

2016-17 Evaluation of Summer Programs

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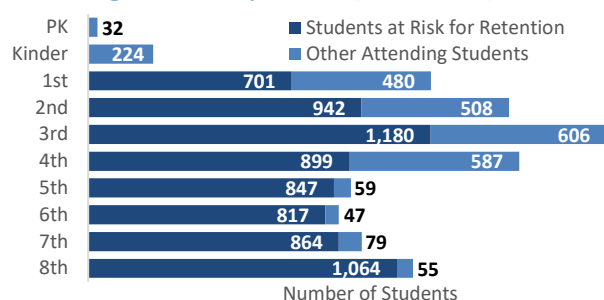
At-a-Glance

The Dallas Independent School District (ISD) Summer Learning and Extended-Day Services (SLEDs) Department provided four major programs in summer 2017. First, the Summer Readiness Program (SRP) offered remedial instruction at each elementary and middle school for grade one through grade eight students at risk for retention. Second, the high school Credit-Recovery Program (CRP) allowed students to recover up to one full credit for failed high school courses at nine comprehensive high schools and one alternative campus. Third, the Summer Achievers Academy (SAA) was a voluntary program that offered morning academic instruction at three elementary schools and one middle school. Alternative certification interns with the Dallas ISD Compass program and Teach For America (TFA) taught the academic lessons under the guidance of mentor teachers. Big Thought provided afternoon enrichment at the four campuses. Fourth, the District partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG), Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, and Big Thought to offer voluntary Extended Learning Three-Week Camps (ELTWC) at 13 elementary schools and 12 middle schools across the district. Estimated expenditures totaled \$1,291,587 for the SRP, \$1,266,790 for the high school CRP, \$975,519 for the SAA, and \$1,864,924 for the ELTWCs. Nurses for all summer programs cost \$138,965.

Summer Readiness Program

Attendance for the SRP by grade level is shown in Figure 1. In addition to providing remedial instruction to students at risk for retention, the schools could invite other students to receive reading or mathematics intervention. The 9,991 attending students included 7,314 at-risk students and 2,677 invited students.

Figure 1: Summer 2017 Number of Students Attending the SRP by Grade (N = 9,991)



Source: Summer Learning Attendance Application on 8/17/17.

Note: SRP = Summer Readiness Program.

Overall, 86 percent of the students at risk for retention were promoted to the next grade at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. To be promoted, students must have attended all eight days of the program. Promotion rates are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: 2016-17 to 2017-18 SRP Promotion Rates for Students by Attendance Criterion

Grade	Attended < 8 Days (N = 3,067)	Attended 8 Days (N = 4,225)	Overall
1st	75.2%	82.5%	79.2%
2nd	81.0%	82.4%	81.7%
3rd	83.6%	86.4%	85.3%
4th	90.1%	90.1%	90.1%
5th	77.4%	87.5%	84.1%
6th	80.4%	97.3%	89.6%
7th	82.8%	97.0%	90.5%
8th	82.4%	89.5%	86.4%

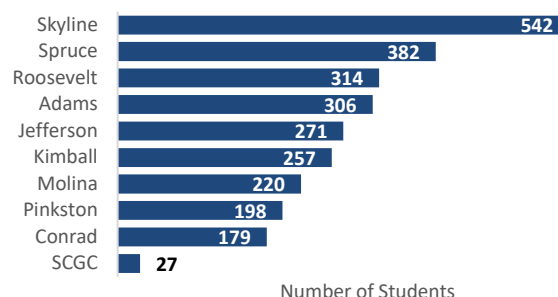
Source: Data retrieved from the Summer Learning Attendance Application on 8/17/17 and merged with 2017-18 grade-level data from 9/11/17.

Note: SRP = Summer Readiness Program. Includes only students required to attend the SRP. No PK or kindergarten students were required to attend the SRP and are not included. 22 students were missing data for the 2017-18 school year and are excluded.

High School Credit-Recovery Program

A total of 2,696 students attended at least one day of the high school CRP. CRP attendance rates by campus are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Summer 2017 High School CRP Attendance by Campus (N = 2,696)



Source: Data retrieved from the district's summer data file from 7/27/17.

Note: CRP = Credit-Recovery Program. SCGC = School Community Guidance Center.

