70 districts	38 districts
21st CCLC	✓	Interviews and surveys	31 state offices	25 state offices
State supports	✓	Interviews	6 states	5 states
Federal funding streams	✓	NA**	NA	NA

* This research also included a review of literature and other research about families and communities that informed our understanding of topics to ask of research respondents.

** We used information obtained through interviews with district representatives, 21st CCLC state leads, and state respondents to inform this research area.

Figure 1. **Data Collection Timeline**



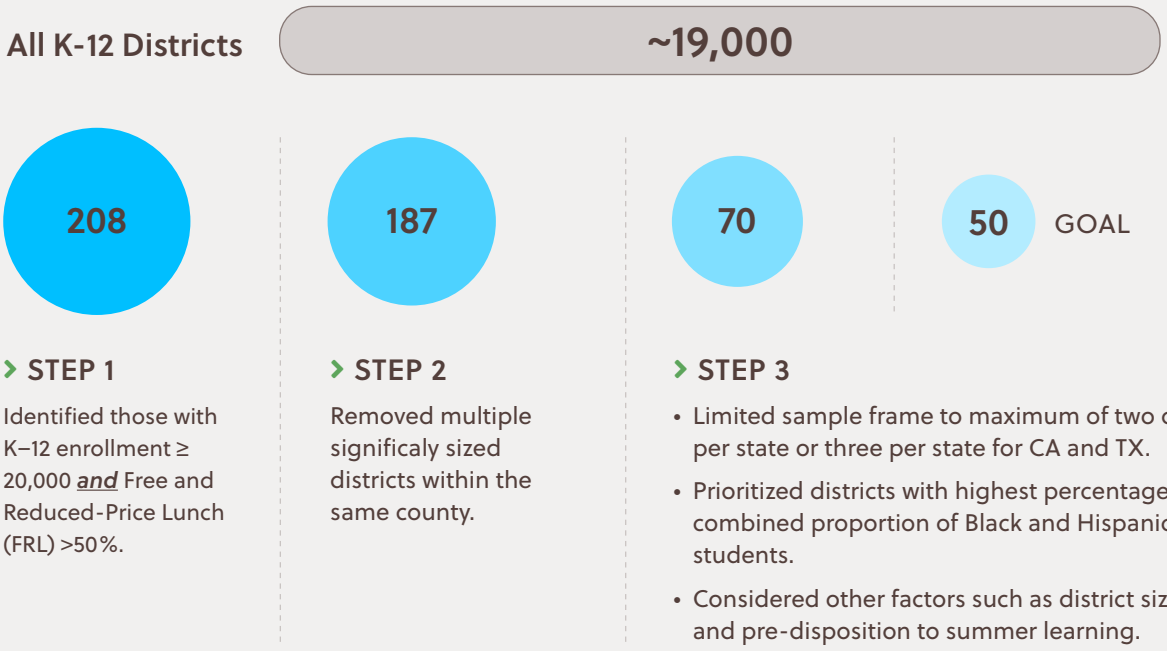
Study Samples

This study draws on multiple perspectives from district representatives and community partners, staff from 21st CCLC state offices, and other state-level stakeholders involved in the design, implementation, and funding of district-led summer learning programs. Across the stakeholder groups, we intentionally developed overlapping geographic samples to obtain a more in-depth understanding of issues within districts and states. For a detailed description of the sample selection processes, see Appendix A: Detailed Methodology for Primary Research.

DISTRICTS. Given the study's focus on advancing equitable outcomes for students, we developed a sampling frame of 70 urban districts with high concentrations of students whose families are socioeconomically vulnerable. To achieve a sample that reflects this goal, we developed several criteria and related rationale (see Figure 2).

First, we identified all public school districts with K–12 enrollment equal to or greater than 20,000 students ***and*** free or reduced-priced lunch (FRL) for more than 50 percent of the enrolled students.[5] This step resulted in narrowing the sample to 208 districts.

Figure 2. **Process for District Sample Selection**



[5] District enrollment >20,000 for 2018-19 [National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/]. The NCES data did not include or report data on free or reduced-price lunch for 19 of these districts, but based on our knowledge of these districts, we assumed that at least 50 percent of their students would qualify.

From there, we examined the list of districts and further reduced the number by removing multiple significantly sized districts within the same county. The majority of such districts were in New York City (e.g., Bronx, Queens, and Kings Counties) and were not representative of districts in other places because of their location and relationship to each other. This adjustment narrowed the list to 187 districts.

To develop the initial sample frame of 70 districts, we then limited the list to include a maximum of two districts per state for most states; because of the size of California and Texas, we chose a maximum of three districts in these states. We prioritized districts with the highest percentage of students accessing FRLs or the highest combined percentage of Black and Hispanic/Latinx students. We also considered other factors related to the larger study effort, including geographic distribution as well as indicators of those districts pre-disposed to summer learning (e.g., whether a district is part of the National Summer Learning Association's [NSLA's] New Vision for Summer School [NVSS] Network or the subject of an NSLA brief). Aside from the two main criteria (enrollment and FRL), we sought to include a range of different types of districts, including those that were known to support summer learning programs as well as those whose interest in summer was unknown. By including a variety of districts, we expected to uncover findings that would be applicable to a broad spectrum of districts across the country.

Based on the criteria and considerations above, the initial sample frame of 70 districts included 39 states and Washington, D.C., and the targeted sample included 50 districts; we ultimately conducted 42 interviews with a total of 47 individuals representing 38 districts in 30 states.[6]

21ST CCLC. To determine how states' 21st CCLC programs support summer learning programs, including rules and requirements for subgrantees[7] (often districts), we reviewed publicly available information (e.g., annual reports, evaluation reports, and requests for proposals[8]) to assess the landscape of states' 21st CCLC state programs. The analysis of publicly available data focused on information about select characteristics related to summer programming that informed our sample criteria, namely, (1) whether the 21st CCLC state office required summer programming and (2) whether the state's 21st CCLC office offered applicants points for including summer learning in their proposals. To understand whether and how states prioritize summer learning as well as state requirements and expectations for 21st CCLC subgrantees, we felt it was

[6] Despite repeated attempts, due the ongoing issues and challenges facing districts and other stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were only able to complete interviews in 38 out of the 50 targeted districts.

[7] Definition of terms: *grantee* is the state receiving the 21st CCLC award; *subgrantee* is the district or CBO that receives a portion of this award; and *sites* are the locations of programming if a subgrantee has more than one location.

[8] Our analysis was based on publicly available information. We located evaluation and/or annual re-ports for 39 states and Washington, D.C. Six states did not appear to have publicly available evaluation reports, although we found some information about the reports online. We additionally were able to review requests for proposals (RFPs) for 39 states and Washington, D.C.; we did not find RFPs for the remaining 12 states.

important to focus on a sample that appeared to place greater emphasis on summer programming. While the majority of 21st CCLC state offices in the sample either required or awarded points for summer programming, ultimately the final sample included a number of states that did not have explicit requirements or guidelines but still supported some programs in some way (see the description of 21st CCLC respondents below).

Using these two main sample selection criteria, we narrowed the initial sample of 21st CCLC state offices from 50 states and Washington, D.C., to 30 states and Washington, D.C. (see Figure 3). We sought to complete interviews with 25 21st CCLC state leads. To reduce our sample down to 25 (roughly one-half of all states and Washington, D.C.) while connecting this aspect of the research to the study's larger focus on districts and their implementation of summer learning programs, we prioritized states that were represented in the district sample.[9]

Final samples included interviews with 34 staff members from 25 21st CCLC state offices; representatives from 21 states completed follow-up surveys (84% response rate).

Figure 3. **Process for 21st CCLC Sample Selection**

STATE RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS. We also examined state-level resources and supports for summer learning in five states to explore whether and how these systems of support affect district level summer programming. We conducted research and interviewed state-level stakeholders to clarify and deepen our understanding of the issues influencing decision-making about summer learning initiatives, related PD, funding, and other supports. To develop the sample of states, we relied on a number of factors:

[9] Because we sought to maximize overlap across the district, 21st CCLC state leads, and other state-level stakeholder samples, we did not include the 21st CCLC offices for Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Bureau of Indian Education.

- We conducted online research and reviewed documents in a select group of states to investigate their summer learning policies and practices in order to understand the extent to which state-level coordination, funding, and other resources exist and are leveraged to support district-led summer learning programs. We also relied on our knowledge of summer learning initiatives in particular states, and as with all areas of the study, our selection was informed by the study advisors' recommendations as well as input from Wallace staff.
- Building on this research, and in alignment with the states included in samples for the district and 21st CCLC research areas, we narrowed the initial sample to six states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon. In the end, we completed interviews with 11 state-level stakeholders in five states; however, we were unable to schedule an interview with our contact in Alabama.

Figure 4 *(see next page)* shows a map of the completed interviews with district, 21st CCLC, and other state-level stakeholders. Overall, we conducted interviews in 36 states. For an in-depth explanation of the sample selection processes, see Appendix A: Detailed Methodology for Primary Research.

Respondents

Our team conducted semi-structured telephone or videoconference interviews with study respondents. We also administered a follow-up survey to 21st CCLC state leads. Following is a brief summary of the characteristics of the final sample. See Appendix A: Detailed Methodology for Primary Research for more details.

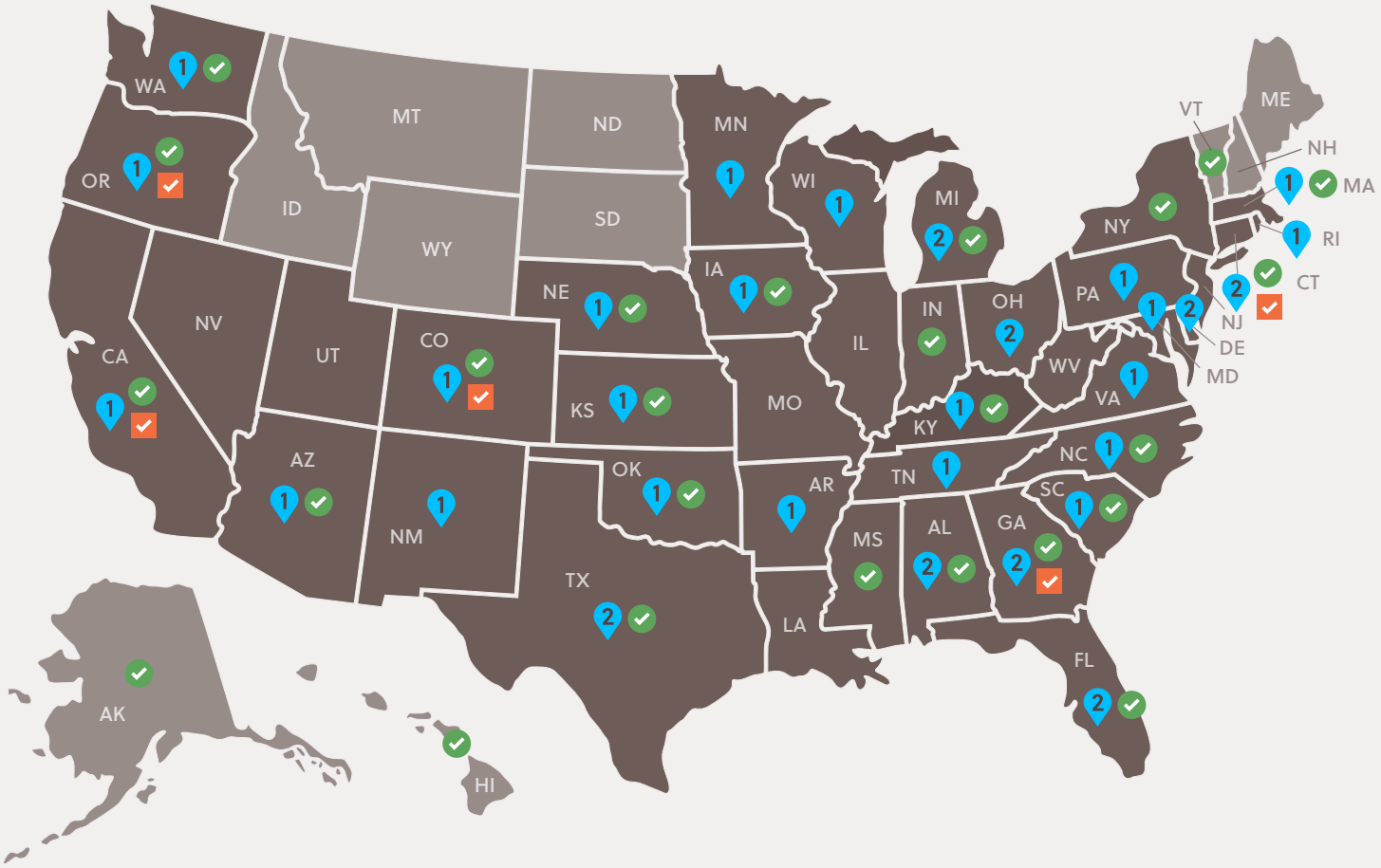
DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS. As noted above, we completed interviews with 47 individuals representing 38 districts in 30 states. The interviews included 30 districts with district personnel only, 4 districts with district and partner representatives, and 4 districts with only a partner organization (despite multiple attempts to contact district personnel).[10] In many instances, there was more than one person—often representing multiple departments—responsible for a district's summer learning programs.

Various district-level departments, offices, and public agencies were represented in the district sample. Examples include the district's Department of Extended Learning, Family and Community Engagement Office, and the Office of Community Education; one representative was from the city's Parks and Recreation Department. Not all individuals shared the department or office in which they worked.

Study respondents held a variety of roles and responsibilities. For example, they oversaw early childhood programming, coordinated year-round OST programming, or oversaw academics for their entire district. Additional information about the sample follows:

[10] As districts made decisions about shifting from remote, hybrid, or in-person learning, many district staff simply did not have the time or attention to devote to our requests.

Figure 4. **Primary Data Collection: Sample Frame and Completed Interviews**



KEY

- Met district sample criteria
- Did not meet district sample criteria
- Number of districts interviewed
- 21st CCLC state lead interviewed
- State stakeholder interviewed

- Across the 47 people interviewed, 27 described themselves as directors, and 10 described themselves as executive directors. Others held job titles of coordinators, program managers, and deputies.
- When asked about how long they had been in their department and in their current role, length of time varied. On average, respondents had spent 12 years in their department and 6 years in their current role.
- Overall, the districts were primarily medium-sized urban districts with sizable proportions of Black and Hispanic/Latinx students:
  - 27 districts (71%) had student populations of 20,000–49,000 students.
  - 34 districts (89%) were in cities.
  - 36 districts (95%) had Black and Hispanic/Latinx student populations of 40 percent or more.

21st CCLC STATE LEADS. Across 25 states, we collected data from 34 staff members. For some states, we conducted a group interview with multiple individuals. The amount of time that study respondents had been in their current position ranged from 3 months to 22 years, with an average of 7.5 years. Twenty-seven of 34 respondents provided a percentage of their time focused on 21st CCLC, which ranged from 25 percent to 100 percent, with 17 respondents indicating at least 75 percent of their time was focused on 21st CCLC. Through interview and survey data, we confirmed information obtained from publicly available sources. In our final sample, we found the following:

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- Of the 25 states in which we spoke to 21st CCLC representatives, 10 states have a requirement for summer programming in their grant application: Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oklahoma, Texas, Vermont, and Washington.
- Through the survey data, we confirmed that at least 6 of the 15 states that do not require summer learning in their application for grant funding do award priority points for including summer programming: California, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, and North Carolina.
- Although the remaining states in our sample may not require summer programming nor award points for it, they can promote summer programming in other ways, such as professional development. We used the interviews to gather information about how state 21st CCLC leads support the implementation of, or strengthen, summer learning programs.

OTHER STATE-LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS. As mentioned above, we conducted interviews with 11 state-level stakeholders in five states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon. In each of the five states, we spoke with the State Afterschool Network lead. Given their expertise with afterschool and summer programming (via advocacy, PD, and other supports), we believed these individuals would provide valuable insights about the variety of ways their state might be supporting summer learning. We additionally spoke with officials within state departments of education (2 states) as well as a director of a statewide youth-focused organization (1 state).

