Summer Learning: A Program Guide

SUMMER SCHOOL PLANNING CYCLE

- 01 YOUR TEAM FORMATION
- 02 REFLECTING BACK
- 03 DETERMINE NEEDS
- 04 ADJUST TEAM
- 05 IDENTIFY COMPONENTS
- 06 DESIGN STRATEGIES
- 07 IMPLEMENTATION
- 08 EVALUATION
- 09 ANALYSIS/REFLECTION
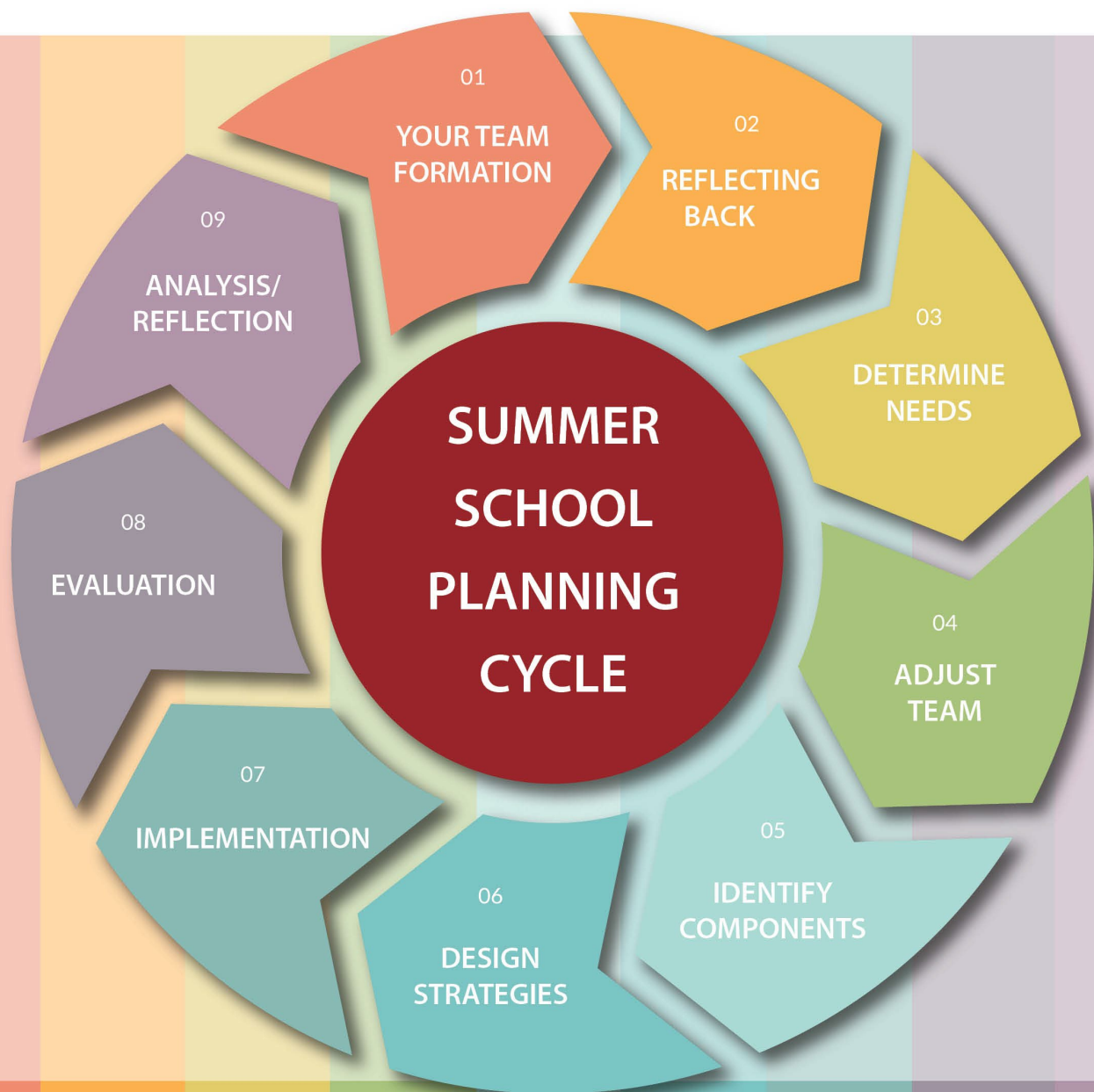
Overview

