



#### **Who Should Read**

---

Superintendent  
Chief Academic Officer  
Summer Learning  
Coordinator

# Design a Summer Reading Camp

Ideas and Tools for Improving the Recruitment and Retention of Students for Summer Programming

### **3 Ways to Use This Toolkit**

- Create an engaging summer learning experience to mitigate summer slide in reading
- Enhance student recruitment and enrollment for summer programming
- Increase summer programming attendance rates

# District Leadership Forum

## Managing Director

Pete Talbot

## Contributing Consultants

Rebecca Richards

Jennifer Taylor

Maria Wahlstrom

### LEGAL CAVEAT

EAB Global, Inc. ("EAB") has made efforts to verify the accuracy of the information it provides to members. This report relies on data obtained from many sources, however, and EAB cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided or any analysis based thereon. In addition, neither EAB nor any of its affiliates (each, an "EAB Organization") is in the business of giving legal, accounting, or other professional advice, and its reports should not be construed as professional advice. In particular, members should not rely on any legal commentary in this report as a basis for action, or assume that any tactics described herein would be permitted by applicable law or appropriate for a given member's situation. Members are advised to consult with appropriate professionals concerning legal, tax, or accounting issues, before implementing any of these tactics. No EAB Organization or any of its respective officers, directors, employees, or agents shall be liable for any claims, liabilities, or expenses relating to (a) any errors or omissions in this report, whether caused by any EAB organization, or any of their respective employees or agents, or sources or other third parties, (b) any recommendation by any EAB Organization, or (c) failure of member and its employees and agents to abide by the terms set forth herein.

EAB is a registered trademark of EAB Global, Inc. in the United States and other countries. Members are not permitted to use these trademarks, or any other trademark, product name, service name, trade name, and logo of any EAB Organization without prior written consent of EAB. Other trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos used within these pages are the property of their respective holders. Use of other company trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos or images of the same does not necessarily constitute (a) an endorsement by such company of an EAB Organization and its products and services, or (b) an endorsement of the company or its products or services by an EAB Organization. No EAB Organization is affiliated with any such company.

### IMPORTANT: Please read the following.

EAB has prepared this report for the exclusive use of its members. Each member acknowledges and agrees that this report and the information contained herein (collectively, the "Report") are confidential and proprietary to EAB. By accepting delivery of this Report, each member agrees to abide by the terms as stated herein, including the following:

1. All right, title, and interest in and to this Report is owned by an EAB Organization. Except as stated herein, no right, license, permission, or interest of any kind in this Report is intended to be given, transferred to, or acquired by a member. Each member is authorized to use this Report only to the extent expressly authorized herein.
2. Each member shall not sell, license, republish, distribute, or post online or otherwise this Report, in part or in whole. Each member shall not disseminate or permit the use of, and shall take reasonable precautions to prevent such dissemination or use of, this Report by (a) any of its employees and agents (except as stated below), or (b) any third party.
3. Each member may make this Report available solely to those of its employees and agents who (a) are registered for the workshop or membership program of which this Report is a part, (b) require access to this Report in order to learn from the information described herein, and (c) agree not to disclose this Report to other employees or agents or any third party. Each member shall use, and shall ensure that its employees and agents use, this Report for its internal use only. Each member may make a limited number of copies, solely as adequate for use by its employees and agents in accordance with the terms herein.
4. Each member shall not remove from this Report any confidential markings, copyright notices, and/or other similar indicia herein.
5. Each member is responsible for any breach of its obligations as stated herein by any of its employees or agents.
6. If a member is unwilling to abide by any of the foregoing obligations, then such member shall promptly return this Report and all copies thereof to EAB.

# Table of Contents

---

Executive Summary . . . . .	4
Research Overview . . . . .	5
Design a Full Day Camp-Style Program . . . . .	8
<i>Sample Daily Camp Schedule . . . . .</i>	9
<i>Sample Outreach Letter to Community Leaders . . . . .</i>	10
<i>Guide to Turn Summer School Into Camp . . . . .</i>	11
Recruit Earlier and More Frequently. . . . .	13
<i>Sample Student Recruitment Timeline . . . . .</i>	14
<i>Recruitment Video Creation and Distribution Plan . . . . .</i>	15
<i>Sample Interview Questions for Recruitment Video. . . . .</i>	16
<i>Guide to Rolling Out Your Recruitment Video . . . . .</i>	17
Retain Students Through Incentives. . . . .	18
<i>Guide to Creating a Summer Incentive Store. . . . .</i>	19
<i>Sample Letter Requesting Donations to Store. . . . .</i>	20
<i>Sample Stock for Incentive Store. . . . .</i>	21
<i>Camp Bucks Template. . . . .</i>	22

# Executive Summary

---

## Maximize the Impact of Summer Learning for Students

**Strong summer programming can narrow the achievement gap in reading.** To be effective, summer programs should be taught by teachers who are literacy experts and must include rigorous instruction that aligns to the science of reading as well as engaging activities that keep students interested each day. However, too often, even the best programs are unable to yield their intended results because of a lack of attendance throughout the program. Therefore, districts must bolster their enrollment and recruitment efforts to increase student attendance.