Data Collection and Analysis

The findings presented in this report combine our learning from multiple data sources, including a review of secondary sources such as websites, reports, and other documents as well as primary sources, including interviews with district leaders, 21st CCLC state leads, and other state stakeholders. The team analyzed results by organizing interview notes by main topics and coded responses thematically within these broad categories. The survey primarily included closed-ended items, and these results are reported in aggregate. We similarly analyzed these results by key themes and topics.

We have synthesized findings across the various study elements (e.g., districts, 21st CCLC, state supports, and federal funding) and supplemented these results with information from reports and other sources as it emerged throughout the study time frame. While we were conducting this study, other researchers were similarly interested in assessing how districts were making decisions about summer and what summer programs might look like post-pandemic. We have endeavored to include these insights as they became available.

Limitations

From our primary research, we have included proportions of specific responses when possible. In a number of instances, we also have denoted relatively small occurrences (e.g., a few for 3–4 respondents or several for 5–7 respondents). Because the data collection (i.e., interviews and surveys) involved staff in varying positions and roles, totals may not represent all respondents. For example, if a study participant was not knowledgeable about certain issues or if specific matters did not fall within a respondent's purview, they would not be represented. In addition, because the interviews were semi-structured, the findings presented here may not represent all respondents if a particular topic was not discussed during the interview. We found, even at the district level, that it was difficult to reach one or two individuals with a complete understanding of their district's systems of support for summer learning (e.g., funding streams, professional learning and other resources, and community partnerships).[11] Although our research involved obtaining perspectives from multiple stakeholders (often 1–2 individuals per district), our scope did not involve triangulating sources to confirm the information that they provided.

[11] Moreover, many district personnel were reluctant to talk about the quality of their programs with external researchers.

It is also important to note that this research occurred while the COVID-19 pandemic continued to disrupt educational and OST programming and occupy a great deal of attention. For example, our interviews with district respondents took place between late fall 2020 and into spring 2021, and each respondent was at a different stage of planning for summer 2021. Of note, the largest of the federal COVID-19 relief packages (the American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA]), which included funds specifically earmarked for afterschool and summer programs, was passed in late March 2021 when our interview process was well underway. The information included in this report represents circumstances at the time, which have likely changed since we completed our data collection.

Report Organization

This report synthesizes the overarching themes that emerged from the various sources of data from this study. Within each of the following sections, we report key findings by topics derived from our analysis. In each main section of this report, we have included a discussion of findings related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on summer programming. Sections include the following:

SECTION 1: Districts' Summer Learning Program Strategies

SECTION 2: District-Community Partnership

SECTION 3: Professional Development and Resources

SECTION 4: Funding Streams for District-Led Summer Learning

SECTION 5: Promising Practices and Ongoing Challenges

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions, the final section of the report, includes a summary of overall findings from the study, offers implications for policy and practice, and notes opportunities for future research. The appendices provide a detailed description of the methods for our primary data collection and an in-depth review of findings from our research on federal funding streams for summer learning.

Photo by Anna Earl on Unsplash

SECTION 1: Districts' Summer Learning Program Strategies

It is not easy to generalize about district-led summer learning programs. Districts tend to offer a variety of approaches with different intentions and variations across schools and communities. That said, we found that districts' summer learning programs are primarily designed to support students' academic performance. While districts may use different strategies to achieve this overall goal, district leaders overwhelmingly described their efforts as providing rigorous and intentional opportunities to support students' academic learning. In many instances, district leaders additionally spoke to their programs' efforts to promote positive social and emotional learning (SEL); provide a safe environment; offer fun, structured activities; and connect students or schools to community resources. With regard to summer 2021, respondents particularly underscored the importance of supporting students' SEL, growth, and development due to the pandemic and students' lack of social connections and feelings of isolation.

To better understand the landscape of district-led summer learning programs, we explored the array of goals, motivations, and other factors that influenced the design and implementation of districts' programs prior to the pandemic. In general, district leaders referred to the one-to-three programs that existed within their districts.

Program Goals and Motivating Factors

We learned from study participants that district-led summer programs and the experiences they offer are largely driven by conventional measures of academic achievement and are designed to support students' performance in core content areas, such as reading and math. In nearly one-half of districts, respondents indicated that their districts' summer learning programs are largely influenced by local or state policies or initiatives and are most commonly tied to elementary reading and literacy goals (e.g., third-grade reading benchmarks). Other, less frequently cited, motivating factors include districtwide focus on middle to high school transition, mitigating summer learning loss, and statewide summer learning campaigns designed to promote equitable access to quality summer learning opportunities.

> Ultimately, it was clear that district leaders are concerned about the broad goals of summer learning programs to mitigate summer learning loss and boost academic achievement.

Whether focused on students at risk of failing, students who are struggling academically, English language learners, or students ready to take on new academic challenges, districts generally offered a variety of summer programs with multiple purposes. Overall, the majority of the district level representatives we interviewed indicated that their summer programs focus on students who need academic support.

In addition to academic support, many district leaders spoke of their summer learning programs as *enrichment opportunities* for students. Respondents talked about enrichment as a pedagogical approach to delivering content, such as project-based learning or inquiry-led practices, as well as specific content areas typically outside of the core curriculum, such as arts, gardening, and sports.

Ultimately, it was clear that district leaders are concerned about the broad goals of summer learning programs to mitigate summer learning loss and boost academic achievement. Overall, we found that district leaders and other policymakers responsible for the design and implementation of their summer programs rely on established research showing evidence that interventions outside of the traditional school day can be effective means for influencing positive achievement, particularly for struggling students.[12]

Key District Decision-Makers

Running a summer program involves coordination with numerous stakeholders. Among the districts included in this study, no one model stood out, but there were a few consistent themes regarding collaborative:

- Senior leadership within the school district provides overall vision and policy for their programs.
- School-based, including principals and other building-level administrators, guidance counselors, social workers, and others, provide direct insight into school population needs, as well as critical connections between the school, student, and family.
- Logistical support is coordinated with transportation, food services, and other administrative offices.

Partnering organizations also can have a central role in the design and implementation of district-led summer programs. Section 2: District-Community Partnerships includes more about the role of partners.

Student and Family Supports to Promote Equitable Access

Transportation, Meals, Coordination of Care, and Program Cost

To encourage enrollment and successful participation, district leaders most commonly cited supports and services such as transportation, food, and afternoon care. More importantly, the majority of district stakeholders noted that their summer

[12] See for example: Schwartz, H. L., McCombs, J. S., Augustine, C. H., & Leschitz, J. T. (2018). *Getting to work on summer learning: Recommended practices for success* (2nd ed). RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR366-1.html

programs are free or affordably priced to enable participation, as cost is a major barrier for many families. Nearly three-fourths of respondents indicated that their programs do not require any student fees for participation.

Student Eligibility and Recruitment

Because district-led programs are largely designed for students in need of additional support, many programs use a formal screening or referral process to identify students. However, even for programs that have eligibility criteria (usually based on academic need), some prioritize spaces for those who qualify while keeping enrollment open to all who apply or express interest. Other programs with a more open enrollment policy use applications, referrals, and other forms of registration for students. Districts employ a range of methods to recruit students, including email, social media, newsletters, and flyers. District stakeholders also spoke about coordinated efforts through district-, school-, and partner-level communications.

Family Engagement

A few districts stood out in their approach to family engagement. For example, one district followed the lead of its superintendent, who had established a practice of consistent communication with families, to communicate with parents every day, most likely as a way to provide an update on daily activities. The individual acknowledged that this required working around the clock, but "I don't want one family to feel like they weren't being responded to." In addition, by offering parents a daily opportunity for feedback, this district was able to address problems immediately rather than waiting to hear about them through the grapevine. In the era of social media, in which parents often turn online to share complaints, ongoing, frequent, and proactive family engagement, while time-consuming, can interrupt this and foster more productive one-on-one relationships.

21st CCLC Support for Districts' Summer Learning

In general, the 21st CCLC state leads indicated that the summer programming they funded was designed to reinforce students' academic achievement, which was consistent with what we learned from district leaders. However, the 21st CCLC state leads also described support for enrichment and other opportunities beyond academics, indicating greater variation in the types of learning experiences compared to those described by district representatives. There is a range of types of programming beyond academics offered in the summer since programming takes place during non-school hours and students' academic achievement is not the sole motivating driver.

- **Alignment with academic year content:** Roughly one-half of 21st CCLC state lead respondents described summer programming goals as being the same as academic year goals, including a focus on reading, math, and enrichment. In addition, three 21st CCLC state leads also described encouraging their

subgrantees[13] (mostly districts) to use summer programming to help students transition between grade levels, particularly transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. Such programs provide academic supports as well as social supports, helping students to identify a cohort of peers they can turn to as they matriculate into a new school setting.

- **More flexibility in program content and approaches:** More than one-fourth of the 21st CCLC state leads we interviewed talked about the added flexibility of programming in the summer compared to afterschool offerings during the regular school year. This included subgrantees offering more opportunities for field trips and fun activities; having a full day of enrichment (e.g., referred to as "Fun Friday"); focusing on equity and social justice issues facing their communities; promoting positive SEL, project-based learning (PBL), and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS); and/or digging into robust enrichment opportunities that have a combination of traditional academic and non-academic components.

- **Variation in enrichment activities:** The 21st CCLC state leads also noted that enrichment programming varied by subgrantee. Examples included computer science, cooking classes, healthy eating, maker space activities (e.g., hands-on projects like building, modeling, coding, or woodworking), robotics, salsa dancing, STEM activities, and violin lessons. Some also suggested that enrichment offerings can be driven by student interest.

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

[13] Definition of terms: *grantee* is the state receiving the 21st CCLC award; *subgrantee* is the district or community-based organization that receives a portion of this award; and *sites* are the locations of programming if a subgrantee has more than one location.

21st CCLC Program Support for Summer Programs

The 21st CCLC program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.[14]

The 21st CCLC program started in 1994 under the Elementary and Secondary School Act and was expanded in 2001 with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act. 21st CCLC-funded afterschool programs are now present in all 50 states as well as in the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and territory of the Bureau of Indian Education. All 21st CCLC centers provide programing with academic enrichment and youth development that is designed to support participants' academic success.[15]

Through interview and survey data, we confirmed the following:

- 10 of the 25 21st CCLC state offices in our sample require summer programming in their grant application: Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oklahoma, Texas, Vermont, and Washington.
- 6 state offices award priority points[16] for summer programming: California, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, and North Carolina.
- 4 additional states had previously awarded points for summer learning: Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, and Nebraska.

States have the capacity to shape the context of programming through their grant applications and funding awards. Overall, we found that at least 16 21st CCLC state offices prioritize summer programming in some way: They either required such programming or offered points for it. While the remaining five states in our sample may not require summer programming nor award points for it, they can promote summer programming in other ways, such as professional development. We did not verify the extent to which the state offices that were not in our sample prioritize summer learning programs.

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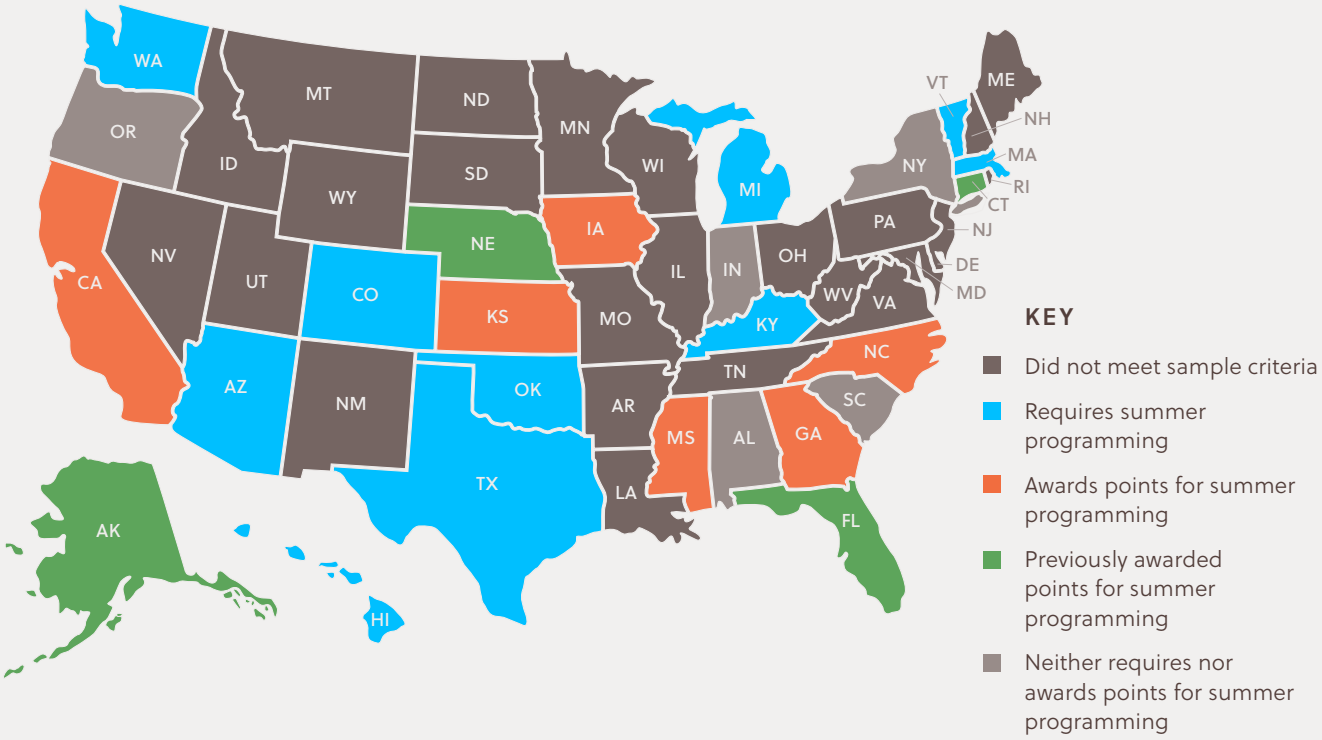
[14] From: U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *Programs: 21st century community learning centers.* https://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html

[15] U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *21st century community learning centers (21st CCLC) analytic support for evaluation and program monitoring: An overview of the 21st CCLC performance data: 2016–17 (13th report).* https://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/1617perrpt.docx

[16] The 21st CCLC state offices conduct a competitive grant process for their subgrantees. Each section of the application contributes to a total number of points (typically 100), and a state can include points for priority investment areas, such as summer programming.

Figure 5. **21st CCLC Program Support for Summer Programs**



COVID-19 Pandemic Context

Our research suggests that the school and program closures brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have helped to drive home how important summer (and after-school) programs are for children and families, and the pandemic crisis has brought more attention and investment to summer programs than ever before. As a result of the pandemic, many district and 21st CCLC program leaders indicated that they planned to incorporate more enrichment-focused activities in summer 2021.[17]

COVID-19 Pandemic and Summer 2020

Summer 2020 was different in each district, depending largely on guidance from state and local decision-makers. Some districts were unable to offer any programs, either due to COVID-19 health restrictions or because they were not able to shift to virtual or remote learning due to insufficient planning or staff to create and implement such classes. Many built on their experiences with offering virtual or remote instruction during spring of 2020. In-person programs were uncommon and served smaller groups in compliance with public health guidelines. Most of these programs provided childcare for the children of essential workers, language and literacy instruction for English language learners, or support for students with special education needs.

[17] Our research echoes many findings reported during the spring and summer of 2021. See for example, Bang, M., Bicker, L., Darling-Hammond, L., Edgerton, A. K., Grossman, P., Guitiérrez, K. D., Ishlmaru, A., Klevan, S., Lee, C. D., Mlyashiro, D., Nasir, N. S., Noguera, P. A., Payne, C., Penuel, B., Plasencia, S., & Vossoughl, S. (2021). *Summer learning and beyond: Opportunities for creating equity.* https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/summer-learning-creating-equity-report

VIRTUAL OR REMOTE LEARNING. One key factor that shaped summer learning in 2020 was whether the district had the ability to shift to online learning. While some districts were already "one-to-one" districts (where each student has a school-issued Internet-connected device), most districts were not. Some districts found that even if they were able to distribute devices, a significant number of their students still did not have sufficient Internet access to use them for learning. Several district leaders we interviewed described staff efforts to get students online. In the spring of 2020, districts that served a high number of migrant students had an especially hard time reaching their students, which likely persisted through the summer.