The summer of 2021 saw a significant expansion of summer programming for public school students throughout the state. These programs were designed to address the learning loss that occurred as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and the unprecedented disruption to learning it caused. This program expansion was possible largely due to the infusion of federal aide through a variety of grants (ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III) intentioned upon mitigating learning loss. Since much of this funding only became available in the spring of 2021, there was limited time for schools and districts to engage in comprehensive planning. Given the situation at that time, districts did an extraordinary job of creating an unprecedented number of summer programming opportunities for an unprecedented number of students.

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With more time to devote to planning summer programs this year, this guide has been created to assist districts and schools with the process. A great deal of evidence exists documenting the need for a rigorous planning process to insure an effective summer program. (See Appendix) In addition, this comprehensive planning process will allow districts to meet the expanded reporting and accountability requirements of the federal grants.

The number and diversity of summer programs implemented in any district may range from a handful in a small district to several dozen in a large urban district.

This guide is designed to be used by those people with direct responsibility for the creation, implementation and evaluation of any individual, discrete summer program.

In those cases where a particular program or programs are being administered by a community partner agency, this planning process should be conducted in partnership with the school district since the district is ultimately responsible for the program management and outcomes.

Reflection
Reflecting on last year's programs

Prior to planning for summer programs, it is advisable to reflect on programs that were in place last summer or even on programs that have been in place for several years. It is possible some programs are no longer as relevant or effective as they have been and the only reason they are continued is tradition or routine.

The reflection framework offered below is designed to be used to structure a thoughtful review of any summer program implemented to date. It is recommended that this review be undertaken by a team consisting of a small number of staff who have knowledge of the program or programs under review. In the case of a large district with many summer programs this may involve more than one such team. *(It may be preferable to conduct portions of this reflection in the Fall of the year when recollections concerning the summer program are fresh.)*

Click on the following link and complete the framework to organize your reflections.

Reflection Framework

Planning for new or drastically redesigned summer program

If the reflection stage results in a decision to drastically redesign one or more summer programs or to create entirely new programs, it is recommended that a design team be created for each program under consideration. This team will be responsible for the design, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

Team Formation

Creating a team, with an identified leader, to design and guide the implementation of any summer program is essential. This may be an existing team at the school or district level, or a team created expressly for this purpose. If the program is designed by a district-based team and is to be implemented in a school or schools, it is strongly recommended that this team contain school representatives. In general, school-based programs should be designed and monitored by school-based teams and district-based programs should be designed and monitored by district-based teams. Team members should also reflect the scope of the program. For example, if you are partnering with a community agency for services, their representation on the team will be critical. Finally, if the program in question is a continuation of a program begun last year it would be preferable that members involved in that program remain on the team. Members of this team should be compensated for their time if their work occurs beyond contractual time.

Click on the link and complete the framework on Team Formation.

Team Formation Framework
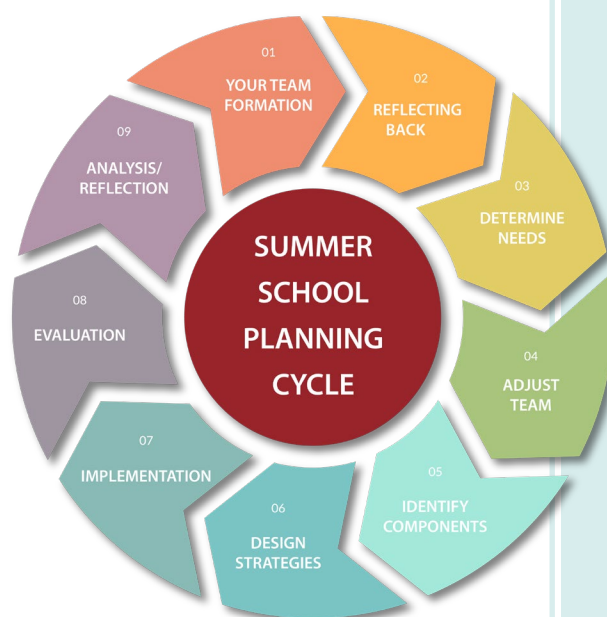
Program Design

After the team is organized it can begin its work to achieve the team goal. To assist in this design process, click on the following link and complete the framework on Program Design.

