

# summer matters: a community landscape report



national summer  
learning association

# memphis

More than 10,000 children and youth benefit from summer learning opportunities, the result of significant investments by the city, state, school districts, and private philanthropy.

A close-up, high-angle photograph of a diverse group of children. They are all looking upwards towards the camera with various expressions of joy and curiosity. The children have different ethnicities, hair colors, and styles. One child in the foreground has curly brown hair and wears glasses. Another child has a blue cap and glasses. The background is bright and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting with sunlight. A teal text box is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

**In 2017 Seeding Success  
commissioned the National Summer  
Learning Association (NSLA) to  
conduct a landscape assessment  
of summer learning programs in  
Memphis, TN. This report summarizes  
key data points from that assessment.**

# intro

## SUMMER LEARNING IN MEMPHIS

In Memphis, more than 10,000 children and youth benefit from summer learning opportunities, the result of significant investments by the city, state, school districts, and private philanthropy. Shelby County Schools (SCS) partners with non-profit organizations like Literacy Mid-South and Seeding Success to serve over 6,200 students through summer learning academies. The city of Memphis also partnered with Memphis Public Libraries to offer a diverse array of summer programs – everything from robotics to the arts and test prep. Still, more students are engaged in summer learning activities through churches and community-based organizations operating alongside this system. With such a diversity of programs, funding, and partnerships, there is a need for coordination and collaboration to ensure as many young people as possible are provided with high-quality summer learning opportunities.

Kicking-off their work in 2013, Seeding Success is a cradle-to-career backbone organization and partnership representing K-12 institutions, non-profit, business, health, civic, faith, and philanthropic organizations that are committed to fearlessly pursuing education outcomes for children. With their partners, which include the City of Memphis, Seeding Success is leading quality improvement work to identify and scale effective summer and after school programs to improve well-being and academic achievement.

The purpose of this report is to highlight the findings of a community assessment of Memphis's summer learning landscape during summer 2017. The assessment offers a snapshot of existing summer programs. Data were collected on who was being served by those programs and the kinds of programming they offered. This assessment gives Seeding Success and the City of Memphis the opportunity to learn more about the range of summer opportunities available, as well as gaps in services or data.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

**Eighty-one percent of the programs reported serving at least one meal each day.**

**The majority of programs offered 60 or more minutes of academic instruction each day (88%).**

**Eighty-five percent of programs had paid staff. Almost two-third worked with or had a certified teacher on staff (62%) and most had volunteer staff (80%).**



# discover



**14**  
PARTICIPATING  
ORGANIZATIONS

**16**  
PROGRAMS

**3,513**  
YOUTH SERVED

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS OF MEMPHIS	
Total 2016 City Population <sup>1</sup>	639,621
Percent of Persons Living Below Poverty Level <sup>1</sup>	27.6%
Total 2016 City Population under 18 in households	163,753
Percent of Adults with at least a High School Diploma <sup>1</sup>	53.9%
Percent of Adults with a Bachelor's degree or higher <sup>1</sup>	16.3%
Number of Students in District-run Schools <sup>2</sup>	111,500
Percent of District Students who are English Language Learners <sup>2</sup>	6.5%
Percent of District Students Eligible for Free & Reduced Price Lunch <sup>2</sup>	82.4%

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey, Community Facts for Memphis city, Tennessee.

<sup>2</sup> Shelby County Schools, Shelby County Schools by the Numbers 2016-17.

[NSLA received data from 14 organizations offering 16 summer programs throughout Memphis. You can find a full list of participating Organizations on the back cover.]

PROGRAM CONTENT AREAS	PERCENT
Literacy or Reading Skills	94%
Sports/Recreation	69%
Crafts	63%
Academic Enrichment	44%
STEM	44%
Math	44%
Social-emotional Learning	31%
Fine Arts (visual, performance, etc.)	31%
Health and Nutrition	31%
Summer Jobs/Career Prep	19%
Other	13%
College Access	13%
Academic Remediation/Credit Recovery	6%