> One individual shared that OST providers "tend to be more flexible" and therefore open to creating new programs and reimagining what summer programs could look like during the pandemic.

Districts that implemented virtual summer programs in 2020 recognized that it was a very ambitious project. One said, "It was not easy, but we did it, because that's what we do. We make it work for kids." Looking back, another leader said, "It was daunting, to say the least . . . we pulled it off, blood, sweat, and tears." One key factor that an individual shared was that OST providers (who are often critical district partners in summer learning programs) "tend to be more flexible" and were therefore open to creating new programs and reimagining what summer programs could look like during the pandemic.

IN-PERSON LEARNING. In-person summer programs in 2020 were small and generally targeted to specific populations. One district leader described the in-person program as "weird" with all of the COVID-19 mitigation efforts in place. However, this district was able to run a program in person for 100 students without having to shut it down, which the district leader considered a success. Another district's in-person summer program typically served 550 students, but in 2020 served 100. The same district also created online lessons for families to extend the learning and engage more students.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Summer 2021

Our interviews with district stakeholders started in late fall 2020 and continued into spring 2021, and each respondent was at a different stage of thinking about summer 2021. Thus, it was challenging to get a complete understanding of the districts' plans for summer 2021. Study respondents recognized that policies and funding were in constant flux, so their thoughts about summer 2021 included many caveats. Most district and 21st CCLC leaders shared a desire to host in-person programs, acknowledging that students need time to connect with peers and opportunities to play outside. However, study participants also communicated challenges and concerns regarding adequate staffing, time to plan programs, and strategic allocation of supplemental funds to support summer learning programs. These challenges were

also reflected in a number of reports released by various field organizations in spring and summer 2021.[18]

PROGRAMMING. One main issue facing districts was trying to estimate how many students they would have in summer programs. As one individual put it, "They [the district superintendent] are nervous about having enough spots, and I'm concerned about filling them." The school district leaders we interviewed also recognized the wide range of needs that children and families would have in summer 2021, so the question was how to address them. Many students who would benefit most from summer learning opportunities lived in communities that had suffered disproportionately from the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Families were eager to have somewhere for their children to go to get the academic and social support they need.

In spring of 2021, we surveyed 25 21st CCLC state leads about their plans for summer 2021. More than one-half of 21st CCLC state leads indicated that their subgrantees were planning to offer summer programming. Some 21st CCLC state leads suggested their subgrantees were prioritizing in-person programming, while others were going to continue to offer programming in a hybrid model. For those 21st CCLC subgrantees that planned to offer in-person programming, many focused their efforts on making better connections with students and families.

STAFFING. Teacher recruitment was another concern facing school districts as they planned for summer 2021. District and state respondents suggested that districts tend to rely on their own educators to staff their summer programs, and due to the COVID-19 crisis, educators were fatigued and unlikely to be as willing to work in summer programs as they might have been in past years. One district leader remarked, "The teachers are exhausted. They've done a great job, but they're exhausted. How many are going to want to do summer school?"

LACK OF TIME TO PLAN ADEQUATELY. We heard from state-level respondents (State Afterschool Network leads, personnel from state departments of education, and others) that while the COVID-19 crisis helped raise awareness about the importance of summer learning programs, the prolonged "crisis mode" nature of the pandemic and related uncertainty about school reopening plans left districts with very little time to plan for the upcoming summer. And they pointed out the irony that this was just as states are benefiting from the largest influx of funding for summer programming that they have ever received.

SUSTAINABILITY. Although states have access to more summer funding than ever before—through the federal ARPA and in some cases state-level funding in response to COVID-19—this large influx of funding is only available through Sept 2024. State stakeholders suggested that states will therefore need to seek sustainable longer-term funding sources to continue supporting such programs, as the value of and need for summer learning supports will remain long past the COVID-19 crisis.

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[18] See, for example: Afterschool Alliance. (2021) A *return to normal? Not quite. What summer programming looks like for 2021*. https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/COVID-19-Survey-Wave-5.pdf

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

SECTION 2: District-Community Partnerships

Overall, districts' infrastructure for summer learning is complex, involving coordination among district staff as well as with community-based partners. The vast majority of district representatives (roughly 95 percent of district and partner staff members that we interviewed) shared insights regarding their district-community partnership.

For many districts, community partners play an essential role in supporting district-led programs. Partner organizations can be well-integrated with the district and its systems of support for summer learning or operate on the periphery fulfilling discrete roles. Community partners often provide enrichment or non-academic programming with a youth development focus; assist with student outreach and recruitment; coordinate programming and other services; and provide other supports specific to the partners' expertise. During the pandemic, many partner organizations supported schools and districts by providing technology support, delivering food, and offering other services to community members and families.

Community partners often provide enrichment or non-academic programming with a youth development focus; assist with student outreach and recruitment; coordinate programming and other services; and more.

To better understand the district-partner dynamic prior to the pandemic, we asked study participants to share information about these partnerships, including the types of partners involved, their roles and responsibilities, and the nature of their collaboration.

Types of Partners

By and large, community-based organizations (CBOs) were the primary type of district partners identified by those we interviewed (roughly two-thirds). The 21st CCLC state leads corroborated what we had learned through interviews with district leaders: public school districts and CBOs represented the majority of 21st CCLC subgrantees; in addition, districts and CBOs often had formal partnerships even when the district was the primary subgrantee of the 21st CCLC award. The types of CBO partners included the following:

- OST providers, such as the Boys and Girls Club of America, the YMCA, and the United Way
- City agencies or city-based programs, such as the city's Parks and Recreation Department or Youth Services Department
- Other community-serving organizations, such as public libraries, local hospitals, churches, social services organizations, local science museums, and universities

Partners' Roles

We commonly heard that partner organizations were an essential part of the district's summer learning strategy. A few key roles included providing enrichment and academic activities for students, supplying or coordinating afternoon care, and helping to recruit and advertise districts' programs to students and their families.

Full-Day Enrichment or Academic Support

According to roughly one-half of the district and partner respondents, community partners mostly provided full-day enrichment activities, such as thematic camps (e.g., STEM) or additional programs to bridge the school year and summer program dates. Partners also offered related activities, including arts, sports, or health and wellness activities (e.g., nutrition education, games, and physical activity breaks). Providing academic content to summer programs was another way in which partners contributed, with approximately one-fifth of district representatives mentioning this specific role. Partners provided direct academic instruction or supplied the curriculum for the districts' summer programming. For example, one partner supplemented literacy content by providing an academic mentor and liaison to work with the summer program. Another school district used a bilingual curriculum developed through its partnership with a local university.

Half-Day Programming

Several district and partner representatives also said that CBOs provided afternoon childcare programming. Partners were able to offer programming for half of the day, which extended the program duration and thus allowed students to stay engaged while supporting family child-care needs. For example, one partner shared, "We partnered to extend the day in those [school] sites where we were doing the summer reading program. . . . Whether that was more like tutoring, enrichment, or just a summer camp setting, we've done that."

We also heard from some 21st CCLC state leads that half-day summer programs were paired with other half-day programs offered through the district or community to create opportunities for full-day programming. For example, a Title I summer school may be offered in the morning, and then a 21st CCLC program would provide lunch and operate in the afternoon. The types of afternoon programming depended on the role and expertise of the particular program partner and staff, ranging from afternoon day camp to themed enrichment activities (e.g., arts, cooking, STEM).

Recruitment

Partners additionally helped recruit students by advertising programs to families in the community and identifying program participants. Recruitment was often just one aspect of the district-partner collaboration. In one district, a partner described how a network of partners supported the district's summer program: "The lead agency would get the dollars to do the programming in the schools, so they really took it upon themselves to get the word out through the schools to all their families. We would post it on our website. So it was, you know, kind of like that grassroots [effort] of how you get the word out right through the family and the schools."

Other Supports

Several respondents described other roles that partners played. For example:

- **Community wraparound programming:** Several community partners came together to offer programming and provide wraparound supports for families, such as wellness activities (e.g., nutrition, exercise, stress management) or referrals to dental or medical services.
- **Coordination and liaising with other partners:** A single partner was responsible for bringing in and coordinating outside nonprofit organizations to offer activities to students.
- **Resources:** One partner, for example, distributed books used by the district's summer literacy program designed to maintain students' reading throughout the summer break.

Nature of District-Partner Collaborations

Some respondents provided insight into the dynamics of the collaboration when they described their partnerships. There was a wide variety of ways of building and sustaining relationships. However, among those who mentioned their collaboration, consistent communication seemed to be a common strength regardless of how the partnership was structured.

District leaders described different strategies for collaborating with their partners based on the role that the partner played. Examples included partners working directly with the superintendent or designated staff within the district; the district leveraging multiple departments to assure coordination with partners; and a citywide program coordinating the district, the partners, and the mayor's office. In general, respondents suggested that partners brought an important outside perspective to the planning and implementation process.

COVID-19 Pandemic Context

For the majority of districts that partner with CBOs, their partnerships are an essential part of the district's systems of support for summer learning. During summer 2020, community partners provided technology support, delivered food and other resources, and offered other services to community members and families. For example, in one district, the district's partner could not offer in-person or virtual programs, so it distributed books at food distribution sites. The books were chosen intentionally to have a socially conscious message and included imagery that reflected the identity of local families. One unforeseen benefit was that people of all ages read the books. Grandparents lined up early and said they loved last week's books and couldn't wait for this week's books. The partner remarked on the positive impact of these provisional services during the pandemic, "I could not have asked for a greater connection to have adults [reading] or greater evidence. I can't quantify that."

A number of 21st CCLC state leads mentioned that family engagement increased and that they believed many subgrantees (districts and CBOs) would be reaching out to families more to provide more resources and supports to meet their needs. This outreach could include counseling, visiting homes, delivering food, and addressing other food insecurity issues. Another state lead described subgrantees engaging families in a variety of ways by continuing to provide social-emotional supports, such as mental health services and well-being checks, and providing transportation. Many 21st CCLC leads also mentioned that subgrantees provided technology support and Internet access to families in need. The persistent nature of the pandemic compelled many summer programs, including partner organizations, to use trauma-informed practices designed to strengthen relationships and foster a sense of community with students and families. Programs focused on centering students' interests and supporting their development by holding listening sessions, facilitating community conversations, and offering or referring students to individual or group counseling.[19]

Partners' contributions were particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely remain important in a post-pandemic era.

Overall, the value of community partners was a strong theme that we heard across the interviews with study participants. Partners' contributions were particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely remain important in a post-pandemic era.

[19] Bang, M., et al. (2021). *Summer learning and beyond: Opportunities for creating equity.* https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/summer-learning-creating-equity-report

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

SECTION 3: Professional Development and Resources

During our interviews with district leaders, community partners, and 21st CCLC state leads, we asked about professional development (PD) opportunities and resources (such as websites, curricula, and tools) that support summer programs. We wanted to learn about types of activities (e.g., multiple-day in-person trainings or one-hour online workshops) and what topics were covered. We also wanted to understand how districts make decisions about which PD and resources to offer and how decisions are shaped by state and district priorities, program requirements, and funding availability. Respondents shared what additional PD opportunities they thought their districts needed now and in the future.

Overall, we found that districts seek to be responsive to the needs of their communities and consult with program staff and teachers when prioritizing specific topics for PD. Almost all of the respondents expressed a need for more PD specific to summer programs but recognized that there is limited time for it. Our interviews also highlighted how current events shaped the topics covered by PD. In response to COVID-19, study respondents reported increased interest in PD related to student and staff mental health and well-being, trauma-informed practices, and SEL. In addition, the movement to address racial injustice led to increased interest in PD about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Professional Development Activities

Our research revealed that educators and staff involved in the design and implementation of summer programs had access to a variety of PD opportunities. The most common format was a required one- or two-day intensive training prior to the start of the program. Teachers and staff often received PD in specific content areas or were trained to deliver specific curricula (e.g., literacy programs). In addition to district staff, partner organizations also led summer-focused PD on topics such as child development and SEL as well as content-based curricula.

Professional Development Specific to Summer Programming

All-staff orientations, which were typically held a few days before the summer program began, were the most common type of PD (mentioned by more than one-half of district representatives). These orientations covered a wide range of topics, including child development, safety, and first aid.

Beyond the frequently mentioned one- or two-day intensives, we learned that PD related to summer learning varied widely across districts. One district shared that they typically offer a training in April focused on "gearing up for summer." Another district leader explained that PD is built into the schedule of summer days, providing staff with an hour of reflection between the academic morning and the afternoon enrichment activities.

Several district representatives described year-round PD for afterschool staff that directly influences summer programs, as afterschool staff are often also summer program staff. As a result, while some summer staff members may have only received

a few hours of required PD, other staff members had attended multiple opportunities throughout the year.

Several districts mentioned specific PD for people in the role of site coordinator or site administrator. Site coordinators/administrators in turn are often responsible for coordinating and offering PD to building-level staff as opposed to one PD opportunity being offered districtwide.

A few district leaders provided details about PD that was focused on creating a "summer culture." One district leader with a well-established summer program said that it is important for teachers to make summer distinct from the school year. One reason this district leader believes the program succeeds is that it allows students to have more flexibility and fun during the summer rather than just "more school." The district leader felt that it was important for every staff member to understand this shift in culture, so it was the topic of a full day of PD for all staff.

PD for District Teachers

In responses about PD, district leaders often distinguished between the PD offered to district teachers who work in summer programs and PD offered to "summer staff" (i.e., hourly staff hired specifically for summer programs and often afterschool staff or high school and college students).[20] For example, one interviewee explained that they did not offer PD specific to summer because "teachers use what they know from the school year and apply it to summer." Other district representatives shared that teachers receive a few hours of PD or attend a day-long session focused on logistics and the summer curriculum.

We also learned that some summer learning programs offer district teachers leadership opportunities. A couple of districts shared their model of having district teachers serve as instructional coaches at each summer program site. These experienced teachers met regularly one-on-one with summer program teachers. Serving in the role of coach provided district teachers the chance to explore a different role, which was its own form of PD, while also offering specific real-time support to other teachers.

Common Professional Development Topics Across Districts

In general, the PD topics related to summer learning were focused either on content (e.g., literacy training) or on engaging with traditionally marginalized student populations.

LITERACY TRAINING. PD on literacy is usually linked to a specific curriculum or a district or a state initiative. The amount or level of PD is often determined by the teachers' experience and also their roles in the summer program. If, for example, a certified teacher is taking on a leadership role in a literacy initiative, they would receive additional training on using rubrics or providing feedback to the other teachers.

[20] On the one hand, summer staff may not necessarily have the same skills as district teachers, and their PD is likely to be more focused on building their capacity to work with students and implement the summer learning curriculum. Teachers, on the other hand, would likely draw upon their experiences as classroom teachers.

Photo by Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages

SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS. PD also supports teachers and staff working with English language learners (ELLs). Respondents described this type of PD as focusing on instructional strategies and specific curricula. One interviewee stated that summer programs focused on ELLs rely on experienced ELL educators who do not need as much PD for the summer session.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. Some district leaders mentioned PD specific to working with students who are receiving special education services. For example, one district leader highlighted the specific challenge of virtual learning for students with disabilities and individualized education plans (IEPs) and how PD had to shift to focus on the parents as well as the teachers during remote schooling. They had to take on new responsibilities regarding their child's learning while juggling other newly established duties and routines due to the pandemic (e.g., working from home, managing technology needs of the household). Other district representatives shared that teachers who work with students who receive special education services appreciated opportunities to learn from each other through discussions about the individual students they worked with, as each situation can be unique.