Program Design Framework

Program Strategies

The previous section on program design is a necessary but insufficient step in creating an effective summer program. Having all the operational and logistic components in place and well organized contribute to an efficient and well-run program. What actually happens day to day in the program however will be the main contributor to students meeting the needs identified in that section. In this framework the team will be taken through a process designed to articulate the strategies the program will utilize to achieve the identified student needs.

Click on the following link and compete the program strategies framework.
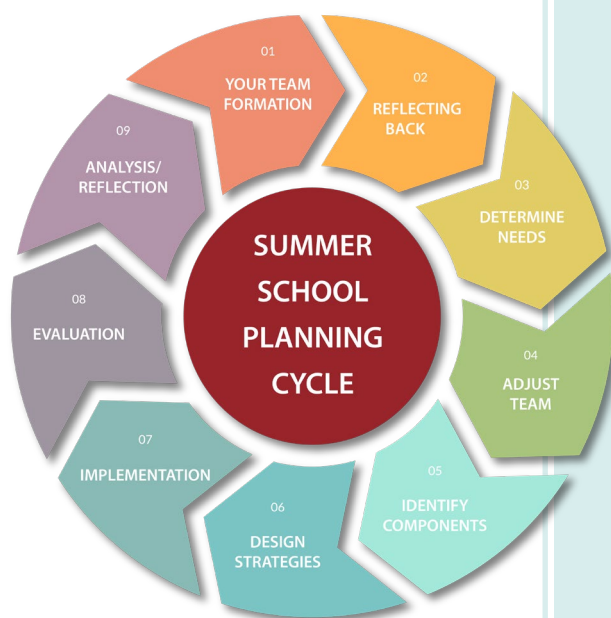
Program Strategies Framework

Having all the operational and logistic components in place and well organized contribute to an efficient and well-run program.

Program Evaluation

As a new or redesigned summer program is being rolled out it is incumbent upon the team managing the program to evaluate both the implementation of the program and the ultimate effectiveness of the program. Not only is this just good practice, since many of the federal funding sources require a high degree of accountability for outcomes, the evaluation process has become more important than ever. To assist the team in this process, click on the program evaluation framework.

Program Evaluation Framework

As a new or re-designed summer program is being rolled out it is incumbent upon the team managing the program to evaluate both the implementation of the program and the ultimate effectiveness of the program.

Reflection Framework

Name of Program	
Brief Description of Program	
Approximately how long has this program been in existence?	
Approximately how many students participate in this program each summer? How were students selected? What percentage of students attended? What was the average student attendance rate?	
What is the primary purpose of this program?	
What data was collected to measure the efficacy of this program? *(Attendance, test scores, surveys, questionaires, satisfaction data-students, parents,, staff feedback, agency data, etc.)*	
How many agencies are involved in the program? List. What role did each agency play?	
Approximately how much did it cost to run this program?	
Has the program largely met the expectations set for the enrolled students? How do you know? *(Holistic summary of the success in meeting program goals, with attention to positive and negative outcomes.)*	

Reflecting on this School Year

What academic challenges emerged this year that weren't anticipated?	
What learning components were put in place that have been successful and could inform the planning of the summer programs?	
What social/emotional needs of students emerged that may not have been considered last summer but need to be taken into consideration for planning for this summer?	

Based upon all the above, what would you recommend regarding this program?

    __ Continue the program as is with few if any changes.

    __ Continue the program but consider the following changes:

    _____

    __ Discontinue the program

Team Formation Framework

Team leader	
District members	
School-based members	
Community-based members	
Team organization: Meeting schedule; agendas; minutes; reports; timelines	
Team Resources: Budget; Staff compensation, consultation services	
Team Goal	
Numerous organizations have produced evidence-based information on effective summer program design. (See Appendix). What effective program design standards are being followed in the creation of this program?	