**An ideal summer curriculum is well aligned to the school year curriculum, both of which promote literacy instruction grounded in the science of reading.** Since every district makes their own curriculum choices, it is incumbent upon the district to ensure alignment between the school year and summer learning so that student instruction is consistent across the year. This toolkit does not address curriculum and is designed to be implemented regardless of curriculum.

**Students cannot benefit from summer programming if they never enroll or attend.** This toolkit is designed to help districts attract and enroll those students who are struggling to read in summer programming and maximize their attendance throughout the summer.

### Guiding Framework for Improving the Impact of Summer Programming

1



**Design a Full Day  
Camp-Style Program**

2



**Recruit Earlier and  
More Frequently**

3



**Retain Students  
Through Incentives**

### How To Use This Toolkit

This resource provides data on the impact of summer learning loss to help make the case for investing resources in recruitment and retention efforts while also providing strategies for implementing more powerful approaches to student recruitment and retention.

Our goal with this toolkit is to offer a variety of ideas and tools to help districts increase enrollment and attendance rates in summer programming to help reduce the widening achievement gap and improve students' reading outcomes.

# Summer Slide Is Common, But Preventable

## Summer Break Leads to Learning Loss for Most Students

**Summer slide is particularly troubling in the early years as students can forget knowledge of important foundational skills over the summer.** On average, students lose one month of learning during the summer. While summer slide can impact all students, the average learning loss masks how students from different socioeconomic backgrounds fare.

**Critical Foundational Skills Often Lost Over Summer Months**



**45%** Decline in decoding skills



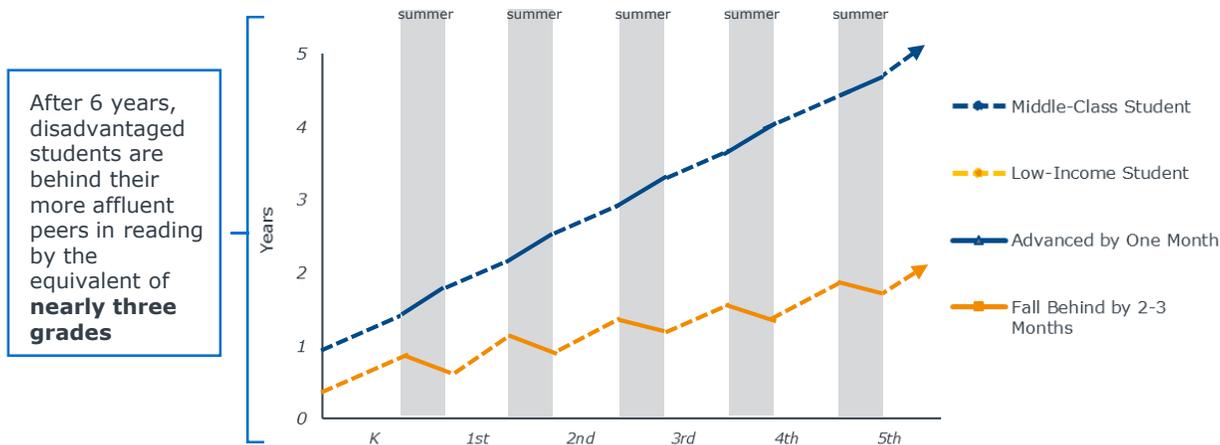
**25%** Decline in fluency skills

## At-Risk Students Are Most Affected by Summer Slide

Lower income students often have less access to books and enrichment activities over the summer to support their developing literacy. As demonstrated in the below graph, **low income students can fall behind by 2-3 months every summer**, which compounds over the years. This loss, combined with the reality that many middle class students will make learning gains over the summer, contributes to a widening achievement gap. **Consequently, by 9<sup>th</sup> grade, summer learning loss accounts for 66% of the achievement gap in reading.**

## Summer Slide Contributes to Growing Achievement Gap

*Low-Income Students Fall 2.5 to 3 Years Behind Their Middle-Class Peers by Fifth Grade*



Source: Mraz, M. and Rasinski, T.V., 2007, [Summer Reading Loss](#); RAND Education/Wallace Foundation, 2011, [Making Summer Count: How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning](#); The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, 2011, [Research: Early Literacy](#); The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010, [Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