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY. Race and equity were mentioned as topics for PD, but less often than the topics mentioned above. One district leader shared that they had completed a two-day training about equity with a focus on weaving equity into everything they do, including how to talk about race and how to plan programs with race in mind. Another district leader shared that they "provide PD in a culturally relevant and sustainable way and will bring in guest speakers that support EDI [equity, diversity, and inclusion]." One interviewee also shared that they had participated in anti-racist PD but wanted it offered across the board for classroom teachers and youth development educators in their district.

Professional Development Opportunities Led by Partners

In addition to PD led by district staff, we also learned about how summer program partners (e.g., United Way, YMCA, and Boys and Girls Clubs of America) often provided PD. These opportunities ranged from sessions focused on child development and SEL to more specific content-based curricula. One interviewee described a successful training offered by Boys and Girls Clubs in their district that balanced broad background topics and a specific curricular focus. Respondents also mentioned other curricula, typically literacy focused, that required related PD for staff prior to curricular implementation. Often, this type of PD was offered directly by the curriculum designers.

Most of the 21st CCLC leads shared that State Afterschool Networks and technical assistance providers were responsible for leading PD for 21st CCLC subgrantees and their partners (e.g., districts and CBOs).[21],[22] Roughly four-fifths of state leads mentioned PD offered by State Afterschool Networks, and two-thirds of state leads also noted PD led by contracted technical assistance providers. Through their work with OST programs, such as the 21st CCLC program, State Afterschool Networks can play a critical role in supporting increased access to and improved quality of summer learning programs. Examples of topics and resources covered by State Afterschool Network PD were program design and implementation resources, quality frameworks, and self-assessment tools. Only a few 21st CCLC state leads mentioned other organizations or entities that provided PD. They mentioned various conferences, summits, and webinars but did not provide detail on the providers.

Professional Development Tools and Resources

Through this research we also sought to document the types of professional learning tools and resources that staff use to inform the design and implementation of their summer learning programs. Below, we highlight the two most commonly mentioned resources:

- The Y*ou for Youth* (y4y.ed.gov) online professional learning community helps state and local 21st CCLC program staff and their stakeholders connect with one another and share best practices. The site offers instructional and PD resources in (1) supporting positive relationships with children and youth, (2) providing professional development and technical assistance opportunities, (3) creating partnerships, (4) managing a 21st CCLC program, and (5) leading

[21] The 50 State Afterschool Networks foster partnerships and policies to develop, support, and sustain quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities for children and youth. The networks work with a broad range of stakeholder groups—from state policymakers to local leaders in education—on a range of issues, including youth development, STEM, juvenile justice, health and wellness, social and emotional learning, and college and workforce readiness. From: http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/about-the-networks

[22] Even though we asked about summer-related PD, it often was difficult to discern whether 21st CCLC state leads were referring to summer or afterschool since the two tended to blend together in their responses.

program staff. Among the 21st CCLC staff, the majority (95 percent) indicated that they use the Y4Y website as a resource.

- The *Summer Learning Toolkit*, funded by The Wallace Foundation, is a free, online resource for individuals involved in the design and implementation of summer learning programs. Drawing on evidence-based practices, the toolkit includes adaptable planning and management tools and sample resources to support district personnel and partners in developing high-quality summer programs. Roughly one-fifth of district representatives and about one-third of 21st CCLC state leads reported that they had used the toolkit.

Suggestions for Future Professional Development Opportunities

During interviews, in addition to asking about existing PD, we asked what would improve PD so it could in turn improve summer learning programs. The most common themes from the responses follow.

Creating Better Alignment of Professional Development Opportunities

Across interviews, a number of people wanted improved alignment of different PD opportunities, for example, inviting community partners to district-led opportunities and vice versa. Others expressed a desire for more overlap between PD offered to teachers and PD offered to other afterschool and summer staff. One interviewee explained, "We're trying to get as a district to a place that the same training that's provided to our school teachers are also provided to our afterschool and summer staff, especially with us implementing a new curriculum at the district. I think that more and more folks are trying to be on the same page about what is being presented to students and how the afterschool and summer folks learn it and then create their own take on activities."

Addressing the Needs of Experienced Educators

One ongoing issue with PD is balancing the needs of new summer teachers and staff while keeping PD relevant and helpful to returning teachers and staff. Some district leaders offered examples of the way this plays out and how they try to address it. In some districts, as mentioned above, teachers have different roles during the summer, such as coaches, site leaders, or supervisors. While this can be a win-win situation, in which newer teachers get on-the-job training and experienced teachers get new opportunities, it can also be challenging when experienced teachers are not fully prepared for these new roles.

Crafting the Right Balance of Academic and Enrichment Components

A few districts stressed the need for more PD focused on balancing academic and enrichment components. This balance is related to the discussion above on summer culture and competing visions about what summer learning should look like.

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

Experienced district and partner representatives shared that the success of academic programs is related to the engagement of students in enrichment activities. One study respondent spoke about making learning fun, which allows students to make a connection between non-academic and academic content. The interviewee from a partner organization remarked, "again it's summer, so you don't want it too academic based, but you want to be able to make the connections. You want to have some time for kids to do some fun math program, you know, just making these connections [with math concepts]."

COVID-19 Pandemic Context

The pandemic surfaced additional PD needs as schools and districts continued to grapple with the prolonged impacts of COVID-19. While we asked specifically about PD related to summer learning, respondents shared how the pandemic led districts to focus all PD on urgent tasks such as online teaching. The district leaders also recognized that in addition to online and hybrid teaching, staff needed additional training to respond to students' mental health and social-emotional needs.

Professional Development Focused on Online or Hybrid Instruction

During several interviews, district leaders and partners spoke about PD that was created specifically in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The move to virtual learning required PD for teachers to learn how to teach online, engage students, and troubleshoot technology. Some of this PD was run by outside groups, while in other cases, teachers and staff learned from each other. District leaders mentioned how valuable it was for teachers to learn these skills for summer programs in the summer

of 2020, since in many cases, they were still teaching online in the fall of 2020. The transition to online teaching for the school year was smoother in many cases due to the lessons learned in the summer.

Support for Students' Social and Emotional Learning

Many district leaders cited a need for PD focused on supporting students' SEL. This need was mentioned specifically in light of students' experiences with remote learning as well as persistent physical and social isolation during the pandemic. While supporting student's SEL was important even before the pandemic, district leaders highlighted an even greater need for related PD, strategies, and resources in summer 2020, summer 2021, and beyond.

Trauma-Informed Practices

A topic that has gotten more attention in recent years, and especially during the past year, is the impact of trauma and stress on children's learning. District leaders recognized the need for additional PD for teachers on these topics as they welcomed students back to summer programs after a very difficult year. One respondent remarked, "We are noticing that families are hungry for is some healing and some coming back together and rebuilding whatever normalcy means . . . because a lot of families are struggling, and we're seeing a lot of the residual effects of being at home for a year, and we know every home is different. I can only imagine what our babies are going to come back to us carrying, and I think we as professionals need to take time to unpack that and not just rush immediately into like oh, let's go, we've got to go, we've got to read. We're doing them a disservice, I think."

As students navigate reconnecting with peers and adults, it is important to build teachers' capacity to assist students so they feel listened to, supported, and develop a sense of safety. PD can help teachers to purposefully find ways to strengthen relationships with students; create opportunities for students to express and process their feelings; and, if needed, recognize when and how to refer students to professional counseling. It is also critical for teachers and staff to recognize the impact of trauma and stress in their own lives and how to manage it while working with children and families.

> "A lot of families are struggling and we're seeing a lot of the residual effects of being at home for a year and we know every home is different . . . I think we as professionals need to take time to unpack that and not just rush immediately into like oh, let's go, we've got to go, we've got to read. We're doing them a disservice."

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

SECTION 4: Funding Streams for District-Led Summer Learning

To better understand supports for summer learning, we examined funding streams that districts and states access to deliver summer learning programs and district efforts to strengthen quality experiences for students who are from populations that are socioeconomically vulnerable. Our research explored how these funding streams are administered at the state and district levels and how they are leveraged to support high-quality summer learning programs.[23]

Overall, we found that the structure of federal and, in some instances, state funding for summer learning programs allows many district leaders to independently develop their programs to suit local needs. The broad and extensive nature of federal and state policies allows district leaders discretion in funding and designing summer programs (focused literacy policy initiatives, academic supports, etc.).

Prior to the summer of 2020, the districts in our study leveraged multiple sources of funding to support their summer learning programs. During our interviews with district stakeholders, we sought to obtain information about how they braided or blended multiple sources of funding[24] to support their summer programs. We also interviewed and surveyed 21st CCLC state leads for their insights into how their subgrantees (e.g., districts and CBOs) leveraged funding. Their responses are covered in this section.

Federal Funding

In general, federal funding is flexible in how it can be used to support OST programming, and there are few specific guidelines regarding summer learning. The rationale for each funding source is defined in federal legislation or policies. For example, Title I funding determination reflects community characteristics (e.g., up to 185% of federal poverty level), while two other major sources of funding, CCDF and TANF,[25] are accessed at the individual household level. Ultimately, state and local education and state child-care agencies determine how programming is developed and facilitated across their service area. We learned from state-level stakeholders that state leadership can allot federal funds (e.g., 21st CCLC, TANF, and CCDF) across a state to support summer learning programs, and the districts may have discretion to shape programs to suit community needs.

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[23] In addition to the information gathered through interviews with district and state respondents as well as a survey of 21st CCLC state leads, we also conducted an analysis of three major traditional federal funding streams that have been used by states and districts to fund summer programs: Title I, CCDF, and TANF. A brief summary is included near the end of this section, and more details are included in Appendix B: Federal Funding for Summer Learning Programs. It is worth noting that this information was gathered at the onset of this summer learning landscape study. At the time of publication, some policies may have changed since first documenting this information.

[24] From Urban Institute: "Blended and braided funding both involve combining two or more sources (or 'streams') of funding to support a program or activity. Braided funding pools multiple funding streams toward one purpose while separately tracking and reporting on each source of funding. Blended funding combines, or 'comingles,' multiple funding streams for one purpose without continuing to differentiate or track individual sources." https://workforce.urban.org/strategy/blended-and-braided-funding

[25] *TANF* stands for "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families," and *CCDF* stands for "Child Care Development Fund."

District respondents most commonly reported that they used Title I funds for their summer programs, with nearly one-half of district representatives reporting it as one source of federal funding. They also reported, in smaller numbers, that that their summer efforts are supported in part through other Title programs, including Title II, Title III, Title IV, and Title VI programs. A number of district leaders indicated that they accessed funding from one or more of the Title programs, but they were not able to identify the specific one(s). The predominance of Title program funding to support summer learning programs is consistent with what we learned from 21st CCLC state leads, with the majority (more than 80%) indicating that their subgrantees receive some form of Title funding.

About one one-fifth of district leaders also indicated that they support their programs with other sources of federal funding but were not aware of the exact sources. None of the district leaders that we spoke with reported that they had access to CCDF or TANF funds for their summer programs.[26] Among 21st CCLC state leads included in the study, a small number reported that their subgrantees (possibly CBOs rather than districts) used CCDF and TANF funding to support summer programs. Furthermore, district leaders reported that the 21st CCLC program, a federal funding mechanism for many district-led OST opportunities during the school year, was not as often accessed or blended with other funding sources for their districts' summer programs; roughly one-fourth of district leaders mentioned that their district received funding from 21st CCLC program for summer programming. While it appears that these sources are not as commonly used to support districts' summer programs, it is also important to note that this finding could be due to either a lack of awareness or pre-COVID policies that made it difficult for districts to access these funds.

Although district interviewees were not knowledgeable about the use of TANF and CCDF funds for summer learning, our review of secondary sources revealed that states have used these funding sources to fund summer programs. For example:

- Tennessee uses CCDF funds for its Read to be Ready summer literacy program, which seeks to raise awareness about the importance of reading, unite efforts to address low reading achievement, highlight best practices, and build partnerships in child-care environments.[27]

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[26] Although both CCDF and TANF are determined by household income levels, states can find creative ways to use these funds. CCDF lead agencies can provide financial assistance for childcare to families with children up to age 13. States are required to allocate *quality set aside* funding from 4 to 9 percent out of their CCDF federal funds to support quality initiatives. States can also use CCDF for the PD of the child-care workforce, which in some states leads to partnerships with SEAs and other stakeholders to strengthen out-of-school and summer learning. Governmental bodies have the option to use TANF funds to provide financial assistance to families with low incomes to access childcare through a process called the TANF Transfer, in which the funds are treated as CCDF dollars and must be spent according to CCDF rules. Thus, these funds augment the single consolidated child-care program and can be used to support summer learning opportunities.

[27] Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, December 6). *TDOE awards $8.9 million for Read to Be Ready summer programs.* https://www.tn.gov/education/news/2018/12/6/tdoe-awards--8-9-million-for-read-to-be-ready-summer-programs.html

→ With TANF funding, Georgia provided both afterschool and summer programming for high school students as a strategy to prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies.[28]

State, Local, and Other Sources of Funding

Districts also rely on other funding sources to support their summer programs. Roughly one-half of district leaders we interviewed shared that they used state funds for their programs. In many cases, these districts were in states that had dedicated funding for literacy-focused policy initiatives. Only a few district leaders stated that they used local sources of funding. A minority of 21st CCLC state leads reported that their subgrantees received state or local funding to support their summer programming.

In addition to public sources of funding, districts also may rely on private sources to support their programs. Nearly one-half of district leaders we spoke with indicated that they used private sources, such as foundation grants, individual donors, and participant fees. The districts that mentioned they relied on participant fees for summer programming most often used these funds to support gifted and talented programs or to help defray the costs of afternoon programs or extended hours.

> Ultimately, districts look to the state to figure out what they "have" to do, but other than following state-level guidance and mandated requirements, local decision-makers have a great deal of latitude in shaping their summer programs.

We also learned from several state-level stakeholders that state legislation and state funding for summer learning programs are closely intertwined. Legislation authorizes state-level funding opportunities that districts can access for summer learning. State legislation also can specify eligibility (e.g., number of Title I students in a school or priority populations) and program criteria (e.g., require a minimum number of hours of direct instruction or partnerships with CBOs). However, we also found that while states can determine funding eligibility, specify minimum criteria for state-funded programs, and issue guidance, most decisions about school-community partnerships, staffing, and other programmatic elements about summer are made at the local district level to suit their communities' needs. Ultimately, districts look to the

[28] National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment. (2019, September). Using CCDF and TANF to support quality out-of-school time care. *Voices from the Field, 8.* https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ sites/default/files/public/ncase-using-ccdf-tanf-ost-508c.pdf

state to figure out what they "have" to do, but other than following state-level guidance and mandated requirements, local decision-makers have a great deal of latitude in shaping their summer programs.

COVID-19 Pandemic Context

Federal Relief Funds

To better understand the effect of COVID-19-related funding on summer programming, we conducted additional research into the three federal supplements passed in 2020 and 2021.[29] We provide a brief summary below, noting the implications for summer learning. For more detail, see Appendix B: Federal Funding for Summer Learning Programs.

Supplements due to the COVID-19 pandemic included multi-year federal investments. This funding allows states to support summer learning opportunities for families in need of summer care and programming. Several states used this additional funding and support for summer learning in 2020 and 2021. For example:

- Rhode Island used funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to improve 2020 summer learning efforts and to identify best practices to address the social-emotional needs of students, staff, and families.
- North Carolina used funds from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) to implement a summer learning program in summer 2021 to support kindergarten readiness.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) additionally has detailed language about the use of funds with regard to summer learning and includes 1 percent of funds ($1.25 billion) for evidence-based summer learning and enrichment. For example, ARPA requires that local education agencies adhere to the requirement that no less than 20 percent of funding they receive be "reserved to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment..."[30]

[29] Respondents in only 11 of the districts were able to speak knowledgeably about Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding, and those indicated they had used it to support summer programming in 2020 or were planning to use it in summer 2021.