The evaluator summarized average course grades, scores on the *Assessments of Course Performance* (ACP), and passing rates for each summer course. Average ACP scores ranged from 59.4 on the U.S.

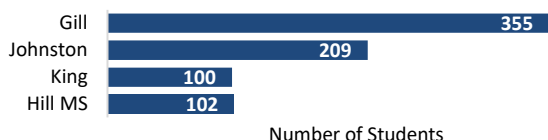
Government exam to 87.5 on the Communications Applications exam. High school course passing rates were generally high, ranging from 78.6 percent for first-semester English IV to 100.0 percent for second-semester Math Models and first-semester Pre-Calculus.

Summer Achievers Academy

Attendance

As shown in Figure 3, 766 students attended at least one day of the SAA ($n = 664$ elementary; $n = 102$ middle), fewer than the 1,772 ($n = 1,517$ elementary; $n = 255$ middle) who attended during the previous summer (Mickelson & Rapini, 2016).

Figure 3: Summer 2017 SAA Attendance by Campus ($N = 766$)



Source: Data retrieved from the district Summer Learning Attendance Application on 8/17/17.

Note: SAA = Summer Achievers Academy.

The percentage of students attending daily peaked at each site during the first or second week of the program. Three of the four programs did not report attendance for each day of the SAA. This lack of data prohibited further analyses.

Social-Emotional Learning

Social studies teachers of students enrolled in the SAA completed the *Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini (DESSA-Mini)*, a pre-program assessment of social-emotional competence. Enrichment instructors completed a post-program rating during the last week of the SAA. For students with both a pre- and post-program score, the evaluator used paired-samples t tests to compare social-emotional competence before and after the summer program. For any statistically significant differences, Cohen's d was used to examine practical significance.¹

The average scale scores for elementary school and middle school students on the *DESSA-Mini* are shown in Table 2. For elementary students, scale scores rose 3.50 points, a statistically significant change, $t(65) = 2.34$, $p = .02$. The standardized effect size index (Cohen's $d = .29$) indicated a small practical gain. Results at the middle school level should be viewed with caution due to the low number of students ($n = 16$).

¹ Cohen's d is a measure of effect size and is indicative of practical significance. A small effect size is .20, medium is .50, and large is .80 (Cohen, 1988).

Table 2: Summer 2017 Mean Pre- and Post-Program *DESSA-Mini* Scores

Campus Level	M Prior to SAA	M After SAA	M Gain
Elementary ($n = 66$)	54.46	57.96	3.50*
Middle ($n = 16$)	55.81	55.01	-.80
Overall ($N = 82$)	54.72	57.39	2.67

Source: Pre-program: June 2017. Data received 6/19/17. Post-program: July 2017. Data received 9/25/2017.

Note: SAA = Summer Achievers Academy. *DESSA-Mini* = *Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini*. * Indicates statistically significant difference, $p = .02$.

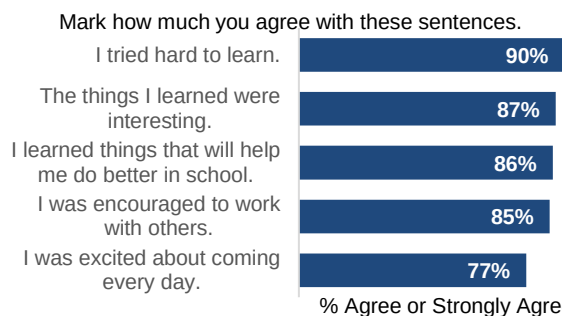
Classroom Observations

Observers recorded classroom conditions and activities in 28 elementary school and 9 middle school academic classrooms and 26 elementary school and 9 middle school enrichment classrooms across the four SAA sites. Observers positively rated most SAA classrooms with respect to resources, student treatment, and classroom control, especially at middle schools.

Student Surveys

Big Thought surveyed SAA students during the last week of the program to assess attitudes toward the SAA. Positive responses (agree and strongly agree) are shown in Figure 4. At least 77 percent of the students rated all statements positively.

Figure 4: Summer 2017 SAA Student Survey ($N = 289$)



Source: SAA student survey administered July 2017, received from Big Thought on 9/25/17.