# Current Summer Slide Mitigation Inadequate

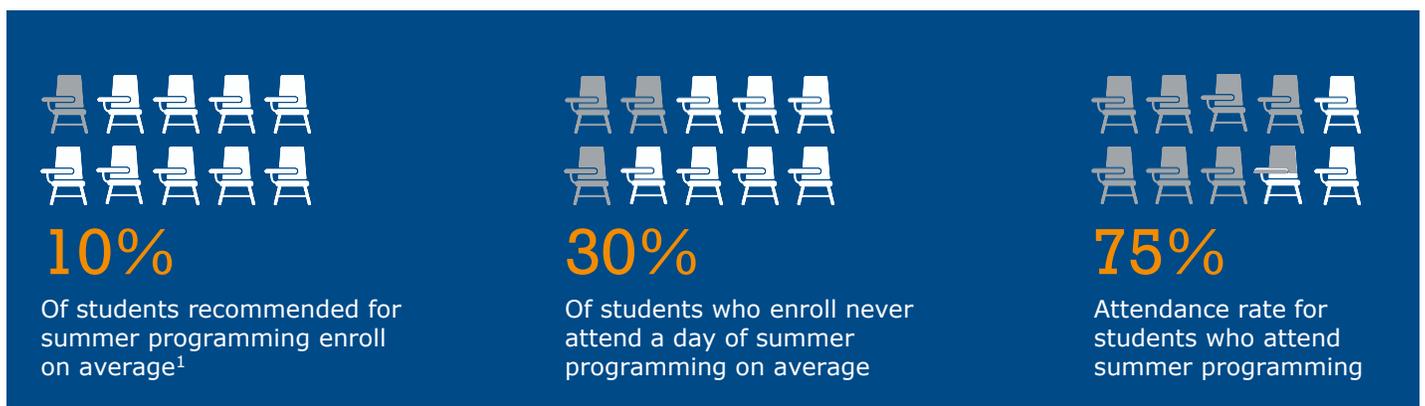
## Teachers Are Spending Too Much Time Covering Forgotten Skills and Content...

With too few students taking advantage of summer learning opportunities designed to mitigate summer slide, teachers are left with a difficult choice at the beginning of the school year. They must decide between devoting instructional time to cover previous material or beginning to teach the current year’s content knowing that some students are already behind. **More than half of teachers spend significant time, up to 4 weeks, reteaching previous content.**



## ...Because Too Few Students Enroll in Summer Learning Experiences

Despite districts’ best efforts at targeting students for enrollment, **only 10% of identified students enroll in the district’s summer programming.** Some of those students will never attend a single day of camp.



1) Based on 120+ EAB interviews.

Source: National Summer Learning Association, [Summer’s Influence on Teaching and Learning All Year](#); RAND Education/Wallace Foundation, 2018, Learning from Summer: [Effects of Voluntary Summer Learning Programs on Low-Income Urban Youth](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

# Structural Barriers Reduce Efficacy of Programming

## Half Day Programming Presents Childcare Coverage Issues for Parents

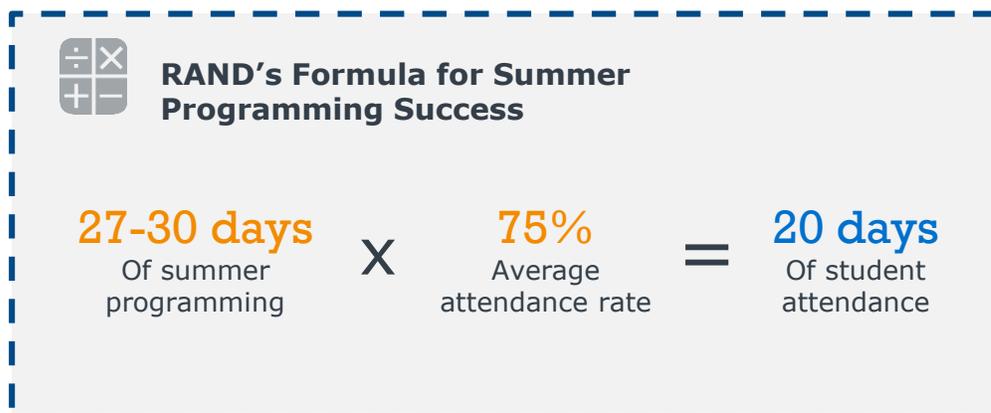
While most districts offer some summer programming for students, **these programs often fall short of their intended goals because of student enrollment and retention problems.** Half day programs reduce attendance as parents need full day childcare coverage. Programs that run the same hours as the school year are easiest for parents’ schedules, thus increasing the likelihood of enrollment.



**Half day programs reduce attendance** as parents struggle to find childcare coverage for the remainder of the day

## Short Duration Programming Limits Student Learning Gains

Research shows that students must attend at least 20 days of summer programming to see an increase in student achievement. Too often summer programming runs for fewer than 20 days and students do not attend all days of programming. If students attend summer programming for at least 20 instructional days, research indicates that **students will show improvements between 14% and 23% of typical annual gains.**



**RAND's Formula for Summer Programming Success**

27-30 days Of summer programming  $\times$  75% Average attendance rate  $=$  20 days Of student attendance

Source: RAND Education/Wallace Foundation, 2018, Learning from Summer: [Effects of Voluntary Summer Learning Programs on Low-Income Urban Youth](#); EAB interviews and analysis.



## Design a Full Day Camp-Style Program

### Section Description

A key component to a successful summer program is reducing the stigma of summer by redesigning the program to have the appeal of summer camp. This transformation ideally includes lengthening the daily schedule and the duration of the program to more closely mirror the structure of summer camps. Districts should also consider how they can transform the school building from its school year appearance into a more engaging and exciting learning environment for students through cost-effective strategies.