Program Design Framework

What student needs is the program being designed to address? Is there data to document this? What will be the goals for the students who are enrolled?	
What age group/grade level will the program encompass?	
What community providers if any are participating in the program?	
How many students will be enrolled in the program?	
Where will the program be based?	
When will the program start and when will it end?	
What time will the program begin and end each day?	
How will students be selected for and enrolled in the program?	
What information will be collected on selected students? How will this information be communicated to the summer school staff?	
How many days per week will the program operate?	
How many any what type of staff will be required for the program? (Teachers, aides, nurses, clinicians, administrators, etc.)	
How will staff be recruited?	
How will students get to and from the program? Will transportation be needed during the course of the day?	

How and when will information be communicated to all stakeholders? (Parents, students, school community, community providers, community in general, leadership, etc.)	
Will professional development be needed for some or all staff? If so, when, what kind, know much, and who will provide?	
Will there be time for the staff to meet together during the summer?	
How will the effectiveness of the program be evaluated? (It is critical to make this decision prior to program implementation and after the primary purposes and goals of the program are established *(What specific data will be collected and how and when will this data be collected?).*	
What material and equipment will be required for the program?	
What custodial services will be needed?	
Will food be provided to the students? If so, how and by whom?	
How much will the program cost? What will be the source(s) of funding? What will the accounting requirements of the funding source be?	
Do we have sufficient resources (time and money) to implement the strategy as designed?	
Who will be in charge of the program?	
Is it clear who will be responsible for what during the course of the program?	
Is extra insurance required? If so, who will provide the insurance?	
Will there be a formal contract if a community agency is participating in the program?	

Program Strategies Framework

List the most important student needs this program is designed to address. (These needs can be academic, behavioral, social, emotional, nutritional, physical, recreational, vocational, etc. any one or any combination.)	
What are the major strategies that will be used in the program to meet the identified needs? Obviously, the strategies incorporated into the program will depend upon the student needs identified in item 1, as well as the age and make-up of the student group. Since the possible strategies are almost endless, the point here is for the team to be thoughtful in their search for appropriate strategies to employ for this particular group of students. Therefore, this framework is designed to assist the team to select strategies with a high probability of success. Regarding a proposed strategy: A. Is there evidence that this strategy has been successful in addressing the identified student needs in a similar group of students? B. Does the staff have the necessary skill to implement the strategy? If not, is it feasible to train the staff up to a level of proficiency? C. Can we identify what exemplary implementation of this strategy looks like? D. Can we articulate the strategy clearly enough to develop a common understanding among those that will be charged with implementation?	
Is there a system in place to measure that the essential components of the selected strategies are being implemented as designed.	
How is evidence of student learning going to be captured?	
Will a system be designed to capture individual student performance in the summer program? How will that information be transmitted to the student's teachers next school year?	
What specific components of the program are designed to attract students to the program and maintain their attendance?	

Program Evaluation Framework

List the major desired student outcome goals of the program.	
What strategies, devices or procedures will be utilized to determine to what degree these goals in item 1 (above) were met at the end of the program?	
If any interim measures of these outcomes are to be made, what will they be and how often will they be used?	
Data on student attendance in the program is critical and should be included in any evaluation of a summer learning program.	
How will the team assess the degree to which the major strategies in the program are being implemented? How often?	
Who will be responsible for completing a summary evaluation document describing the outcomes of this program?	
When will the final program evaluation be completed?	
How will the final program evaluation be disseminated? Will each students' teacher receive data on the student's performance in the program?	
Are the evaluation requirements of the funding source being met?	
Is a process being designed to conduct a comprehensive review of the program to determine strengths, weaknesses, changes, and revisions for forthcoming years?	
How will the student learning in the summer program be linked to the student learning during the school year?	