[30] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, March 11). U.S. *Department of Education factsheet, American rescue plan act of 2021, Elementary and secondary school emergency relief fund (ARP ESSER)*. https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf

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SECTION 5:
Promising Practices and Ongoing Challenges

Through this study, we learned about the ways that districts sought to support high-quality summer learning, explored how these programs were implemented prior to COVID-19, and identified specific practices that districts will continue to use post-pandemic (e.g., a greater emphasis on students' SEL). We heard about well-established practices, such as offering a combination of academic and enrichment activities, using effective family and community engagement strategies, employing skilled staff and school leadership, offering ongoing professional learning, and leveraging external partnerships and collaboration.

We also heard about persistent challenges. Many programs did not operate in summer 2020, or they did so in a limited fashion. When speaking about the challenges that they face under normal circumstances, respondents most frequently cited transportation and funding, which have implications for equitable access to summer learning opportunities. Study participants also mentioned additional barriers to implementing their programs, including the limited pool of qualified staff and difficulties developing effective school-community partnerships.

Promising Practices

Study participants shared a range of factors that contribute to their programs' success, including program content, community and family engagement, school leadership, staff PD, and external collaborations and partnerships.

Student-Centered Programming

In our interviews with district leaders, we heard that successful summer programs are those that have meaningful student participation and community engagement, garner enthusiasm from schools and teachers, and result in strong academic outcomes for students. In addition, district leaders believe summer programs should provide a safe space for students, not feel like school, and have a positive learning culture. Study respondents also suggested that consistent student attendance is critical for success, which is aligned with established research that shows the positive affect attendance has on academic performance.[31]

Comprehensive Academic and Enrichment Activities

Respondents cited their districts' academic offerings and students' academic growth as critical indicators of the success of their programs. District leaders also described various enrichment opportunities when talking about programmatic successes. For example, interviewees said that they increased or embedded fun or enriching activities (e.g., chess tournaments or field trips) within their summer programming, which they felt had a strong positive impact on students.

[31] Schwartz, H. L., McCombs, J. S., Augustine, C. H., & Leschitz, J. T. (2018). *Getting to work on summer learning: Recommended practices for success* (2nd ed). RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR366-1.html

Family and Community Engagement

We also heard from district representatives about the various ways they engaged with families and school communities. For example, one district interviewee talked about how they engaged the community in decision-making about summer programming; another district engaged families by being available for phone calls at times most convenient for families; and another district worked hard to ensure that families were connected with the right community-based partners to improve access to social services (e.g., child-care assistance, food assistance, and transportation).

Skilled Personnel and Dedicated Funding

The district leaders we spoke with also highlighted their strong staff and district-level leadership as key to their program's success. They described how staff who oversee programming, such as principals, show great leadership; teachers are thoughtful; and health and wellness support staff, such as nurses, are effective. In one instance, an interviewee noted that they had hired three principals the previous summer to serve as a core leadership team and provide oversight for the summer program. In another case, the school board was very successful at not only providing leadership but also in supporting summer programs with funding. Dedicated resources and staff were important to effective implementation. Interviewees also explained how supervisory staff can provide extra support during the summer; for example, because there were fewer programs and individual classrooms to oversee than during the school year, a curriculum manager visited a site every day in one district. Additionally, a few respondents noted that inter-department collaboration was effective, for example, in bringing together teachers and youth development staff.

Staff Professional Development

Study respondents shared that they felt positive about the PD opportunities they were able to offer to leadership and teachers. They noted how administrators have grown through coaching and how teachers have improved their teaching practice as a result of successful professional learning experiences.

External Partnerships and Collaboration

Study participants underscored the importance of strong district-partner collaborations. They shared how effective partnerships strengthen the design and implementation of summer learning programs. For example, we learned about purposeful partnerships in which half-day 21st CCLC summer programs were paired with other half-day programs offered through the district or community to create opportunities for full-day programming. And in another example, in one state, tribal partnership programs operated in the morning, and 21st CCLC programs ran in the same locations in the afternoon. In addition to coordinating programming, tribal partners offered staffing and support to 21st CCLC programs.

Ongoing Challenges

Respondents described a variety of overarching challenges affecting their districts and summer learning programs. Topics mentioned by a range of respondents related to transportation, access and equity, student attendance, funding, staff skills, partnerships, and advocacy.

Transportation

By and large, lack of transportation (and lack of funding for transportation) was a commonly cited barrier by both district and 21st CCLC respondents. This challenge generally was described in two ways: (1) the city or town itself did not have proper public transportation systems in place, or (2) the program was unable to properly fund transportation to ensure student attendance.

The 21st CCLC state leads particularly highlighted the challenge of including children from rural or remote areas of the state. During the summer, because fewer sites are available, students often need to travel longer distances to reach the program. During the school year, 21st CCLC subgrantees' programs often serve students within their same school building during afterschool hours, eliminating the need for transportation to the program site. During the summer, however, the 21st CCLC subgrantees' programs are responsible for getting the children to and from the program. The cost of bus service is remarkably high, especially when buses need to travel long distances. During interviews, 21st CCLC leads said that students can spend up to two hours each way on buses.

Equitable Access to Programming

Multiple respondents described challenges related to ensuring students who need the most support attend summer programming. However, support looks different depending on the district and school population. For example, one district leader spoke about the major challenges in serving their district's significant homeless population. Another interviewee noted the barriers that families face finding affordable childcare even when they qualify for child-care assistance; this can be a challenge for working parents in districts that only offer half-day programming or do not have late-afternoon program options. Another study participant shared how some departments within their district are not well-coordinated; as a result, their programs did not receive IEPs or other education plans from the school year for individual students, which meant that programs had to modify or adapt their programming quickly with little notice to best serve these students. A few 21st CCLC state leads pointed out challenges related to enrollment eligibility and rules that affect summer programs. One issue that affects subgrantees' summer programs is that some children who live in the community for the summer (e.g., because they live with relatives during the summer) are not enrolled in the school district and therefore are not eligible to attend school-based summer programs.

Addressing Student and Family Needs

During interviews, study participants also shared common barriers to engaging effectively with families. The most frequently mentioned topics were language and cultural barriers. Several district leaders and community partners pointed out the large number of languages spoken in their districts and, in many districts, the growing number of immigrants and refugees. They additionally shared that some families simply do not have prior experience with summer learning programs and are reluctant to change their views on the purpose of summer. Summer traditions, including spending time out of state or out of the country with family, can be hard to give up for what might be perceived as more time in school. Recognizing the breadth of families' needs and "meeting them where they are" are a challenge and opportunity for summer programs. School districts have stepped up to meet families' needs, but our study respondents also acknowledged that it takes time and money to intentionally nurture the school-family relationship.

Funding

Study participants frequently cited funding as a key challenge. Respondents described how funding (and the lack thereof) affects transportation, program quality, access and opportunity for students and families, and efforts to serve students in a way that can make the most impact. We also heard about concerns regarding stability and predictability of funding. For example, one district representative described how funding for summer programming came from Title I funding and surplus funding from the school year, which made it hard to predict the availability of funding from year to year. Another interviewee expressed concern that the influx of funding from the ARPA would abruptly end, which would be consequential for planning future summer learning opportunities.

The 21st CCLC state leads also described specific challenges with funding through the 21st CCLC program. Many of the comments shared during interviews regarding funding were general, for example, "not enough money" and "summer programs need more funding." For instance, one 21st CCLC state lead explained that there is a significant difference between what the state requests and what they are awarded through the 21st CCLC program. During another interview, a 21st CCLC state lead pointed out that the money for 21st CCLC is allocated for the year and that the funding can be "eaten up" by the school-year programming before it's available for summer programming. This forces some 21st CCLC state leads to conclude that they need to choose between quality school-year programs and supporting summer programs. One study respondent added that with more money, they would create more robust summer programs, offer competitive wages, and be able to keep staff. Some 21st CCLC state leads recognized that many programs do not have the funding to offer enough families access to their programs. They noted that additional funding could help with expanding enrollment, addressing waiting lists, and offering additional free programming.

Staffing

Respondents spoke about challenges related to staff qualifications and capacity. Staff who are hired to teach in summer programs come with a range of experiences (e.g., classroom assistants, college students, and school-year teachers). As noted in the RAND 2018 report *Getting to Work on Summer Learning*, "Summer teachers who have recently taught in either the sending or the receiving grade level are more likely to have deep content and content-specific pedagogical knowledge for the grade of students they are teaching. Some districts assigned teachers to grade levels and subjects that matched the teachers' recent experience—avoiding, for instance, assigning a middle-school physical education teacher to teach third-grade reading. By matching teachers' summer experience to their school-year experience, districts also aimed to maximize teacher knowledge of grade-level standards and children's developmental stages."[32]

An interviewee described that the staff who teach summer programs are often just the "least exhausted" of the staff who worked during the school year. Teacher burnout was a concern for those working over the summer. Other staffing-related challenges mentioned by respondents included the lack of competitive wages, turnover, and staff rejuvenation (making sure they have enough of a break over the summer so that they're rejuvenated for the following academic year).

Building Effective Partnerships

Although we heard about promising practices regarding district-community partnerships, we also heard from district leaders who struggled with building effective partnerships. Study respondents shared that they grappled with having strategic conversations with partners about how to have a mutually beneficial partnership. A related theme that we heard from respondents is that it takes time to build trust among the different parties involved. We also heard that districts often were looking to work with partners to complement what the district offers. Finding the right partner to fill that need may come down to the available partners within a district or school community as well as the CBOs' organizational mission, program offerings and capacity, and staff skill sets. One interviewee cited the need for an afterschool coalition or summer learning coalition to more effectively advocate for the benefits of summer learning programs, indicating the value of promoting the district's or state's commitment to summer programming more broadly.

[32] Schwartz, H. L., McCombs, J. S., Augustine, C. H., & Leschitz, J. T. (2018). *Getting to work on summer learning: Recommended practices for success* (2nd ed). RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR366-1.html

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides insight into how individuals responsible for district-led, publicly funded K–8 summer learning programs access and use supports to improve and advance equitable outcomes for the K–8 grade students that they serve. Overall, district leaders are striving to provide meaningful summer programs and recognize summer as an important time to reinforce and extend school-year learning while offering enrichment activities and opportunities not available during the school year. Districts take a variety of approaches, weaving funding and tailoring partnerships to best serve the needs of various schools and communities. Despite the significant threats of the pandemic during summer 2020, many districts resumed programming in 2021. Significant federal investments can serve to bolster districts' efforts for years to come.

The findings from this study can help inform decision-making about summer programming. We have outlined a few high-level implications and opportunities for future research.

Implications for Policy and Practice

More intentional collaboration between districts and partners can help ensure that their respective interests and capacities are aligned to promote students' learning and overall development.

This study highlighted the promise of effective district-community partnerships in strengthening the design, implementation, and quality of summer learning programs. Each district's approach may be tailored to its students, families, and communities, and partnerships are a valuable resource for district-led summer programs. Through this research, we learned about a variety of partnership models. Partners often bring a youth development lens to summer programming, helping to ensure the programs focus on positive SEL and mental health development in addition to academics (e.g., social clubs and team-building activities in addition to tutoring or direct instruction). Community partners also provide districts with an expanded staffing pool beyond district educators. While most districts reported overall that their partnerships enriched their summer learning efforts, they were not without challenges. For, example, we heard about how some districts struggled to develop mutually beneficial arrangements that built on the respective strengths of each party. With all the resources and connections community partners bring to their work with districts, ensuring that these partnerships are effective is critical to the success of summer learning programs.

Districts can fund summer programs from a variety of sources and should use the influx of COVID-19-related supplemental funding to invest in quality improvement and sustainability strategies.

This research examined some of the connections between federal funding, policies, and initiatives for OST and summer learning and their potential influence on district-led efforts. Although there are general requirements and guidance, provisions regarding the design and implementation of summer programs are not clearly defined, particularly in federal funding guidelines (e.g., 21st CCLC, Title I, TANF, and CCDF).

The supplemental federal COVID-19 relief funding includes new investments in education, including OST and summer programs. States can play a key role in distributing these funds to districts, and with a focus in the legislation on equitable allocation of funds and supports, this influx of funding offers opportunities for state policymakers to make greater targeted investments in summer learning, which can help to increase districts' capacity to meet all students' needs.

Through our research, we learned about long-standing issues and challenges faced by districts and their partners such as transportation, limited qualified staff, and

difficulties developing strategic school-community partnerships. As states consider the allocation of federal relief funds, they could consider tactical investments to address these broader systemic barriers for now and the future.

Future supports for summer learning programs can build upon established promising practices while incorporating recent adaptations from the field.

The timing and focus of this study, along with other emerging insights from the field, provide an opportunity to reflect on the state of summer learning, to reflect on the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to apply lessons learned from this experience. The existing body of research on summer learning offers evidence-based practices, such as offering a combination of academic and enrichment activities,[33] which study respondents suggest are even more relevant as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the increased focus on supporting students' SEL and creatively engaging family and community members are strategies that district leaders highlighted in our interviews as particularly important during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, district summer learning programs were largely designed to provide academic support for students who were failing or at risk of failing. However, as a result of the pandemic, summer learning stakeholders recognize the need for a focus on whole-child learning (social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development, as well as their physical and mental health). Time will tell whether adaptations driven by the context of the pandemic will in fact inform changes in policy and practice in the future.

Opportunities for Future Research

A more in-depth examination of district summer learning programs and related supports would yield valuable information to help inform the field of OST and summer learning.

Because of the collaborative and somewhat distributed staffing structure of district-led summer learning, we recognize the limitations in the information that we were able to gather from interviews with one or two individuals per district. Summer learning programs often require coordination with multiple departments within a district (e.g., teaching and learning, afterschool programming, transportation, student services, and family and community engagement). In addition, community partners have important yet varying roles and responsibilities. Some are well-integrated within the district and its systems while others operate separately or on the periphery.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to district-led summer learning programs. Additional research using continuous improvement or real-time evaluation cycles might provide deeper dives into a small sample of districts to better understand one or more of the following topics:

[33] See for example, Chaplin, D., & Capizzano, J. (2006). *Impacts of a summer learning program: A random assignment study of building educated leaders for life (BELL)*. Urban Institute.

- **Effective approaches to district-community partnerships:** Our research revealed a range of partnership models. This study was not centrally focused on documenting characteristics of district-community partnerships, but we found some evidence of successful partnerships as well as some indicators of persistent challenges. Additional research could explore the facilitators of and barriers to effective partnership.

- **Best practices for and challenges with regard to parent and family engagement.** Through our research, we learned that districts' parent and family engagement strategies varied based on the local population and community needs. Future research could uncover in greater depth whether and how district leaders use evidence-based approaches to engaging families and communities, particularly those from groups that have been historically marginalized.

- **Professional development priorities and opportunities for additional support:** This study provides insights into the variety of PD and other resources that summer learning stakeholders use to plan and implement their programs. The pandemic surfaced additional areas of need, and many districts and community partners have sought to build their staff capacity in areas such as supporting students' and educators' mental health and well-being; addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion; and developing an integrated focus on whole-child learning. Documenting and elevating promising practices, tools, and resources could help ensure that program exemplars are shared beyond specific districts and states to encourage knowledge sharing and skill building.

An examination into new federal- and state-level funding for summer programs over the next few years could assess how districts respond during this period.

Future research could accomplish the following:

- Explore how districts use new federal and state funding sources to improve access and programming. Related research could also examine how families access such programs, highlighting both facilitators and barriers to family engagement.

- Identify district leaders' barriers to accessing funding and opportunities for improved linkages between public funding streams and district-led programs.

- Examine the opportunities and challenges of using short-term funding solutions to address structural and systemic issues facing the summer learning workforce (e.g., staff recruitment and retention, pay and incentives, and professional learning and development).

> We may, truly, be at the point of a bold rebirth for summer learning—a time for it to be more central to the public education commitment we make to our children and families.

Much of our nation's infrastructure has been challenged by the pandemic, with our educational system taking major blows. Yet schools, teachers, students, and families have persevered. There is no doubt that learning was truncated during this time, but dedicated educators and school leaders redoubled their efforts and deployed strategies to make the best of virtual school. The OST and summer learning field also faced barriers as many programs had to be halted and far fewer children were served. Yet, the field has also endured these challenges. In fact, summer is now seen as part of the solution to the challenges of supporting students' growth and development. We may, truly, be at the point of a bold rebirth for summer learning—a time for it to be more central to the public education commitment we make to our children and families. We hope this research can play a small part in paving that road forward.