### Resources

**Time:** 2 days to secure supplies and decorate school

**Recommended Owner:** Summer learning coordinator

**Materials:** Tents, props, and arts and craft supplies

### Overview

This section is designed to help districts build engaging programming that lasts for a full day so students will be excited to attend and parents will be able to send them without concerns about afternoon childcare coverage.

- 1 Establish a full day schedule and secure partnerships for afternoon enrichment activities.** These changes will increase the likelihood that parents can enroll their students as childcare needs will be met and that students will be excited to attend, especially to partake in the enrichment activities.
- 2 Create a “camp language” to differentiate the summer learning experience from the school year,** including calling teachers “counselors”, classrooms “cabins” and programming “camp” rather than summer school to make students excited to be part of a new experience that will sound and feel different from the school year.
- 3 Decorate the school and classrooms to help the feel of camp come alive for students.** When students see tents, campfires, and other camp-themed props, they will see that they are no longer part of a regular school day, but rather, a more fun and engaging experience.
- 4 Develop camp-themed activities for students to complete that are aligned to the science of reading and will promote literacy development.** Since students are in a school setting, districts should ensure that the types of activities students complete feel different. Theming the activities around camp will bring cohesion to the learning experience for students and be a deviation from regular school year instruction.

# 1 | Sample Daily Camp Schedule

## Maximize Impact of Summer Programming

### Summer Programming Daily Schedule

Half day programming often presents challenges for parents' schedules. **By extending the programming to the full day and using enrichment activities in the afternoon, parents are more likely to be able to enroll their student, and students are more likely to enjoy the experience.** Districts should develop partnerships with local organizations to support the development of full-day programming.

Daily Schedule	
	<b>8:00 a.m.</b> Students arrive
	<b>8:15 a.m.</b> Morning meeting
	<b>8:45 a.m.</b> Classroom work
	<b>11:30 a.m.</b> Lunch
	<b>12:30 p.m.</b> Enrichment activities
	<b>3:00 p.m.</b> Dismissal



### Develop Enrichment Partnerships

- ▶ Identify opportunities to partner with local YMCAs, United Way chapters, or Boys & Girls Clubs to offer afternoon activities
- ▶ Recruit local community leaders and professionals to come read to students in the afternoon and talk with them about the career paths they chose
- ▶ Recruit coaches, music, and art teachers in the district to run a fun activity or lesson in the afternoon

### Tips for Maximizing Attendance

Attendance is lowest on Fridays and around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Do not plan critical content and instruction for these days. They may be better used for review time and enrichment activities.



## 2 | Sample Outreach Letter to Community Leaders

*[Insert  
institution  
logo here]*

Dear [**Name of Local Community Leader/Professional**],

I hope this message finds you well. At [**School/District Name**], we are committed to ensuring that all students have the supports and resources they need to grow and be well prepared for their futures.

This year we are really excited about a new initiative we're starting as part of our summer programming for elementary school students who need more academic support over the summer months. We are eager to welcome local leaders like yourself to campus each afternoon to read to students and talk to them about your career and the importance of schooling in your success.

Would you be interested and available to come speak to our summer campers one afternoon? Camp runs Monday–Friday [**insert camp dates**] and we're hoping you would be available for 1–1.5 hours to read a book and talk with our campers.

We realize that you have a very busy schedule and greatly appreciate your consideration of this request. We're eager to broaden our students' knowledge of career opportunities and the importance of strong literacy skills for their futures.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions about our summer learning initiatives. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[**Superintendent/Principal X or Summer Learning Coordinator**]

### Follow Up Literacy Activity: Thank You Note Writing

Have students write a thank you note to the community leaders. This provides an opportunity to practice their literacy skills through **printing**, **sounding out words**, **expanding background knowledge**, and **recalling details** of either the story that was read or what the speaker shared about his or her career.

## 3 | Guide to Turn Summer School Into Camp

Enhance the “Fun” Atmosphere to Improve Student Engagement



### Develop a “Camp Language”

- Label summer programming as “**camp**” rather than “**summer school**”
- Refer to students as “**campers**” to make them feel like they are not at school
- Refer to lessons as **activities or games** to make the learning feel more fun and less like school
- Host an “**opening day**” and a “**closing day**” ceremony to celebrate the beginning and end of the program
- Call the classrooms “**cabins**” and give each one a different name
- Refer to teachers and staff as “**counselors**”



### Create a Camp-Like Learning Environment

- Make changes to the physical classroom by adding tents and camping chairs for reading nooks
- Host a morning meeting to announce the day’s fun activities
- Host sing-alongs by the camp fire
- Have students write messages on postcards for family and friends
- Disguise literacy learning with themed games such as “**s’more word scramble**” and “**readings around the fire**”
- Provide students the opportunity to **play a board game or make crafts with friends**
- Create grade-level teams and embed contests and games, such as obstacle courses, dodge ball, and quiz bowls, throughout the summer program to award points to teams; the team with the most points wins a prize or recognition during closing ceremonies



