

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) received federal funds for high-quality summer programming for the summer of 2021 through Title I, Part A, as authorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) Department hosted pre-kindergarten through grade eight summer camps at high priority campuses during the summer of 2021. The camps were planned using a holistic approach, focusing programming on addressing learning gaps, acceleration, and the emotional needs of students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In lieu of the ELO Credit Recovery Program, Campus Reconnection Centers provided opportunities for students in grades 9-12.

The purpose of the 2020-21 Summer Breeze program evaluation was to provide context and implementation data so that program managers could assess the delivery of program components and operations, determine effectiveness, and plan future efforts. The evaluation examined the level of implementation of the grant-funded program. Data for this report were obtained from interviews with program staff and a review of program documents.

On March 13, 2020, in alignment with federal recommendations, the Governor of Texas issued a disaster proclamation certifying that the novel coronavirus COVID-19 posed an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the state of Texas. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas ISD transitioned students to at-home learning on March 23 following spring break (March 16 – 20) until the end of the 2019-20 school year. To help district students and families access the internet during at-home learning, the Dallas ISD launched "Operation Connectivity" in May 2020, which provided 23,000 hotspots to families by October 2020. Dallas ISD delayed the start of the 2020-21 school year until September 8, 2020 and implemented at-home learning districtwide for the first four weeks. The district also modified the school calendar from a six-week schedule to a nine-week schedule. On October 22, 2020, the district announced that campuses would provide in-person and virtual learning throughout the rest of the school year, and parents could then choose whether their children participated in in-person or virtual instruction. In-person and virtual instruction included both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. The district also continued to implement the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as well as state and local COVID safety protocols.

The district allocated \$2,000,000 of Title I, Part A, funding to Summer Learning programs in 2020-21. This amount was the same in 2019-20 (Watson, 2020).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

How were the Summer Breeze camps implemented?

Teacher Recruitment and Training

Campus principals selected Summer Breeze teachers based on their expertise to address the unique needs of Summer Camp students, including strong Social Emotional Learning skills. Selections were made by May for summer of 2021. Once selected, Summer Camp teachers attended professional development, which included online learning resources developed by the Teaching and Learning Department. Training sessions were held virtually via Zoom on June 1 - 3, 2021 from 4:00 – 6:00 pm. Topics included elementary and middle school curriculum, classroom management, addressing mental and emotional health needs related to the stress of the pandemic, as well as Summer Camp behavioral expectations and basic operational information for the program.

Student Identification

Individual campuses set student eligibility guidelines to determine which students would be invited to attend the summer program. ELO offered suggestions for selection based on Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee requirements, chronic absences, and program specific criteria, though the eligibility decisions were made by each campus individually. Campuses were instructed to identify roughly 20-30 percent of the student population per grade level (prekindergarten through grade eight) for attendance in the program. This year, for the first time, student promotion and retention were not factors.

Each campus provided ELO with student program enrollment information by June 11, 2021. Summer data controllers at each campus used student summer enrollment forms to develop class rosters and place students by grade level and English-language ability (general education or bilingual).

Marketing and Parent Communication

The program was marketed to parents as Summer Cool Camp. Marketing materials, including the program invitation sent home to parents, communicated that the Camp's content would be designed to meet the needs of the whole child. Further, students would experience a full day of activities ranging from content-embedded novel engineering to extracurricular activities.

Program Characteristics

Summer camps were held over two weeks, beginning on Tuesday June 22, and ending on Thursday July 1 (for a total of seven days of instruction, with no camp programming held on Fridays). The face-to-face (fully in-person) program ran from 8:00am to 4:00pm, though students were also offered a virtual morning-only option. Transportation, breakfast, lunch, and participation incentives were provided to students utilizing the face-to-face model. The daily schedule included journaling, content lessons, extracurriculars, and personal reflection.

As previously stated, summer 2021 marked the first time that student promotion and retention concerns were not factors in student selection. Because the emphasis for the Summer Camps was no longer on improving content grades, all grades were recorded as “pass” or “fail”. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas Education Agency waived promotion/retention and retesting requirements for the 2020–21 school year. Students were promoted to the next grade based on teacher and parent input.

