



Summer Matters: How Summer Learning Strengthens Students' Success

Key Findings

Summer Matters' high quality summer learning programs in Fresno, Los Angeles and Sacramento have **bolstered students' academic success** by **strengthening their academic skills** in general and **literacy skills** in particular, and increasing the effectiveness of their **work habits** and **confidence in their abilities** as learners.

These high quality summer learning programs:

Improved Students' Academic Skills

- Students improved their reading efficacy, grade-level vocabulary skills, attitudes, habits and abilities.
- Students ended the summer with vocabulary skills much closer to their grade level, increasing their instructional grade level by over 1/3 of a grade.
- English language learners demonstrated statistically significant increases in their grade-level vocabulary, a gateway to English language fluency.
- When asked about their confidence and interest in reading (reading efficacy), Fresno students increased their positive responses by five percentage points. LA students increased their positive responses by three percentage points.
- Parents reported that their students improved both their attitude towards reading (68%) and their reading ability.

Fostered Stronger Interpersonal Connections to Peers and Adults, and Lowered Students' Absentee Rates

- Students enhanced their social skills, improved their relationships with educators and fellow students, and strengthened their ability to make new friends and connect with others.
- In Fresno, students who participated in summer learning programs were 1/3 less likely to be chronically absent and showed much greater engagement with their school than their peers who did not take part in summer learning programs.
- Parents reported that their child's summer learning program helped them prepare for the challenge of transitioning from elementary to middle school, a period when many children begin to disengage from school.
- 9 out of 10 parents reported that their child's summer learning program helped them make a new friend and get along better with other children.
- Parents and educators emphasized summer learning programs' critical role in providing students with new experiences and opportunities – such as field trips and community service projects – that they do not have during the school year.

Reinforced Positive Attitudes and Strengthened Work Habits

- Students in Fresno and Los Angeles summer learning programs reported improved academic work habits and reading efficacy, both key contributors to academic achievement.
- Parents reported improved outcomes in their students' reading ability and overall interest in school.

Quality Matters in Summer Learning

- Students who had better summer learning program experiences – as rated by their relationships with program staff and peers, and their enjoyment of program activities – rated their work habits, reading efficacy and social competencies higher.
- Nearly all parents (98%) were satisfied with their child's summer program.