Source: KALB News. 2018. [Reading by campfire: Rapides students keep skills sharp at literacy camp](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

## 3 | Guide to Turn Summer School Into Camp (cont.)

Enhance the “Fun” Atmosphere to Improve Student Engagement



### Set Aside Time for Enrichment Activities

- **Focus on academics in the morning**, especially writing, reading, and vocabulary workshops (see p. 9 for sample daily schedule)
  
- **Reserve afternoons for fun activities**, including “camp spotlights” with local professionals who discuss careers and the value of reading
  
- **Enlist support of athletic coaches to sponsor sporting events** in the afternoon (e.g., the soccer coach can organize an afternoon soccer clinic or game)
  
- **Organize afternoon field trips** to the local library, zoo, aquarium, museum, arcade, swimming pool, etc.
  
- **Invite middle and high school teachers** as well as art and music teachers throughout the district to volunteer for an afternoon to engage students in a fun and enriching activity

### Adapt Camp Theme to Meet Interests of Students



The camp theme is only one way to make summer programming more fun. Districts should align the theme of the program with students’ interests. For example, one summer the theme could be space camp with all of the decorations and camp language reflecting space. **The goal should be to engage students through the theme of camp but diversify activities and books throughout the summer so that students build background knowledge in areas other than the camp theme.**



## Recruit Earlier and More Frequently

### Section Description

Recruiting for summer programming early is crucial for increasing enrollment. As parents' lives are busy, they often need reminders in multiple formats many times before they will consider enrolling their students. Additionally, if districts begin recruitment earlier, they increase the likelihood that parents will not have already made summer arrangements for their child. Enrollment should run concurrently to registration windows for local camps to maximize the chances that students will enroll in the district's program and not go elsewhere.

### Resources

#### Time

- **Video development:** 1-2 weeks based on number of interviews needed and editing; 1-3 hours posting video to webpages and social media
- **Recruitment:** 5-7 hours to analyze assessment data to determine priority students for enrollment
- **Outreach:** 4-6 hours of outreach time per student throughout the recruitment period

**Recommended Owner:** Summer learning coordinator with assistance from assessment director and early literacy director

**Materials:** camera, cell phone or tablet to record interviews, video editing software, and assessment data

### Overview

This section is designed to enhance your district's recruitment efforts to increase summer programming enrollment.

- 1 Create a timeline that identifies key junctures in the recruitment process, including availability of assessment data, local camp registration dates, and video creation.** A timeline that starts early in the fall following summer camp will give districts the lead time necessary to thoughtfully develop recruitment materials and identify students who would benefit from summer programming, and allow ample time to engage in multiple outreach efforts to increase student enrollment.
- 2 Develop a recruitment video that highlights the exciting atmosphere of the program as well as the positive experiences of former students and parents.** Videos are a powerful recruitment tool because they capture testimonials and showcase the fun parts of the summer learning experience.
- 3 Plan your recruitment outreach strategy to include digital and non-digital sources to boost family awareness of the program and enthusiasm for enrollment.** Using multiple modes of outreach increases the chances that families will see the opportunity available and enroll their child.

# 1 | Sample Student Recruitment Timeline

## Fall

- ▶ Create recruitment video, including interviews as needed (see p. 15 for guidance on creating this video)
- ▶ Begin preliminary recruitment for next summer by completing the following steps:
  - ❑ Identify students who are testing below grade level on fall assessments to get initial understanding of potential summer enrollment cohort size
  - ❑ Decide on enrollment procedure, including any revisions from the previous year
  - ❑ Develop or revise a timeline for outreach and recruitment activities
  - ❑ Develop enrollment materials and translate them into multiple languages as needed

## Winter

- ▶ Announce summer program dates and launch enrollment process (*and website, if applicable*)
- ▶ Set a registration deadline two months in advance of the beginning of the program
- ▶ Use winter assessment data to identify targeted student cohort for summer programming
- ▶ Begin active recruitment of targeted families and students for summer programming through:
  - ❑ Discussion at parent-teacher conferences
  - ❑ Personalized phone calls, emails, and flyers/letters

## Spring

- ▶ Send final round of enrollment outreach and close registration
- ▶ Send confirmation notices to families of enrolled students, confirming their spot

## Summer

- ▶ Call families in the days leading up to the start of the program to remind them of start date and time



For more summer planning tools, including and beyond recruitment, see the [Summer Learning Toolkit](#) from the Wallace Foundation.

## 2 | Recruitment Video Creation and Distribution Plan

### Show Parents the Benefits of Students Attending Summer Programming

For too many districts, getting students to enroll in summer school is a huge hurdle with only an estimated 10% of eligible students enrolling<sup>1</sup>. This obstacle has little to do with students and more to do with their parents. Parents commonly do not want their children to have to go to “school” over the summer and would rather enroll them in more fun activities or send them to visit relatives. Therefore, **districts must show what the summer experience will look like for students**. The best way to show the full experience is to create a short video.