What were the results of the Summer Breeze program?

Enrollment and Attendance

Campus staff members reported daily total attendance numbers for each day of Summer Camp programming to the Extended Learning Opportunities Department via a district-provided Google Form. ELO staff provided access to data to the evaluator.¹ Based on accepted invitations and registrations completed prior to June 22, a total of 10,460 students at the elementary level, and 6,849 at the middle school level were projected to attend the summer camps. Average daily attendance as reported by 80 campuses totaled 4,393 at elementary and 3,143 at middle schools (Tables 1 and 2). At some campuses, a sizable portion of projected students failed to attend, while at others, many more students arrived than expected. Program management responded by adjusting staffing and resources to meet student demand.

At the elementary level (Table 1), most campuses anticipated more students than actual attendance numbers. Five schools saw attendance rates at or above 70 percent of their projected total: Birdie Alexander, Frederick Douglass, Harry Stone, Nancy Cochran, and Stevens Park. Notably, two (Douglass and Stone) saw actual daily attendance figures that were one and a half to two times greater than projected for each camp. At middle schools (Table 2), three campuses had attendance rates at or above 70 percent: Boude Storey, Francisco Medrano, and Sarah Zumwalt.

Table 1: 2021 Summer Camp Projected Enrollment and Daily Average Attendance, Elementary Campuses

Camp Site	Projected Enrollment	Avg. Daily Attendance	Attendance Rate
Anne Frank	256	178	69.5
Annie Webb Blanton	97	51	52.6
Anson Jones	230	124	53.9
Arthur Kramer	231	124	53.7
B.H. Macon	411	153	37.2
Bayles	347	123	35.4
Birdie Alexander	39	31	79.5
C.F. Carr	98	27	27.6
Cedar Crest	118	31	26.3
Cesar Chavez	91	12	13.2
Charles Rice	148	64	43.2
David G. Burnet	61	30	49.2
Eddie B. Johnson	132	42	31.8
Edward Titche	246	110	44.7
Edwin J. Kiest	565	228	40.4
Elisha M. Pease	165	74	44.8
F.P. Caillet	363	171	47.1
Felix G. Botello	273	77	28.2
Frank Guzik	180	73	40.6
Frederick Douglass	37	80	216.2*
Gabe P. Allen	144	40	27.8
George W. Truett	99	44	44.4
H.I. Holland	109	18	16.5
Harrell Budd	229	46	20.1
Harry Stone	51	77	151.0*
J.N. Ervin	457	122	26.7
J.P. Starks	56	22	39.3
Jack Lowe, Sr.	77	31	40.3
Jerry R. Junkins	435	205	47.1
John Neely Bryan	134	23	17.2
John W. Carpenter	157	42	26.8
Jose "Joe" May	158	53	33.5
Julian T. Saldivar	125	79	63.2
L.L. Hotchkiss	171	102	59.6
Leila P. Cowart	198	99	50.0
Leonides Cigarroa	182	48	26.4
Leslie A. Stemmons	107	51	47.7
Lida Hooe	140	22	15.7
Maple Lawn	395	112	28.4
Margaret Henderson	512	136	26.6
Martin Luther King, Jr.	137	51	37.2
Martin Weiss	186	73	39.2
N.W. Harlee	87	58	66.7
Nancy J. Cochran	47	33	70.2
Oran M. Roberts	88	49	55.7
Paul L. Dunbar	103	66	64.1
Robert L. Thornton	100	50	50.0
Ronald E. McNair	91	57	62.6
Rufus C. Burleson	48	28	58.3
San Jacinto	167	68	40.7
Sidney Lanier	184	95	51.6
Solar For Girls	221	87	39.4
Stevens Park	117	87	74.4
T.G. Terry	116	72	62.1
Thomas L. Marsalis	181	107	59.1
Trinity Heights	127	42	33.1
W.W. Bushman	181	100	55.2
Whitney M. Young, Jr.	117	41	35.0
Wilmer-Hutchins	138	54	39.1
Total	10,460	4,393	42.0

Source: Extended Learning Opportunities data file dated 07/20/2021.

Note: * Indicates more students in attendance than projected.