Note: SAA = Summer Achievers Academy. Elementary school and middle school student responses are combined.

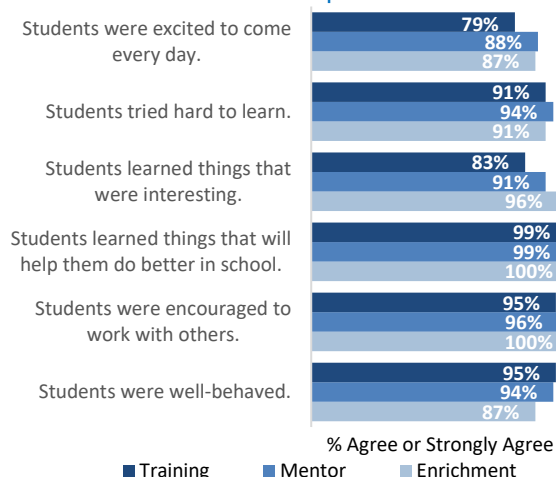
Teacher Surveys

Mentor teachers, training teachers, and enrichment instructors at each SAA campus completed an online survey that assessed their experiences as instructors and their perceptions of student experiences.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of teachers or instructors who responded positively (agreed or strongly agreed) to student-focused survey items.

Response percentages were comparable across teacher types for most items.

Figure 5: Summer 2017 SAA Instructor Survey: Student-Focused Item Response

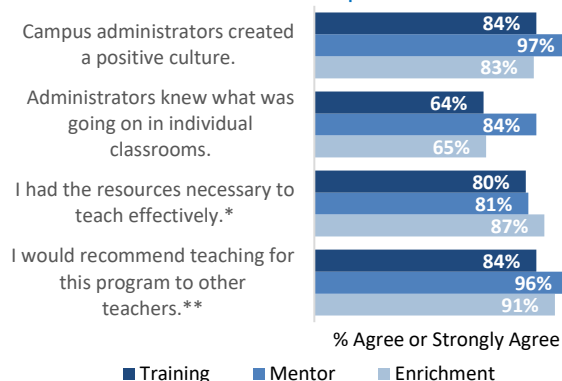


Source: Training teacher, mentor teacher, and enrichment instructor surveys administered July 2017.

Note: SAA = Summer Achievers Academy. *n*=78 training teachers, *n*=78 mentor teachers, *n*=23 enrichment instructors.

The percentages of teachers and enrichment instructors who responded positively (agreed or strongly agreed) to instructor-focused survey items are shown in Figure 6. Mentor teachers were more likely than other types of instructors to respond positively that campus administrators created a positive culture and that administrators knew what was happening in individual classrooms. There were fewer differences among the teacher groups on having the resources necessary to teach effectively and recommending teaching for the program to other teachers.

Figure 6: Summer 2017 SAA Instructor Survey: Instructor-Focused Item Responses



Source: Training teacher, mentor teacher, and enrichment instructor surveys administered July 2017.

Note: SAA = Summer Achievers Academy. *Mentor teachers were asked if their training teachers had resources. **Mentor teachers were asked if they would recommend mentoring. *n*=74 training teachers, *n*=72 mentor teachers, *n*=23 enrichment instructors.

Alternative Certification Intern Training

TFA and Dallas ISD Compass alternative certification interns completed an online survey assessing their perceptions of the practicum experience during the SAA. Response frequencies were calculated for each item and grouped by type of alternative certification program to determine if response frequencies differed between the programs.

Compass interns were more positive than TFA interns regarding most aspects of the SAA teaching experience. In particular, Compass interns responded more positively that serving as an SAA intern prepared them in engaging students at all learning levels (86% Compass, 79% TFA) and for assessing/tracking student mastery (84% Compass, 67% TFA).