#### Guidelines for Making an Enrollment Promotional Video



##### Keep It Short

- Videos should be no more than **2–3 minutes** to maintain viewer interest
- Interview clips should be no longer than **15–20 seconds**
- End the video with information on **where people can go to learn more**



##### Show the Experience

- If available, **use video footage of students** in the program
- Keep the video **focused on fun**, less on the academics
- **Interview teachers, parents, and students** about the summer experience (see p. 16 for sample interview questions)



##### Disseminate Early and Often

- **Release the video in winter** so parents see it before making summer childcare decisions
- **Share video across multiple platforms** including website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- **Showcase video as part of parent-teacher conferences** so parents can ask questions while they are with a teacher

### Sample Recruitment Videos

Cedar Rapids Community School District



[Kids on Course University](#)

Pittsburgh Public Schools



[Back to School Countdown: Summer Dreamers Academy](#)

1) Based on 120+ EAB interviews.

## 3 | Sample Interview Questions for Recruitment Video

---

### First-Hand Experiences Illuminate the Experience for Parents

Parents are most likely to be convinced of the importance of summer programming for their child by learning more about the program from students who attended previously and their parents. **Hearing student and parent testimonials makes the program more relatable.** Videos also give parents the opportunity to hear from teachers who will be spending the summer with their child.



#### **Teachers**

---

Interview teachers who taught in the summer the prior year. Ask them questions such as:

- *How is summer programming different from the school year?*
- *What do students enjoy most?*
- *What will students learn over the summer and how will it help them in the next year?*
- *How do you see students grow and change over the summer?*



#### **Students**

---

Interview kids<sup>1</sup> who attended and ask them questions such as:

- *What was your favorite part of camp?*
- *What did you learn at camp?*
- *Do you want to go back to camp?*
- *Are you a better reader because of camp?*



#### **Parents**

---

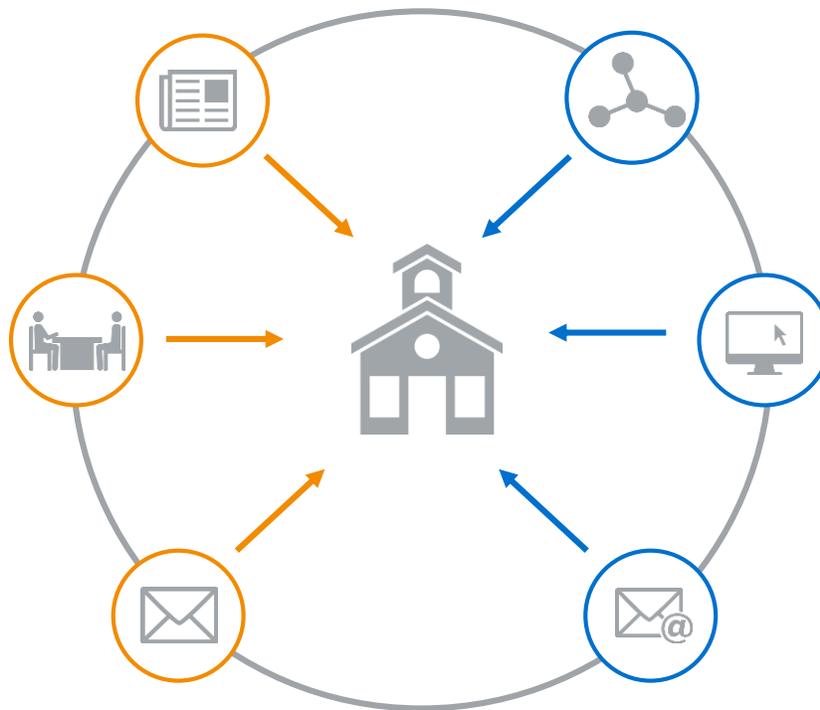
Interview parents whose children attended the prior summer and ask questions such as:

- *What did your child come home excited about?*
- *What changes in your student did you see?*
- *What did you like about the program?*
- *What would you tell another parent who is debating whether or not to send their child to summer literacy camp?*

1) Gain parental permission first.

## 4 | Guide to Rolling Out Your Recruitment Video

Once your recruitment video is complete, determining the means and frequency with which you share it is the next step. As people turn to different sources—both print and digital—for information, **districts should share the video through as many channels as possible and not miss an opportunity to share the link when promoting enrollment in summer learning programs.**



### Non-Digital Promotion



#### *Newsletters or bulletins*

Share link in newsletters and alongside any registration deadline reminders on bulletin boards throughout district



#### *In-person events*

Parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings, and open houses present opportunities for face-to-face promotion



#### *Targeted outreach*

Provide link to video in written communication to families of identified students

### Digital Promotion



#### *Social Media*

Use social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach more families



#### *Website*

Share video on the program registration page as well as highly visited pages, such as your district's homepage



#### *Email*

Embed video in email communication about enrollment and deadlines



## Retain Students Through Incentives

### Section Description

Enrolling more students in summer programming is a significant accomplishment for districts, but the remaining hurdle is ensuring those students attend regularly and for the duration of the program. To build student enthusiasm for attendance and engagement, districts should create an incentive system for students that allows students to work toward an item(s) they want that reflects the effort they put into their summer learning.