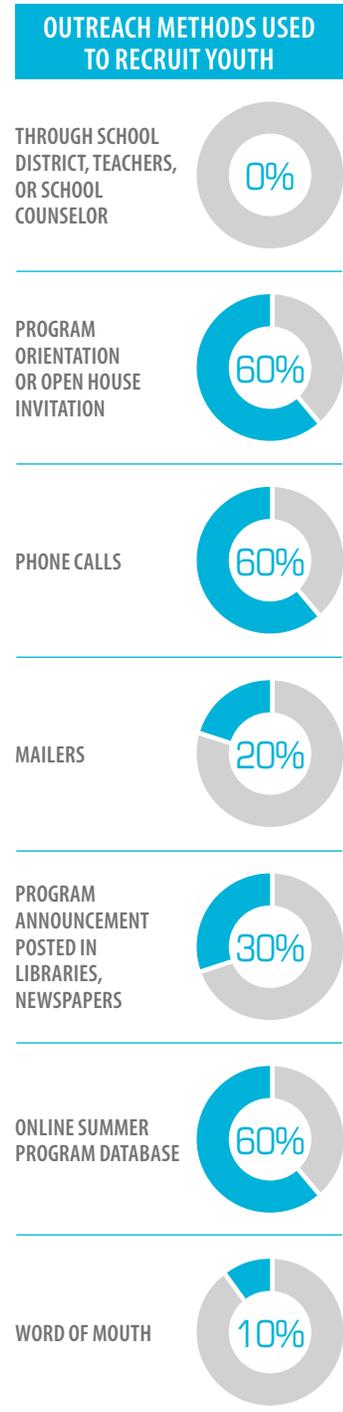
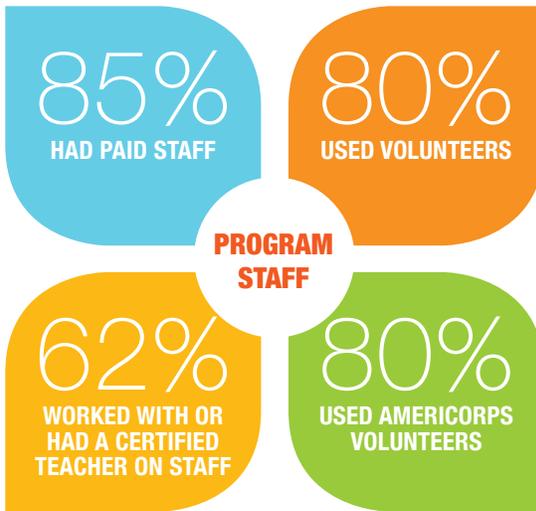
# program calendar



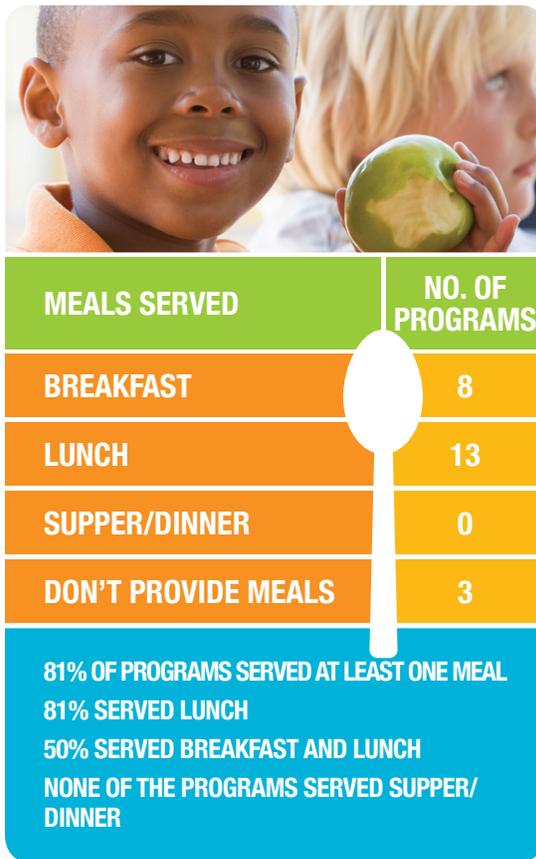
### ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAMS BY GRADE

PRESCHOOL, K	6
GRADES 1-2	10
GRADES 3-4	11
GRADES 5-6	11
GRADES 7-8	11
GRADES 9-10	7
GRADES 11-12	5
TRANSITION TO COLLEGE	3

>Third through eighth graders were eligible for the most programs



AMOUNT OF ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION	PERCENT OF PROGRAMS
Less than 30 minutes	0%
30 minutes	6%
30-60 minutes	6%
60-90 minutes	44%
More than 90 minutes	44%
No academic instruction and/or literacy enrichment included	0%





## THE COMMUNITY INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE SUMMER LEARNING SYSTEMS

Developed in 2013, NSLA's Community Indicators of Effective Summer Learning Systems (CIESLS) rating scale is based on the theory that effective summer learning systems can provide more summer learning opportunities for youth, improve program quality, and improve outcomes for youth through coordinated and collaborative action at the community level.

Based on research on system-building, best practices in existing afterschool and summer systems, and a survey of community intermediaries and program providers, NSLA developed a set of 39 indicators that define the size, scope, and features of summer learning systems. These indicators are used to measure community progress in achieving system-building milestones in each of the rating scale's six domains:

- 1) Shared Vision and City-wide Coordination
- 2) Engaged Leadership
- 3) Data Management System
- 4) Continuous Quality Improvement
- 5) Sustainable Resources
- 6) Marketing and Communications

Key stakeholders in Memphis were asked to self-assess the current state of the region's summer learning system based on the CIESLS. Their assessment is discussed below.