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APPENDIX A: DETAILED METHODOLOGY FOR PRIMARY RESEARCH

This study ties together perspectives from district representatives and community partners, staff from 21st CCLC offices, and other state-level stakeholders involved in the design, implementation, and funding of district-led summer learning programs. Initially, we planned two rounds of primary data collection with district contacts, 21st CCLC state leads, and other state-level respondents in fall 2020 and in spring 2021. However, due to the persistent challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and their effects on study participants' availability and appropriate timing of data collection, we decided to conduct one extended round of data collection starting in October 2020 and continuing through early May 2021. As a result, depending on when a particular interview took place, we incorporated questions about plans for summer 2021 as appropriate.

Following is a description of the three main research areas.

Districts

Research Objectives

The objectives of the district research were to document how district leaders make decisions about the design and implementation of summer learning programs, including key motivating factors that drive planning and decision-making, partners and collaborators, policies that influence these programs, available funding, PD and other supports, and opportunities for future improvement.

Foundational Research

We conducted online research on an initial sample of 70 districts (described below) to document publicly available information on districts' summer programs as well as to identify key points of contact for interviews.

Sample Selection

The primary goal of the district selection was to identify urban districts that have high concentrations of students whose families are socioeconomically vulnerable. To achieve a sample that reflects this goal, we developed several criteria and related rationale. This initial sample of 70 districts was the basis of our foundational background research. Based on this research, we selected a final sample of 50 districts for the interviews.

The initial sample frame of 70 districts included 39 states and Washington, D.C. Following, we describe the steps that we used to develop this sample:

- **Step 1:** We identified all public school districts with K–12 enrollment equal to or greater than 20,000 students and free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) for more than 50 percent of the enrolled students.[34] The enrollment criterion focused the sample on medium-, large-, and extra-large-sized[35] school districts situated in urban centers. We used the criterion of FRL as a proxy for socioeconomic vulnerability. This step resulted in narrowing the sample to 208 districts.

- **Step 2a:** We then examined the list of districts and observed that it included multiple significantly sized districts within the same county. The majority of these districts were in New York City (e.g., Bronx, Queens, and Kings Counties) and were not representative of districts in other places because of their location and relationship to each other within New York City. As a result, we removed these districts from the sample, which narrowed it to 187 districts.

- **Step 2b:** From the list of districts in 2a, we identified several indicators of districts pre-disposed to summer learning, including involvement in the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) New Vision for Summer School (NVSS) Network or being the subject of an NSLA brief. We also took into consideration the size and locale of the districts.

This helped us to determine the minimum number of districts to include in the initial sample. Where possible, we sought to include roughly the same proportion of districts with these characteristics from the list of 187 districts in Step 2a as in the initial sample of 70 districts.

- **Step 3:** To develop the sample of 70 districts, we limited the list to include a maximum of three districts for California and Texas and a maximum of two districts for the remaining states. We prioritized districts based on the highest percentage of FRL or ***combined proportion*** of Black and Hispanic/Latinx student enrollment (again, focusing on indicators of socioeconomic vulnerability). We also took into account several other considerations related to the larger research effort (described below), including (a) districts in states that overlapped the sample included in our research examining state resources and supports and (b) districts in states with 21st CCLC program requirements for summer learning.

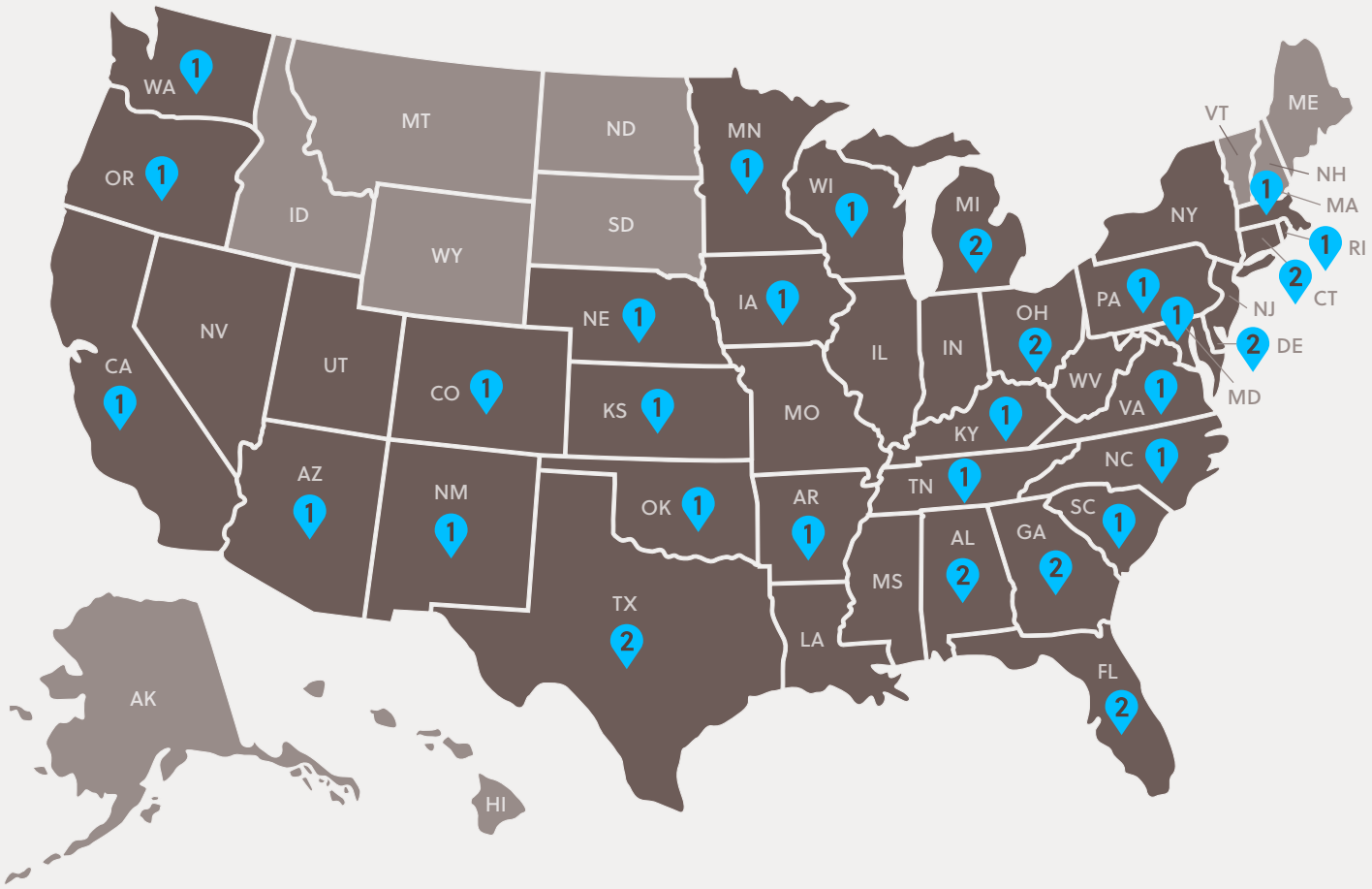
[34] District enrollment >20,000 for 2018-19 [National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) - http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/]. The NCES data did not include or report data on free or reduced-price lunch for 19 of these districts, but based on our knowledge of these districts, we assumed that at least 50 percent of their students would qualify.

[35] Based on the following school district size criteria: medium = 20,000–50,000 students; large = 50,000–100,000 students; and extra-large ≥ 100,000 students.

Data Collection

We sought to complete interviews with 50 districts and ultimately conducted 42 interviews with a total of 47 individuals representing 38 districts in 30 states. Between November 2020 and May 2021, team members conducted semi-structured telephone or videoconference interviews with these individuals (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. **District Data Collection and Final Sample**



KEY

Met district sample criteria

Did not meet district sample criteria

1 | 2 **Number of districts interviewed**

The districts were primarily medium-sized urban districts with sizable proportions of Black and Hispanic/Latinx students. Table 2 displays key demographic characteristics of the final sample.

Table 2. **District Sample Demographic Characteristics**

Districts Interviewed		Number of Districts (n = 38)	Percent
District Size	Medium (20,000–49,999)	27	71%
	Large (50,000–99,999)	7	18%
	Extra-large (>100,000)	4	11%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	50%–60%	18	47%
	61%–70%	8	21%
	71%–80%	4	11%
	81%–90%	5	13%
	91%–100%	3	8%
Locale	City	34	89%
	Suburb	4	11%
Black and Hispanic/Latinx Students	<10%	1	3%
	11%–40%	1	3%
	41%–70%	16	42%
	71%–100%	20	53%

21st CCLC

Research Objectives

The main objectives of this element of the research were to determine how states' 21st CCLC programs support summer learning programs, including rules and requirements for subgrantees. We also sought to obtain information about subgrantees' summer program design and implementation, state-led professional learning opportunities, and other supports.

Foundational Research

An initial task was to review publicly available information to assess the landscape of states' 21st CCLC programs, uncovering the extent to which summer learning programming is funded and supported by states' programs. The initial analysis

focused on information about select characteristics related to summer programming that informed our sample criteria (e.g., summer programming requirements or whether states' 21st CCLC programs offered applicants points for including summer learning in their proposals). Team members also documented other information, including indications of support for summer learning PD and general information about summer learning policies and programming.

Sample Selection

To develop the interview sample, we chose criteria that would narrow our sample to those states that appeared to prioritize summer programming (based on our review of information documented in annual reports, evaluation reports, and requests for proposals). We established two main criteria for the sample: (1) that the 21st CCLC state program requires their grantees to offer summer programming and/or (2) that the state 21st CCLC program attributes points in the application process to grantees for such programming or hosts a specific grant competition focused on summer learning.

Using these two main criteria, we narrowed the sample from 50 states and Washington, D.C., to 30 states and Washington, D.C. We sought to complete interviews with 25 21st CCLC state leads. To narrow our sample down to 25 while connecting this element of the research to the study's larger focus on districts and their implementation of summer learning programs, we prioritized states that were represented in the district sample.

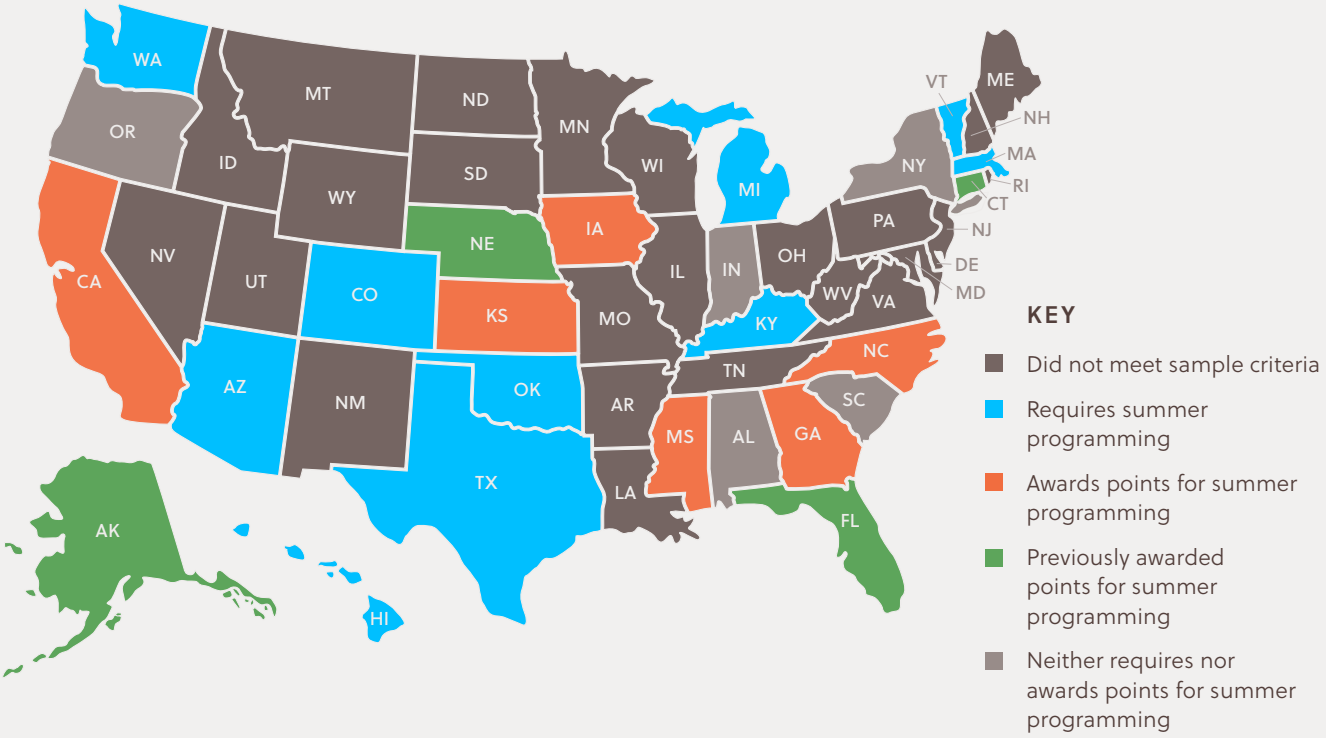
Data Collection

Between October 2020 and January 2021, we conducted semi-structured telephone or videoconference interviews with 25 21st CCLC state leads. The interviews were focused on 21st CCLC-funded summer learning programs in 2019 and 2020 (as relevant), including how the state-level 21st CCLC program is run, how decisions are made, and opportunities for future improvement.

In an effort to refine the interview data, we conducted a follow-up survey with all 25 21st CCLC state leads. We also sought to obtain information about plans for summer 2021 through the survey. The survey was administered in April and May 2021 and received 21 out of 25 responses for an 84 percent response rate.

During the interviews and follow-up surveys with 21st CCLC state leads, we sought to confirm information regarding states' requirements for summer learning and identify those states that awarded points for it. As shown in Figure 7, 10 of the 25 states (40%) in which we spoke to 21st CCLC representatives have a requirement for summer programming in their grant application. Because summer programming is required in these states, we assumed that priority points for summer programming are not applicable. Through the survey data, we confirmed that at least 6 of the 15 states that do not require summer learning in their application for grant funding do award priority points for including summer programming: California, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, and North Carolina. Figure 7 summarizes our understanding of these two indicators by state.

Figure 7. **21st CCLC Data Collection and Final Sample**



Other State Resources and Supports

Research Objectives

This aspect of the study involved an examination of state-level supports for summer learning to explore whether and how these supports affect district-level summer programming. This research also sought to document the extent to which each state in the study elevates, invests in, and coordinates supports for summer learning through policies or funding authorized by the state legislature or the governor as well as through efforts managed by other organizations operating on a statewide basis.

Foundational Research

We conducted online research and reviewed documents to investigate policies and practices in a select group of states to understand the extent to which state-level coordination, funding, and other resources exist and are used to support district-led summer learning programs.

Sample Selection

We used a purposeful sampling frame in selecting states for this element of the study. We started with a list of states included in samples for the district and the 21st CCLC research (described above). We then conducted a scan of available online information about state-level systems of support for summer learning and consulted with our advisors to further narrow the sample. We also ensured that our final selection of

states included geographic diversity. After selecting six states[36] for further investigation, we conducted interviews with state-level stakeholders to clarify and deepen our understanding of the issues influencing decision-making about summer learning initiatives, related PD, funding, and other supports.

Data Collection

We conducted interviews from February to April 2021 with key state-level stakeholders to identify the range of state-offered and coordinated supports, including PD, for summer learning programs. In each of our selected states, we first interviewed the State Afterschool Network lead. As statewide intermediaries focused on afterschool and summer programming (via advocacy, PD, and other supports), we believed these contacts would be most knowledgeable about the variety of ways their state might be supporting summer learning. In addition to these initial interviews with the network leads, we also sought to interview contacts within the state department of education or another state-level agency or organization to help triangulate the information we gathered from our initial sources. However, we were only able to conduct these additional state agency-level interviews in two of our chosen states (California and Oregon). In the interviews, we asked respondents to describe how their organization or office supported summer learning; to provide the general context for how summer programs "happen" in their state;[37] to describe any state-level funding or other formal supports for summer learning; and to identify both state-level facilitators and challenges related to summer learning programs.