### Resources

**Time:** 2 hours to send out letters, 3 hours to order incentives, and 3 hours to set up and restock store

**Recommended Owner:** Summer learning coordinator

**Materials:** camp “bucks”, signs for item value, craft supplies for making banks

### Overview

This section is designed to help districts develop a robust incentive system for students to excite them about coming to summer programming each day and for trying their hardest while there.

- 1 Set up your incentive store to ensure that students are excited to attend every day and are also incented to work hard during the programming.** When students see that they can earn prizes, they become more motivated to attend, even encouraging their parents to bring them to programming, and are more motivated to do their best to earn additional bucks.
- 2 Connect with local businesses and community partners to provide donations and supplies for your incentive store.** Budgets are tight and community partners are often looking for opportunities to support local schools and students. Contributing to the incentive store reduces the cost burden on the district and gives the community the opportunity to support the district.
- 3 Stock your district’s store with items that are practical and exciting for kids so that what they earn is both useful to them and a fun acknowledgement of the effort they have put into their learning.** Districts know their students best—both what they need and what they want—so stock the store accordingly and price items so that students can actually earn them too.

# 1 | Guide to Creating a Summer Incentive Store

## Set Up a “Camp Store” to Incentivize Attendance and Participation

Even if you successfully enroll students, ensuring students arrive on day one and consistently attend throughout the summer often remains a challenge. A summer store incentivizes students to attend on a regular basis and provides students the opportunity to be recognized for attendance and their summer learning.



### Determine Store Location

**Set up in an unused classroom, or on a folding table** that students pass by on a regular basis so that students have a visual reminder of why they are earning bucks



### Schedule Routine Weekly Trips

Have students **visit the store on Fridays to reward weekly attendance** and increase the likelihood that students will attend on Fridays so they can go to the store. If attendance is too low on Fridays, choose Thursdays or the following Mondays



### Distribute “Bucks” for Attendance and Other Priorities

Reward students with “bucks” for **attendance, positive attitude, hard work, books read**, etc. You can include any additional values, goals, or priorities that align with your district priorities and student needs



### Stock Store with a Broad Range of Incentives

Stock the **store with small toys, school supplies, books**, tickets to sporting events, and gift cards that will be exciting for students and motivate them to want to earn bucks (see p. 21 for incentive store stock ideas)



### Price Items to Incent and Reward Students

Price items in the store such that there **are items available to students with only a few bucks and items that would require consistent attendance** and hard work to earn



### Recruit Volunteers to Run the Store

**Ask parents or staff to volunteer to run the store once a week**, supporting students as they make their selections and restocking the store at the end of the day. Older students can also assist in the store, giving them an opportunity to practice their math skills



### Find Funding Sources for Store Stock

**Allocate some funding** in summer budget **or partner with community organizations** for donations to stock the store

**Enter students with high attendance rates – 75% attendance or greater over the summer – into a raffle for a bigger prize**



## 2 | Sample Letter Requesting Store Donations

[Insert  
institution  
logo here]

Dear [**Sir or Madam/Name of Community Leader**],

I hope this message finds you well. At [**School/District Name**], we are committed to ensuring that all students have the supports and resources they need to grow and succeed.

To help encourage students to regularly attend our summer programming to improve their reading and math skills over the summer, we would like to be able to offer them incentives for strong attendance and academic progress.

We are hoping you may be able to help us achieve this goal for our students. Would you be willing to donate to our summer store? We would like to stock it with practical items – backpacks, school supplies – as well as some fun items – sidewalk chalk, scooters, basketballs, soccer balls, etc.

Students are excited to go to the summer store to pick out items they've earned through their attendance each day and we believe this initiative will help more students attend regularly.

We are deeply appreciative of any donation of goods or contribution of funds you are able to make to support students in their summer learning.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions about our summer learning initiatives.

Sincerely,

[**Superintendent/Principal X or Summer Learning Coordinator**]

## 3 | Sample Stock for Incentive Store

Stock your camp store from a variety of sources. **Curate items that best align with student interests and ages that also have a practical use.** The categories below are designed to spark ideas about what items your district could stock.