### 1) SHARED VISION AND CITY-WIDE COORDINATION

A shared vision for summer learning, which informs a community-wide summer learning action plan, can coordinate the efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders and support community-wide collaboration.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends that the region work on creating a shared vision that will guide their system development. This shared vision should be at the base of forming a coordinating body and will help in identifying which partners are needed.

### 2) ENGAGED LEADERSHIP

Successful summer learning system-building requires community stakeholders and champions to advocate for summer programming, coordinate progress towards summer priorities, and share accountability for the development and implementation of the summer learning action plan.

Participants at the strategic planning meeting pointed to a lack of communication within and between systems. They wanted to see a coordinated structure that includes year-round programming and recruitment. Although Literacy Mid-South is currently leading efforts, they did not feel that this was sustainable. They want to identify new partners and champions, and build greater awareness around the importance of summer learning.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends solidifying the coordinating body, including the roles of the lead organization and stakeholder groups.

### 3) DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Model summer learning systems implement processes for data collection, sharing, and analysis across stakeholders.

During the strategic planning meeting, participants noted the lack of coordination and consistency of data collection. To address this, they believed professional development (coordinated across organizations) is needed to increase staff's ability to collect and work with data. Recognizing that this is a large undertaking, they suggested implementing a plan one grade level at a time.

**Recommendation:** NSLA recommends first identifying and coming to agreement on the common indicators that will form the basis for a city-wide standardized data collection and evaluation process.

### 4) CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Exemplary summer learning systems adopt a process for quality improvement at both the systemic and programmatic levels.

Participants wanted to take this opportunity to adopt city-wide standards for summer programs. They noted that there are existing partners they can look to, such as the library, that are currently using quality standards. Once these standards are established, they suggested offering training for direct service staff on how to implement those standards. They also wanted to support parents in identifying what they want from a summer program.

**Recommendation:** NSLA agrees with participants' observations and recommends identifying common standards and tools to assess the quality of summer programs in the city as a next step in this area.

### 5) SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

Community system-building around summer learning should consider the funding targets and strategies for both program development and growth, and system capacity-building.

Participants wanted to examine the roles of intermediaries in communicating and intentionally sharing information about resources.

**Recommendation:** As a first step in this area, NSLA recommends conducting a deeper assessment of current summer funding resources that are being utilized in the region. As part of that assessment, attention should be given to the mix of funding that being accessed from the following sources: local private foundations; business donations and sponsorships; local public funding; national foundations; state funding; and federal funding. Additionally, the assessment should include how resources are used to support for the following: program grants; program capacity building; communitywide marketing and communications; and program

### 6) MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Exemplary summer learning systems identify community-wide strategies to understand the demand for summer programs, build awareness of the need and available resources, and support student recruitment and enrollment.

During the strategic planning meeting, participants noted the need for stronger internal communications. They felt that, because there is more focus on programming, more intentional action is needed to improve in this area. They suggested including parent/youth incentive and recruitment opportunities as part of the process. Developing a camp locator that would suggest programs and a rating system for them based on key quality indicators were brought up as ways to ensure parents are aware of the options for summer.

**Recommendation:** As a first step, NSLA recommends developing a common message for summer in the city. This message should include input from a variety of stakeholder groups including county agencies, program providers, schools, funders, coordinating body, and community members (including parents and youth). This will allow for more buy-in from stakeholders and facilitate strengthened communication channels.



# participating organizations

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis  
Catholic Charities of West Tennessee  
Emmanuel Center, Inc.  
Girls Inc. of Memphis  
Heal the Hood Foundation of Memphis  
Houston Levee Community Center  
Immanuel Lutheran School

Literacy Lighthouse  
Memphis Athletic Ministries  
Memphis Reads  
Memphis Teacher Residency  
Mount Gilead/El-Shaddai Camp Favour  
Refugee Empowerment Program  
STREETS Ministries

## Limitation of the Data

### Incomplete and Estimated Data

Complete data may not have been received from all targeted organizations and agencies for varying reasons. When considered as a whole, it is likely that incomplete and estimated data may have led to an underestimate of the total summer learning program landscape.

### Double Counting

Because youth can participate in more than one program during the summer, they may be counted multiple times in the data used for this report. Where possible, we attempted to remove duplicate counts of children and youth.

### Snapshot in Time

Data collection for this resource scan focused on summer 2017 and represents a snapshot in time. The extent to which providers are able to offer programs and the size of those programs may vary from year to year, sometimes substantially, based on available funding.

## About Seeding Success

Seeding Success is a diverse partnership representing K-12 institutions, not-for-profits, business, health, civic, faith and philanthropic organizations that are committed to fearlessly pursuing educational outcomes for children. The Seeding Success Partnership collaborates to ensure every child graduates high school prepared for college, career and success in life.



seeding success

## About the National Summer Learning Association

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works, offers expertise and support for programs and communities, and advocates for summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. NSLA's work is driven by the belief that all children and youth deserve high-quality summer learning experiences that will help them succeed in college, career, and life.



**national summer  
learning association**

[www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org)