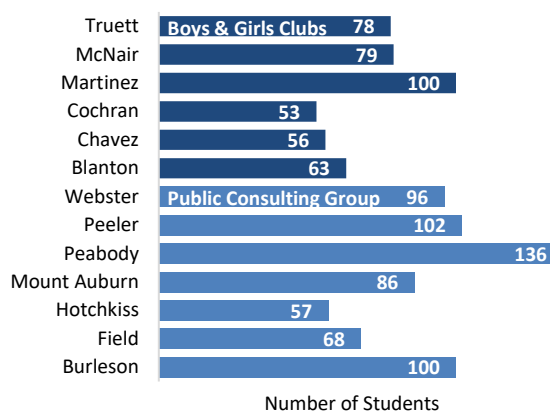
In contrast, TFA mentors were more positive than Compass mentors about the value of most aspects of the SAA teaching experience for interns in preparing them for the upcoming year. This discrepancy was particularly evident with respect to mentor perceptions of the SAA experience in preparing interns to address the social-emotional needs of future students (92% TFA, 61% Compass).

Extended Learning Three-Week Camps

Attendance

Elementary school ELTWC attendance at each of the six Boys & Girls Club sites and seven PCG sites is shown in Figure 7. A total of 1,074 elementary school students attended at least one day of the camps, with as few as 53 students attending Cochran Elementary and as many as 136 students attending Peabody Elementary.

Figure 7: Summer 2017 Elementary School ELTWC Attendance



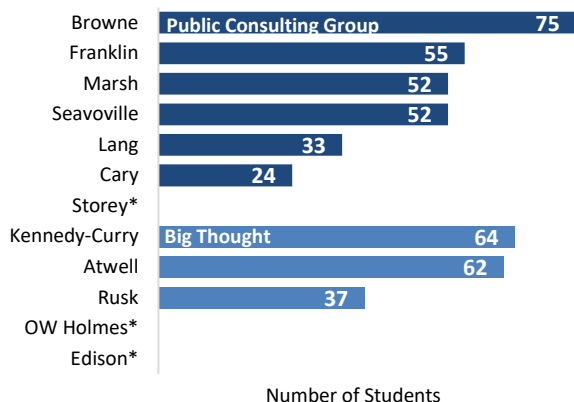
Source: Data received from the Summer Learning and Extended-Day Services Department on 9/14/2017.

Note: ELTWC = Extended Learning Three-Week Camps.

Middle school ELTWC attendance at the six Big Thought and six PCG sites is shown in Figure 8. The

PCG camp at Storey, the Big Thought camp at Edison, and the Big Thought camp at O.W. Holmes did not report attendance. At least 454 middle school students attended at least one day of the program. Attendance ranged from 24 students at Cary to 75 students at Browne.

Figure 8: Summer 2017 Middle School ELTWC Attendance



Source: Data received from the Summer Learning and Extended-Day Services Department on 9/14/2017.

Note: ELTWC = Extended Learning Three-Week Camps. * No attendance was reported.

Student Surveys

Students completed an online survey about their ELTWC experiences at the end of the program.

Responses were positive across all survey items, with over 90 percent of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were excited to come to the program every day, they tried hard, they were learning interesting and helpful things, and they were encouraged to work closely with others.

Instructor Surveys

At the end of the program, ELTWC instructors completed an online survey about their perceptions of student experiences and their experiences teaching.

At least 91 percent of instructors responded positively (agreed or strongly agreed) that students were well-behaved, were encouraged to work with other students and adults, learned things that will help them in school, learned about things that were interesting to them, tried hard to learn during the program, and were excited to come to the program every day.

Instructors were generally positive with regard to their own experiences. At least 88 percent of the instructors felt that administrators created a positive culture, administrators knew what was going on in each classroom, and they would recommend teaching for the program to other teachers.

Recommendations

- **Continue to push pre-enrollment and participation in the SRP for at-risk students.** More students attended the SRP program during summer 2017 than during summer 2016, but at-risk student matriculation rate remained comparable to the previous summer.
- **Promote SAA enrollment and attendance, especially at feeder middle school campuses.** The 2017 SAA program provided academic and enrichment opportunities at half as many sites as in 2016, and 57 percent fewer students attended at least one day. Research suggests that high-attending students achieve better in reading and mathematics when compared to non-attending peers (Augustine et al., 2009).
- **Clearly communicate attendance tracking expectations and procedures, and ensure all programs adhere to the procedures.** Several program sites neglected to record attendance. Determining whether programs are successful requires knowing which students attended and how many days the students attended. Procedures should be improved to ensure greater fidelity to attendance recording requirements.

References

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The full 2016-17 report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

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