¹ Two campuses did not report attendance data and were omitted from data tables provided below. Various other campuses missed one or more days

of reporting, and their average daily attendance figures were calculated based only on days with reported data.

Table 2: 2021 Summer Camp Projected Enrollment and Daily Average Attendance, Middle School Campuses

Camp Site	Projected Enrollment	Avg. Daily Attendance	Attendance Rate
Benjamin Franklin	202	71	35.1
Billy Earl Dade	288	89	30.9
Boude Storey	186	153	82.3
E.B. Comstock	688	136	19.8
Francisco Medrano	107	99	92.5
Harold W. Lang	571	288	50.4
Kennedy-Curry	180	23	12.8
L.G. Pinkston	384	128	33.3
L.V. Stockard	289	148	51.2
Oliver W. Holmes	174	77	44.3
Piedmont GLOBAL	224	122	54.5
Sam Tasby	312	191	61.2
Sarah Zumwalt	102	84	82.4
Seagoville	379	116	30.6
T.J. Rusk	535	136	25.4
T.W. Browne	338	132	39.1
Thomas C. Marsh	358	180	50.3
W.E. Greiner	615	392	63.7
W.H. Gaston	685	419	61.2
William H. Atwell	232	159	68.5
Total	6,849	3,143	45.9

Source: Extended Learning Opportunities data file dated 07/20/2021.

In 2019, a total of 11,083 students in grades one through twelve attended at least one day of the summer academic program in-person, while in summer 2020, a total of 15,326 students in grades kindergarten through eight enrolled in Virtual Summer School (Watson, 2020). In prior years, student level data were shared with evaluators, which allowed for a count of individual students attending at least one day of the programs. The attendance totals reported in Tables 1 and 2 are not based on individual student data, but on daily totals of attendees as reported by campuses. Further, because individual student-level data for Summer Camp students were not available, analysis of student demographic characteristics was not possible.

Teacher Demographics

To prepare for the 17,309 projected students, the program hired and trained 1,317 teachers. The program designed classrooms with a 1:15 ratio to maximize teacher effectiveness and student engagement. Most teachers were African American (52.0%, $n = 685$). An additional 28.4 percent were Hispanic ($n = 374$), and 16.2 percent of teachers were white ($n = 213$). The remaining 3.4 percent ($n = 45$) were of other or two or more races. A total of 972 teachers (73.8%) were female, while 345 were male.

Summer Camp teachers had an average of eight years' experience teaching in the district. Almost one quarter of teachers (23.9%, $n = 315$) held a graduate-level degree. Additionally, a total of 65 teachers (4.9%) were graduates of an Alternative Certification program.

What are the plans for future summer programs?

Dallas ISD plans to continue to offer summer camps focused on improving students' academic and emotional wellbeing as part of its Mitigating Learning Loss initiative. To help address learning gaps caused by the pandemic, summer camps will also include small group instruction as well as instruction on various technology applications and extracurricular activities. The summer camps will build in emotional check-ins, reflective journaling, and exercise breaks including yoga. Campuses will opt into the program, and participating schools will be announced by April 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve the collection of attendance data. Determining which programs are successful requires knowing which students attended and the number of days each attended. Program management should communicate attendance tracking expectations, ensure all campuses adhere to daily attendance tracking procedures, and follow up when procedures are not followed with fidelity.

Take steps to improve attendance projections. The program may consider conducting qualitative research to learn how families made or changed summer program attendance decisions and use these insights to more accurately project enrollment for future summers.

Continue to ensure the program allocates enough resources to accommodate greater than expected enrollment numbers. Predicting student attendance during summer has been a challenge for years. The program should continue to ensure it has the capacity to host more students than its annual attendance projection.

REFERENCES

Watson, C. E. (2020). *2019-20 Evaluation of Summer Learning Programs (EA20-160-2)*. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

EA21-160-4

C. Elizabeth Watson, M.P.A., Evaluation Analyst II

©2021 Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD)

Mail a written request for permission to use or reproduce any part of this document to:

Dallas ISD Department of Evaluation and Assessment; H. B. Bell School Support Center; 2909 Buckner Blvd.; Box10; Dallas, TX 75228

For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.