[36] The six states we selected for interviews were Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon. We were unable to schedule an interview with our contact in Alabama, but we successfully interviewed at least one contact in all other states.

[37] Note: This summary does not address districts' extended school-year (ESY) services because our research found that this does not vary across states. This program is linked to students with disabilities' right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. States' role regarding ESY is about interpreting whether ESY services are necessary for FAPE to be in place for individual students (as having an IEP does not, by itself, qualify a student to receive ESY). There does not seem to be any real variation across states in how ESY is administered or which students are targeted, other than in Texas, which recently passed legislation extending eligibility for ESY services beyond the baseline criteria to all elementary-aged children.

APPENDIX B: FEDERAL FUNDING FOR SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

This section provides a summary of our research on four major federal funding streams that states can use to support summer learning programming:[38]

1) Title I, Part A (low-income families) and Title I, Part C (migrant education)
2) Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF)
3) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
4) 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

While the funding sources above are referenced, there are other funding opportunities available for summer programming that must meet specific criteria, such as using Title II for literacy instruction. We also include a review of supplemental funding passed in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic:

1) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES)
2) Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA)
3) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Title I

Estimated FY 2020 Appropriations: $15.8 billion[39]

Background

Title I funding provides supplemental funds to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools to assist schools with high concentrations of students experiencing poverty or coming from households with low incomes in meeting school educational goals. Legislatively, Title I was Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was the cornerstone of President L. B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" in 1965.[40] In 2015, ESEA was reauthorized during the Obama administration as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).[41]

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[38] In addition to these federal sources, some support for summer meals is provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by way of programs such as the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). However, the funding is not specific to actual programming. Note that this information was gathered at the onset of this summer learning landscape study; at the time of publication, some policies may have changed since first documenting this information.

[39] Committee for Education Funding. (2019, May). *Education matters: Investing in America's future: Fiscal year 2020 budget analysis*. https://cef.org/wp-content/uploads/FY-2020-CEF-Budget-Book_FINAL.pdf.

[40] EducationWeek Staff. (2004, August 4). Title I. EducationWeek. http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/title-i/.

[41] U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. https://www.ed.gov/essa?s-rc=rn

Title I, Part A funding is determined by the number of students from low-income households within a district or LEA. These funds are used in several ways, such as the following:

- Curriculum and instructional improvement
- Instructional activities
- Counseling
- Parental involvement
- Hiring of needed staff
- Program improvement
- Improving school climate
- Supporting students' social and emotional needs

The types of students served by Title I funds can include English language learners; students with disabilities; students who are immigrants; students who are homeless, neglected, delinquent, or at-risk; or any student in need.[42] Fundamentally, Title I, Part A funding assists schools in meeting the educational goals of students from low-income households.

Relevance to Summer Learning

There are two Title I, Part A models authorized under ESSA: a schoolwide program and a targeted assistance program. Both programs, however, are dependent upon the school using (1) research-based strategies to improve student achievement and (2) strategies that support and encourage parent involvement.[43] An LEA's allocation is the amount received as determined by the sum of all four statutory formulas: basic grants, concentration grants, targeted grants, and Education Finance Incentive Grants (EFIG).[44]

Schools receiving Title I money to support a schoolwide program may use their funds to improve student achievement throughout their entire school; therefore, every child benefits from the added services and programs, not just the students identified as eligible to participate.

A targeted assistance school receives Title I funds for services targeting only a select group of children, that is, those students identified as most at risk of failing to meet the challenging content and student performance standards.[45] These schools are typically ineligible for schoolwide support or have chosen not to operate a schoolwide program.

Schools within an LEA's jurisdiction in which 40 percent of the children enrolled are from low-income households can use Title I funds to operate programs that serve the

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[42] U.S. Department of Education, *Every Student Succeeds*.

[43] U.S. Department of Education, *Every Student Succeeds*.

44 U.S. Department of Education, I*mproving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (Title I, Part A)*. https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html

[45] U.S. Department of Education, *Every Student Succeeds*.

entire school population, with the purpose of raising the achievement of the lowest-achieving students.[46] LEAs also must use Title I funds to provide Title I services to eligible children enrolled in private schools.

SUPPORT FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS. Some eligible activities include, but are not limited to, expanded learning time, before school and afterschool program activities, and summer programs and opportunities. In addition, Title I, Part A can be combined with other federal, state, or municipal funding to meet the needs of the LEA.[47]

Title I also includes Part C, which addresses the needs of children of migratory families with six specific purposes:

1) Support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves

2) Ensure that when these children move among the states they are not penalized in any manner that affects graduation qualification and academic achievement overall

3) Ensure the children are provided with appropriate educational services, including supportive services that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner

4) Ensure they receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards as all others are expected to meet

5) Design programs to help children overcome factors that inhibit their ability to do well in school and to have a successful postsecondary transition

6) Ensure that migratory children benefit from state and local systemic reforms [48]

In addition, part of a state's Part C funding must be used for the collection and management of data on the children served. It is important to note that migrant families commonly meet the low-income qualifications as set forth in Part A. State ESSA plans should provide information on in-school and OST services provided to migrant students throughout the normal school year as well as summer.

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[46] U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Parents/Prepare my child for school: Readiness for school. https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html#:~:text=Schools%20in%20which%20children%20from,of%20the%20lowest%2Dachieving%20students

[47] U.S. Department of Education, Prepare my child for school.

[48] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, January 25). Migrant education program (Title 1, part C) – State grants. https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-migrant-education/migrant-education-program/

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)

Estimated FY 2020 Appropriations: $5.8 billion*

**Lead agencies received additional funding via the CARES Act*

Background

CCDF is a federal program authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) - Public Law 113-186 to provide financial assistance to families with low incomes so they can access childcare. The program is administered by states, territories, and tribes, with funding and support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care. *Low-income* is defined as a family's gross monthly income not being more than 127 percent of the federal poverty level during initial eligibility. As a block grant, CCDF is awarded to state or local government bodies in an annual sum of money to help fund child-care-specific projects and programs. States, territories, and tribes select a governmental department or organization, such as their state department of education or department of human services, as the lead agency to administer the funding.

CCDF lead agencies can provide financial assistance for childcare to families with children up to age 13 years, so parents/caregivers can work or attend a job training or educational program. This funding is also used by states to invest in quality initiatives to benefit millions of children by monitoring the health and safety of child-care programs, building the skills and qualifications of the teacher workforce, supporting child-care programs in achieving higher standards, and providing consumer education to help parents select childcare that meets their families' needs. States are required to allocate quality set-aside funding from 4 to 9 percent out of their CCDF federal funds to support quality initiatives.[49]

CCDF is authorized through CCDBG, which was originally included in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 and signed into law by President H. W. Bush.[50] It was subsequently reauthorized in 2014 during the Obama administration.[51] It is managed through federal policies and known as the *CCDF Final Rule*, which consists of a preamble and the corresponding regulatory sections and provides clarity on how to implement the law and administer the program.

Relevance to Summer Learning

CCDF is applicable to all child-care needs, irrespective of time of day or time of year. According to the National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment

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[49] CLASP. (2017). *Implementing the Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization: A guide for states*. https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/implementing-child-care-and-development-block-grant-reauthorization-guide

[50] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Child Care, Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System. (n.d.). *Introduction to CCDF*. https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ccdf-fundamentals/overview-ccdf

[51] McCann, C. (2014, November 17). *CCDBG reauthorization bill to be law of the land*. New America. https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/ccdbgpasses/

(NCASE), 44 percent of all children served through subsidies are school age (5–12 years of age).[52] During the summer months, 26 states and territories see a double-digit percentage increase in the number of school-age children served during these months.[53]

In addition, CCDF is strategically used by a couple of states to underwrite summer learning opportunities that help preschool children gain school-readiness skills and support their forthcoming transition to kindergarten. There are examples of CCDF-funded school-age summer programming to address literacy and other academic skills, such as Tennessee's Read to be Ready summer literacy program, which seeks to raise awareness about the importance of reading, unite efforts to address low reading achievement, highlight best practices, and build partnerships in child-care environments.[54] The additional example found is Georgia's Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program, funded in part by CCDF, which targets three-year-old children whose home language is Spanish.[55]

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

Estimated FY 2020 Appropriations: $17.3 billion[56]

Background

Like CCDF, TANF is another HHS federal program deploying a "welfare-to-work" principle that gives funds to each state's, territory's, or tribe's designated governmental body in the form of a block grant to run its own welfare program. Created out of 1996 welfare reform legislation, in which it succeeded Aid to Families with Dependent Children, TANF was designed to provide support that is temporary in nature and has several limits and requirements, such as time frame and work requirements.[57] TANF funds may be used for the following reasons:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for at home
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage

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[52] NCASE (2021). *National Data Profile of Federal Supports for Afterschool and Summer Child Care.* https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/ncase-national-saccdataprofile-2021_15.pdf

[53] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Child Care, Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System. (n.d.). *Introduction to CCDF.* https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ccdf-fundamentals/overview-ccdf

[54] Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, December 6). *TDOE awards $8.9 million for Read to Be Ready summer programs*. https://www.tn.gov/education/news/2018/12/6/tdoe-awards--8-9-million-for-read-to-be-ready-summer-programs.html

[55] Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (2021). Pre-K summer transition program.https://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/SummerTransitionProgram.aspx

[56] SAM.gov. (n.d.). *Assistance listings: Temporary assistance for needy families*. https://sam.gov/fal/4168af581e644557b1b6a419d8a97ba2/view.

[57] U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Family Assistance. (2019, July 19). *About TANF.* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/about

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families[58]

TANF is one of the few federal assistance programs that does not use the federal poverty guidelines in determining eligibility.59 Eligibility is specified by the individual state.

Relevance to Summer Learning

Governmental bodies have the option to use TANF funds to provide financial assistance to families with low incomes to access childcare through a process called the TANF Transfer, in which the funds are treated as CCDF dollars and must be spent according to CCDF rules. Thus, these funds augment the single consolidated child-care program and can be used to support summer learning opportunities.[60]

Direct support of summer learning opportunities with TANF funding is possible as long as the opportunity is substantiated by one of the reasons deemed by federal regulations (listed above), with the support of the governor and/or state legislature. For example, Georgia provided both afterschool and summer programming for high schoolers under the premise of prevention and reduction of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.[61]

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

FY 2020 Appropriation: $1.3 billion[62]

This program, known as the 21st CCLC program, supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours—afterschool and summer—for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The authorizing legislation for the program is Title IV, Part B of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; 20 U.S.C. 7171-7176).

The program, which can be located in schools or in CBOs, helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment and skill-building activities that can

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[58] U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, HHS.gov. (2012, November 7). *What is TANF?* https://www.hhs.gov/answers/programs-for-families-and-children/what-is-tanf/index.html

[59] Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. (2021, January, 13). *HHS poverty guidelines for 2021.* https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines

[60] U.S. Department of Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Child Care (2021). *OCC fact sheet*. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/fact-sheet

[61] National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment. (2019, September). Using CCDF and TANF to support quality out-of-school time care. *Voices from the Field*, 8. https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/ncase-using-ccdf-tanf-ost-508c.pdf

[62] Afterschool Alliance. (n.d.). *21st CCLC is a Critical Source of Funding for Many Local Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs*. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policy21stcclc.cfm.

complement their regular academic programs; and, through family engagement efforts, offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

Awards are made to state education agencies (SEAs). SEAs in turn manage statewide competitions and award grants to eligible entities, which include LEAs, CBOs, tribes or tribal organizations (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act [25 U.S.C.450b]), or combinations of organizations in partnership. In addition, faith-based organizations are eligible to participate in the 21st CCLC program.

Grantees of the SEAs (which we refer to in the body of the report as state leads) may use the funds to carry out a broad array of OST activities, including summer offerings, to advance student achievement. These activities may include academic enrichment and learning programs, particularly for students who attend low-performing schools; youth development activities; service learning experiences; nutrition and health education; drug and violence prevention programs; and counseling programs. Programs also include activities focused on arts and music, physical fitness and wellness, technology and computer science, STEM content, financial literacy, and environmental literacy. For high-school participants, activities can include internships and apprenticeships. And programs endeavor to engage families in meaningful activities that promote literacy and other educational content.

Table 3 compares the four main federal funding sources described above on key characteristics, including administrative body, income and age eligibility, and funding rationale. We see that CCDF and TANF have similar characteristics regarding eligibility channels and ages of children served. Eligibility for both is determined at the family household level, while Title I funding determination reflects community characteristics, and funding for 21st CCLC is determined at the state education agency. The rationale for each funding source is defined in federal legislation and policies. However, states and LEAs determine how programming is developed and facilitated across their service areas. One other opportunity to note is that states can use CCDF dollars for the professional development of the child-care workforce, which in some states leads to partnerships with SEAs and other stakeholders to strengthen out-of-school and summer learning.

Table 3. **Federal Funding Sources Characteristics**

Funding Source	Eligibility	Rationale	Relevance to Summer Programming	Example
Title I	Schools serving families up to 185% of poverty level	• Academic acceleration and enrichment	• **Part A:** Expanded learning, before school and afterschool programs and activities, and summer programs. • **Part C:** Addresses the needs of children of migratory families.	Vermont's Camp Exclamation Point offers a week-long residential camp for rural and migrant education students.
CCDF	Families that meet less than 127% of federal poverty level	• Childcare • School readiness and academic enrichment	• CCDF is applicable to all child-care needs, irrespective of time of day or the time of year.	Tennessee's Read to be Ready is a summer literacy program.
TANF	Determined by state lead agency	• Assistance to needy families • Job readiness • Pregnancy prevention	• Direct support of summer programming is allowed if it complies with federal regulations and the support of the governor and/or state legislature.	Georgia will provide summer camp programming for students in grades 1–8 to address learning loss.
21st CCLC	Determined by state education agency	• Academic enrichment and family engagement	• Direct support of summer activities is allowed, and some states specifically request proposals for programs that include summer or prioritize applications that include summer (see Figure 7).	Oregon's 21st CCLC state program provided additional funding to expand or enhance summer programs.

Federal COVID-19 Relief Funding

In March 2020, the world underwent a dramatic shift in everyday life due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic rapidly altered school and child-care environments and how children attended and interacted with them, including summer learning programming. The COVID-19 pandemic created economic challenges for the nation, and the federal government responded with three separate, consecutive pieces of legislation in 2020 and 2021: the CARES Act, CRRSAA, and ARPA. Following is a concise review of these three funding opportunities and their relation to summer learning.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

FY 2020 Appropriations: $2.2 trillion

BACKGROUND. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, is a $2.2-trillion economic stimulus bill passed by the 116th U.S. Congress and signed into law on March 27, 2020. Lawmakers developed the bill in response to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.[63] Specific allocations were made for education (U.S. Department of Education) and childcare (U.S. Department of Human Services, Office of Child Care), both of which states can use to support summer learning. The CARES Act funds must be obligated by September 30, 2022 and liquidated by September 30, 2023.[64] *Obligated* means that a state has entered into a legally binding agreement to spend the funds; *liquidated* means that a state has made payments.