### 1 School Supplies



- Pencils, pencil cases
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Bookbags, lunch boxes, notebooks
- Books at different reading levels
- School- and district-branded merchandise

### 2 Arts and Crafts



- Coloring books
- Watercolors/paint sets
- Small craft kits
- Sidewalk chalk
- Stickers
- Stamps and ink pads

### 3 Sports Equipment



- Soccer balls
- Basketballs
- Jump ropes
- Hula hoops

### 4 Gift Cards



- Local stores
- Local restaurants
- Movie theater
- Roller skating rink
- Bowling alley

### 5 Free Rewards



- Announce students with perfect attendance each week over the speaker
- Create a banner recognizing students with strong attendance

### 6 Larger Prizes



- Tickets to local sporting events (major and minor league)
- Amusement park or water park tickets
- Admission to county or state fair
- Bicycles
- Keyboards

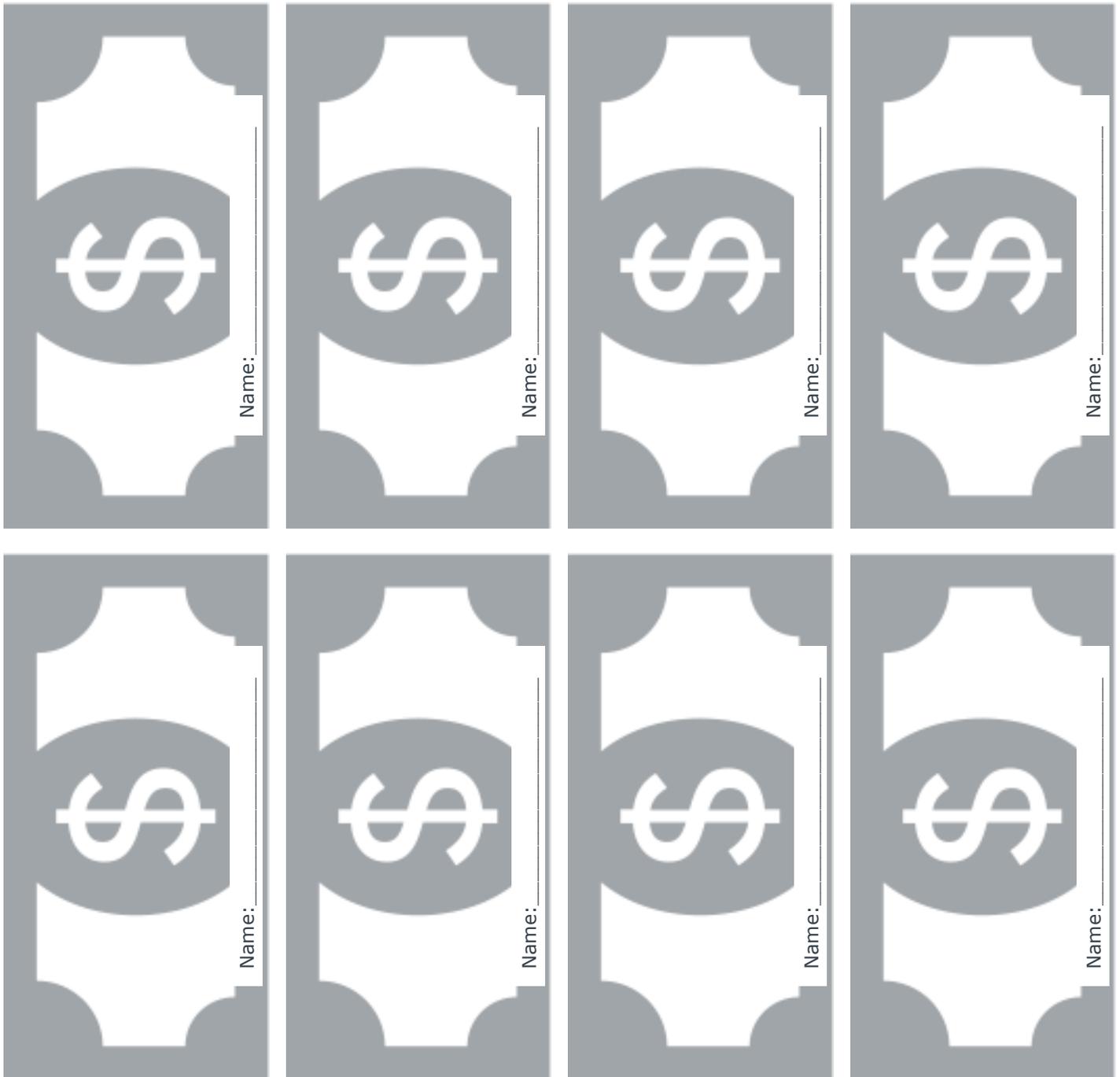
#### Setting Camp Store “Pricing”

For incentives in each category of items, make sure to set items at a variety of price points so that students can choose an incentive that is of interest to them. **The goal is for all students to have an item of interest to them that they can access with their current bucks as well as a target prize that they can work toward.**



## 4 | Camp Bucks Template

The following “camp bucks” are designed to be printed and cut out for use. A spot is designated for the teacher to write the name of the student receiving the buck to eliminate any confusion about who earned the buck. Alternatively, students can work on their writing skills by writing their own name when awarded a buck.



### Afternoon Activity: Making a Camp Bucks Bank

Have students spend an afternoon making a “bank” to keep their bucks in using shoe boxes, construction paper, markers, and other craft supplies, to increase student excitement about earning camp bucks.



Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis

202-747-1000 | [eab.com](http://eab.com)