Example

Reflection Framework

Name of Program	**"Getting Back on Track"**
Brief Description of Program	This program is designed for students who failed one or more courses during grade 9 and were nominated by their school as "at risk" for not completing high school in four years. Since they are high risk for non-high school completion the program hopes to get them back on track to graduate on time. The following program components were implemented: Specific academic instruction – 25% Recreational activities – 25% Group counseling sessions – 10% Pre vocational activities _ 40%
Approximately how long has this program been in existence?	The program ran for the first time during the summer of 2022.
Approximately how many students participate in this program each summer? How were students selected? What percentage of students attended? What was the average student attendance rate?	50 students were nominated to attend the program. Of those students, 42 began the program. The attendance rate for these 42 students was as follows: Attended 90% or more – 68%; attended 80 -90 % of sessions – 25% Attended less than 80% - 7%.
What is the primary purpose of this program?	The purpose of the program is to re-engage students identified at high risk for non-completion of high school in four years by addressing academic deficits, social engagement difficulties, and obstacles to attendance.

What data was collected to measure the efficacy of this program? *(Attendance, test scores, surveys, questionaires, satisfaction data-students, parents,, staff feedback, agency data, etc.)*	Data: Attendance – see above.
	      Formal Assessments- Reading proficiency, math proficiency
	      School Engagement Survey- pre and post
	      Student Interview Data
	      Parent Survey Data

How many agencies are involved in the program? List. What role did each agency play?	Youth Services – provided individual counseling for students. Juvenile Justice Foundation – provided support services for families Park and Rec Department – provided recreational services Department of Children and Families – provided support services for identified families.
Approximately how much did it cost to run this program?	$375,000
Has the program largely met the expectations set for the enrolled students? How do you know? *(Holistic summary of the success in meeting program goals, with attention to positive and negative outcomes.)*	Attendance – compared to the attendance of the group during the school year there was a significant improvement in attendance. There were minimal academic gains in reading and mathematics. Attitudinal survey data indicated a significant improvement in the group overall in their attitude toward school. The primary goals of the program appear to have been met. Specific academic gains were negligible.
Reflecting on this School Year	
What academic challenges emerged this year that weren't anticipated?	Follow-up with the students who attended the program last summer indicates an improvement in attendance that diminished somewhat as the year progressed. Academic deficits continue to interfere with performance.

What learning components were put in place that have been successful and could inform the planning of the summer programs?	One-on one tutoring sessions with a subgroup of students did not realize significant gains in skills or attendance.
What social/emotional needs of students emerged that may not have been considered last summer but need to be taken into consideration for planning for this summer?	Needs appear to be congruent with previous indicators.

Based upon all the above, what would you recommend regarding this program?

  __ Continue the program as is with few if any changes.

  __XX- Continue the program but consider the following changes:

 Implement the intensive academic instruction only for students who opt for that component.

 Expand the pre vocational options in the program and increase the ties between these components and

 programming during the school year.

  _____

  __ Discontinue the program

Appendix
(Selected Resources)

Summer 2022

Summer Learning Best Practice Guide Cultivating Joy, Connection and Curiosity through Well-Rounded Summer Learning. Oregon Department of Education, October 19, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/Documents/ODE%202022%20Summer%20Learning%20Best%20Practice%20Guide.pdf

Every Summer Counts A Longitudinal Analysis of Outcomes from the National Summer Learning Project. Jennifer Sloan McCombs, Catherine H. Augustine, John F. Pane, Jonathan Schweig. The Rand Corporation, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/every-summer-counts-a-longitudinal-analysis-of-outcomes-from-the-national-summer-learning-project.aspx

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A Summer Like No Other: Lessons from the Field During COVID-19. The National Summer Learning Association, November 11, 2020. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from: https://www.summerlearning.org/knowledge-center/a-summer-like-no-other-lessons-from-the-field-during-covid-19/

Summer for All: Building Coordinated Networks to Promote Access to Quality Summer Learning and Enrichment Opportunities Across a Community. The Wallace Foundation. November, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/summer-for-all-building-coordinated-networks-promote-access-to-quality-summer-learning-enrichment.aspx

Effective and Promising Summer Learning Programs and Approaches for Economically-Disadvantages Children and Youth. Mary Terzian, PhD., M.S.W., Kristin Anderson Moore, PhD., Kathleen Hamilton, M.A., Child Trends. A White Paper Commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, July 2009.Retrieved from: https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/documents/effective-and-promising-summer-learning-programs.pdf

Accelerating Learning: Strategies for Whole Child Summer Learning and Beyond, April 6, 2021. Learning Policy Institute, AASA. Webinar available at: http://links.aasa.org/recordings