The CARES Act provided $30.75 billion in emergency funding for K–12 and higher education, giving states $13 billion to specifically support school districts.[65] The legislation also included over $4 billion for early childhood education, including providers of afterschool or summer programs. Out of these funds, Congress set aside approximately $3 billion for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER), which the U.S. Department of Education awarded in the form of grants to states (governors' offices) based on a formula stipulated in the legislation.[66] The formula is 60 percent on the basis of the state's relative population of individuals aged 5 through 24 years

[63] Congress.gov. (2021, March 26). H.R.748 - *CARES Act*, 2020. 116th Congress (2019–2020). https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/748

[64] Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Office of Child Care. (2020 March 13). *CCDF frequently asked questions in response to COVID-19*. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/faq/ccdf-frequently-asked-questions-response-covid-19#:~:text=CARES%20Act%20funds%20(including%20 those,liquidated%20by%20September%2030%2C%202023.&text=CRRSA%20funds%20(including%20 those%20used,liquidated%20by%20September%2030%2C%202023

[65] National Conference of State Legislatures. (2021, June 24). *Federal education updates*. https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/publications-and-resources/federal-education-updates.aspx

[66] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, August 5). *Governor's emergency education relief fund*. https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/#:~:text=Congress%20set%20aside%20approximately%20%243,formula%20stipulated%20in%20the%20legislation

and 40 percent on the basis of the state's relative number of children counted under section 1124(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).[67]

These grants allow governors to provide subgrants to LEAs and institutions of higher education (IHEs) that have been "most significantly impacted by coronavirus" so these institutions can continue providing educational services to their students.[68] In addition, a governor may use GEER funds to provide support through a subgrant or a contract to other LEAs, IHEs, and education-related entities that the governor "deems essential" for carrying out emergency educational services, providing childcare and early childhood education, providing social and emotional support, and protecting education-related jobs.[69]

To support the child-care industry, the CARES Act made payments to states under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) in the amount of $3.5 billion that remained available through September 30, 2021.[70] These funds allow for continued payments and assistance to child care providers in the case of decreased enrollment or closures related to the coronavirus and to assure they are able to remain open or to reopen as appropriate to provide child-care assistance to essential workers. This includes providers who were not receiving CCDBG assistance (also known as subsidy) prior to the public health emergency as a result of the pandemic.

RELEVANCE TO SUMMER LEARNING. The CARES Act may be used to support summer learning in several ways. One specific reference to summer learning (found in this legislation under "Elementary and Secondary Education") states:

> *"Uses of Funds. – A local educational agency that receives funds under this section may use the funds for . . . Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.*[71]

Hence, school districts are allowed to use this funding to support summer learning traditionally and through online learning to address the needs of at-risk populations. GEER funding can support summer learning in an effort to provide emergency educational services, childcare and early childhood education, and social-emotional support as well as to protect education-related jobs.[72] In addition, CCDBG guidance

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[67] U.S. Department of Education, *Governor's emergency education relief fund.*

[68] U.S. Department of Education, *Governor's emergency education relief fund*.

[69] U.S. Department of Education, *Governor's emergency education relief fund*.

[70] US Department of Health and Human Services. (2021, April 14). *Information memorandum*. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/CCDF-ACF-IM-2021-01.pdf

[71] Congress.Gov. (2020, December 27). *H.R.133, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*. 116th Congress (2019–2020). https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/133/text.

[72] Congress.Gov. (2020, December 21). *Rules Committee Print 116–68 Text of The House Amendment to The Senate Amendment to H.R. 133, 2021*. https://www.congress.gov/116/cprt/HPRT42770/CPRT-116HPRT42770.pdf

offered by the Office of Child Care acknowledged the need for school-age childcare for essential workers due to school closures and set the precedent for this funding to be available for summer learning and care programs across the nation.

Examples from Summer 2020

In Rhode Island, CARES funds were used to improve summer learning efforts and to identify best practices to address the social-emotional needs of students, staff, and families. Tennessee directly supported school-age child care for essential workers at Boys and Girls Clubs of America across the state.[73] Oregon also used CARES funds for summer learning programs.[74]

Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA)

FY 2021 Appropriations: $900 billion

BACKGROUND. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) was signed into law on December 27, 2020. It comprises $900 billion in stimulus relief for the pandemic and was adopted at the same time as the $1.4 trillion omnibus spending bill for the 2021 federal fiscal year.[75] Again, specific allocations were made for education (U.S. Department of Education) and childcare (U.S. Department of Human Services, Office of Child Care) that can be connected to summer learning.

Under education, the two main funding buckets are the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) Fund and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER II) Fund.[76] The CRRSAA provided $1.25 billion for GEER II funding.[77] This funding provides LEAs with emergency relief funds to address the impact the pandemic has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the nation. The uses of funds are the same as ESSER I with the additional allowable uses under CRRSAA:

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[73] Reference for RI and TN is: Hunt Institute. (2021). *COVID-19 state child care actions.* https://hunt-institute.org/covid-19-resources/state-child-care-actions-covid-19/

[74] Oregon.gov. (2021). *Oregon leaders announce $250 million summer learning and child care package for kids.* https://www.oregon.gov/newsroom/pages/NewsDetail.aspx?newsid=63653

[75] 68 National Conference of State Legislatures. (2021, January 4). *COVID-19 economic relief bill.* https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/publications-and-resources/covid-19-economic-relief-bill-stimulus.aspx

[76] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, September 13). *Elementary and secondary school emergency relief fund.* https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/elementary-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund/

[77] The Department will award these grants to states (governor's offices) based on a formula stipulated in the legislation: (1) 60% on the basis of the state's relative population of individuals aged 5 through 24 and (2) 40% on the basis of the state's relative number of children counted under section 1124(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/

> *"USES OF FUNDS.—A local educational agency that receives funds under this section may use the funds [to] . . . Address learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care; provide for school facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health needs; inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities.*[78]

Correspondingly, CRRSAA provided $10 billion in supplemental child-care funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.[79]

RELEVANCE TO SUMMER LEARNING. CRRSAA under section 313(d) (11) supports summer learning with the identical language found in the CARES Act.[80] However, the guidance offered by the Office of Child Care references the need to support child-care providers, with recommendations to provide funding to providers not participating in subsidy. This guidance does not stipulate anything regarding summer programming, but summer programs that meet the expanded funding criteria can benefit.

CRRSAA Examples

North Carolina made plans to implement a summer learning loss program to mitigate the impact of limited instructional experiences before kindergarten begins.[81] And Missouri planned to provide grants that will support higher education institutions in their implementation and expansion of child-care programs.[82] Both of these strategic uses of CRRSAA CCDBG funding can increase access to summer learning opportunities.

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[78] Congress.gov. (2020, January 3). H.R. 133. *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*. 116th Congress 2020. https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr133/BILLS-116hr133enr.pdf

[79] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Information memorandum.*

[80] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Information memorandum.*

[81] Fortner, A. (2021). *States' plans to use the CRRSA's $10B in child care relief funds.* CLASP https://www.clasp.org/publications/fact-sheet/states-plans-use-crrsa-s-10b-child-care-relief-funds

[82] Fortner, A. (2021). *States' plans to use the CRRSA's $10B in child care relief funds.* CLASP https://www.clasp.org/publications/fact-sheet/states-plans-use-crrsa-s-10b-child-care-relief-funds

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)[83]

FY 2021 Appropriations: $1.9 trillion

BACKGROUND. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), signed into law on March 11, 2021, provides over $170.3 billion to education, with $123 billion going to K–12 education through ESSER, $39 billion for higher education, and the remaining funds going to other educational programs and activities.[84] In addition, ARPA provides $39 billion in a one-time appropriation to CCDBG, split into two sections, along with a separate, permanent increase to the mandatory child-care entitlement funding to states.[85] These child-care funds are separated into two funding sources: (1) ARPA Child Care Stabilization Grants, which must be obligated by September 30, 2022 and liquidated by September 30, 2023, and (2) ARPA CCDBG, which must be obligated by September 30, 2023 and liquidated by September 30, 2024.[86]

RELEVANCE TO SUMMER LEARNING. The ARPA provides more detailed language about the use of ESSER funds with regards to summer learning and includes 1 percent of funds ($1.25 billion) for evidence-based summer learning and enrichment. Moreover, under subgrants to LEAs, it requires them to do the following:

> *"reserve not less than 20 percent of such funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on the student subgroups.*[87]

Similar language is used in the state funding section with a requirement that no less than 5 percent of the total amount of the grant funds awarded to the state under Subsection D meet the same provisions as subgrants to LEAs.[88]

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[83] Additional obligation and liquidation time is provided for the ESSER and GEER funding in the amount of 12 months under the Tydings Amendment period].

[84] Griffin, M. (2021). *An unparalleled investment in U.S. public education: Analysis of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*. Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/covid-analy-sis-american-rescue-plan-act-2021

[85] Smith, L., McHenry, K., & Einterz, F. (2021, March 24) *Child care in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.* Bipartisan Policy Center. https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/child-care-arp/

86 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *CCDF frequently asked questions in response to COVID-19.* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/faq/ccdf-frequently-asked-questions-response-covid-19#:~:text=CARES%20Act%20funds%20(including%20those,liquidated%20by%20Sep- tember%2030%2C%202023.&text=CRRSA%20funds%20(including%20those%20used,liquidated%20 by%20September%2030%2C%202023

[87] Congress.gov. (2021, March 11). *H.R. 1319 – American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.* 117th Congress (2021–2022). https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text

[88] Congress.gov, H.R. 1319.

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

To better understand the issues affecting the design and implementation of district-led summer programs, we conducted an extensive review of related literature and resources, including studies, reports, websites, and other online documentation. Many, but not all, of these sources are cited in the body of this report. We have included a list of additional resources below.

Source	Lead Author/Org	Pub Date	FOCUS					URL
			Districts	21CCLC	Federal	States	Family/ Community	
A Return to Normal? Not Quite. What Summer Programming Looks Like for 2021.	Afterschool Alliance	2021					✓	https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/COVID-19-Survey-Wave-5.pdf
Afterschool Impacts Database	Afterschool Alliance	nd	✓				✓	http://impacts.afterschoolalliance.org
America After 3 PM: Special Report on Summer: Missed Opportunities, Unmet Demand	Afterschool Alliance	2010	✓			✓	✓	https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/introduction-america-after-3pm.aspx
Analysis: Most Students in Urban Districts Will Have Summer Learning Options, But Schools' Plans May Miss the Mark	Pitts, C.	2021					✓	https://www.the74million.org/article/analysis-most-students-in-urban-districts-will-have-summer-learning-options-but-schools-plans-may-miss-the-mark/
Austin, Texas Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/austin-texas-community-assessment-report/
Baltimore, Maryland Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/baltimore-maryland-community-assessment-report/
Building Community Systems for Summer Learning: Snapshots of State and Local Efforts	NSLA	2016					✓	http://www.summerlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/SPARK-1.pdf
ED COVID-19 HANDBOOK: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs	U.S. Dept. of Education	2021					✓	https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf

Source	Lead Author/ Org	Pub Date	FOCUS					URL
			Districts	21CCLC	Federal	States	Family/ Community	
Getting Support for Summer Learning: How Federal, State, City, and District Policies Impact Summer Learning Programs	Augustine, C.H.	2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2347.html
Getting to Work on Summer Learning: Recommended Practices for Success, 2nd edition	Augustine, C.H.	2018	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/getting-to-work-on-summer-learning-2nd-ed.aspx
Greater Atlanta Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2019	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/greater-atlanta-community-landscape-report/
Greater Richmond & Petersburg, Virginia Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/greater-richmond-petersburg-virginia-community-landscape-report/
Hours of Opportunity: Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer, and Other Out-of-School Time Programs	Bodilly, S.J.	2010					✓	https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/hours-of-opportunity-volumes-i-ii-iii.aspx
Improving the Quality and Impact of Afterschool and Summer Programs: Lessons Learned and Future Directions	Expanded Learning & Afterschool Project	nd	✓				✓	https://www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds/article/improving-quality-and-impact-afterschool-and-summer-programs-lessons-learned
Investments in Staff Yields Summer Success for Students	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/investment-staff-yields-summer-success-students/
Learning from Summer: Effects of Voluntary Summer Learning Programs on Low-Income Urban Youth	Augustine, C.H.	2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR815.html
Lewiston, Maine Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/lewiston-maine-community-assessment-report/

Source	Lead Author/ Org	Pub Date	FOCUS					URL
			Districts	21CCLC	Federal	States	Family/ Community	
Making Summer Last: Integrating Summer Programming into Core District Priorities and Operations	Augustine, C.H.	2018	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2038.html
Memphis Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/memphis-community-landscape-report/
Metro Detroit Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/metro-detroit-community-landscape-report/
Newark, New Jersey Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/newark-new-jersey-community-assessment-report/
Oakland, California Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/oakland-california-community-assessment-report/
Out-of-School Time Programs This Summer: Paving the Way for Children to Find Passion, Purpose & Voice – Parent, Teacher & OST Provider Perceptions	Edge Research	2021					✓	https://www.wallacefoundation.org/News-and-Media/Videos-and-Presentations/Documents/Out-of-School-Time-Programs-This-Summer.pdf
Portland, Maine Community Assessment Report	NSLA	2017	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/portland-maine-community-assessment-report/
Quality-Outcomes Study for Seattle Public School's Summer Programs, 2016 Program Cycle	CYPQ	2018	✓					https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323759161_Quality-outcomes_study_for_Seattle_Public_Schools_summer_programs_2016_program_cycle
Ready for Fall? Near-Term Effects of Voluntary Summer Learning Programs on Low-Income Students' Learning Opportunities and Outcomes	McCombs, J.S.	2018	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR815.html

Source	Lead Author/ Org	Pub Date	FOCUS					URL
			Districts	21CCLC	Federal	States	Family/ Community	
Remote Learning and School Reopenings: What Worked and What Didn't	Ferren, M.	2021	✓			✓	✓	https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2021/07/06/501221/remote-learning-school-reopenings-worked-didnt/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=trends%20in%20remote%20learning%20and%20reopening%20efforts&utm_campaign=EP%20Newsletter%207-14-21
Richmond Petersburg County VA Landscape – NSLA 2018	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/greater-richmond-petersburg-virginia-community-landscape-report/
School Districts Have Expanded Their Nonacademic Services for 2021–2022, While Academic Offerings Remain Much the Same: Selected Findings from the Third American School District Panel Survey	Schwartz & Diliberti	2021	✓				✓	https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA900/RRA956-4/RAND_RRA956-4.pdf
Shaping Summertime Experiences: Opportunities to Promote Healthy Development and Well-Being for Children and Youth	National Academies	2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/BCYF/summertime/index.htm
Spokane County, Washington Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/spokane-county-washington-community-landscape-report/
State Plans for Accelerating Student Learning: A Preliminary Analysis	National Governors Association	2021				✓	✓	https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Review-of-state-learning-acceleration-plans-April-21-2021.pdf
STEM Policy Brief: The Power of Summer	NSLA	2016	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/stem-policy-brief-power-summer/
Strengthening, Supporting, and Sustaining the Out-of-School Time Workforce	NCASE	2018	✓				✓	https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ncase-resource-library/strengthening-supporting-and-sustaining-out-school-time-workforce

Source	Lead Author/ Org	Pub Date	FOCUS					URL
			Districts	21CCLC	Federal	States	Family/ Community	
Summer Learning and Beyond: Opportunities for Creating Equity	Bang, M., et al.	2021					✓	https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/summer-learning-creating-equity-report
Summer Learning Helps Grand Rapids Youth to Succeed in School and Life	NSLA	2013	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/summer-learning-helps-grand-rapids-youth-succeed-school-life/
Summer Learning Toolkit	Wallace Foundation	2018	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/summer-learning/toolkit/pages/about.aspx
Summer Programs and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)	NCASE	2015					✓	https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/ncase_summerprograms-ccdf-508c.pdf
Summer School Programs Race to Help Students Most in Danger of Falling Behind	Giacone, J., et al.	2021	✓			✓		https://hechingerreport.org/summer-school-programs-race-to-help-students-most-in-danger-of-falling-behind/
Think Summer	Wallace Foundation	2013	✓					https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/jsd-summer-learning-think-summer.aspx
Time for a Game-Changing Summer, With Opportunity and Growth for All of America's Youth	After School Alliance	2021					✓	http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/
Understanding the Initial Educational Impacts of COVID-19 on Communities of Color	Kuhfeld, M., et al.	2021					✓	https://www.nwea.org/research/publication/understanding-the-initial-educational-impacts-of-covid-19-on-communities-of-color/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=NWEA%20math%20and%20reading%20test%20data%20of%20BIPOC%20students%20during%20the%20pandemic&utm_campaign=EP%20Newsletter%207-14-21
Westchester and Putnam County, New York Community Landscape Report	NSLA	2018	✓					https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/westchester-and-putnam-county-new-york-community-landscape-report/

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