Summer Learning Toolkit - Introduction
A guide to leading your team in an evidence-based discussion about:

Creating effective summer learning programs aligned to eight key design principles
About EdResearch for Recovery

Facing some of the most difficult education challenges of their careers, education leaders and practitioners are eager to ground their decisions in the best available evidence and data. But they don’t have time to wade through the existing research base to find answers to these questions.

Education researchers can help by providing actionable insights, rooted in high-quality research, to help education leaders make informed, student-centered decisions as they consider which strategies will work best in their schools and their communities. That’s why we created EdResearch for Recovery, a joint project of Results for America and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.

One particular area of focus for EdResearch for Recovery, has been the synthesis of evidence around effective summer learning programs. In the wake of COVID-19, evidence-aligned summer programming is a key strategy for many districts as they seek to accelerate student learning. The American Rescue Plan requires that states spend at least 1% of the money designated for K-12 schools on summer learning programs.

Summer learning programs can lead to academic gains for students and provide opportunities for additional social and emotional development, particularly for low-income students. However, simply offering a summer program does not guarantee positive effects for students.
What is the Summer Learning Toolkit?

Using content from our design principles research brief, we examine the key components of successful summer learning programs. In this brief, Dr. Jennifer McCombs and Dr. Catherine Augustine draw on a significant body of research to highlight evidence-aligned design principles for summer learning programs.

This toolkit includes six individual slide decks covering eight design principles across four domains. In addition to these domains, there is an introductory slide deck and a slide deck on measurement and assessment for summer programs. Embedded within each slide deck are goals, discussion questions, next steps, and planning tools. These tools were created by TNTP and TN SCORE for a group of Tennessee LEAs.

In each slide deck, content on design principles will connect to an example from the Woonsocket Education Department, a small, urban LEA in Rhode Island. This example will provide a lens to examine how these principles can work in a local context.

This toolkit was developed in partnership with Tennessee SCORE and TNTP. While the corresponding tools were originally developed by SCORE and TNTP for Tennessee LEAs, the content and goals for summer programs are generally transferable across states.
Your team of district and school leaders can use this toolkit to:

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<tr>
<th>Examine</th>
<th>Reflect</th>
<th>Generate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 evidence-based design principles in 4 domains</td>
<td>on how these principles could work in your local context</td>
<td>new ideas for improving your summer programs</td>
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In doing this, your team can gain a deeper understanding of the evidence behind the strategies and design principles, critically assess current programming, and develop an evidence-aligned plan for future summer programming.

Each slide deck contains:

1) A **presentation** of evidence-based principles and strategies
2) Discussion **questions** to guide team or individual reflection
3) Links to **tools** produced by TN SCORE and TNTP
Outline of the Summer Learning Toolkit

Slide Deck 1: Introduction
Goal:
Orient to the structure and content of the Summer Learning Programs Toolkit.

Slide Deck 2: Domain 1 - Students
Goal:
Generate and maintain high student attendance and engagement.
Tools:
- Enrollment Example
- Enrollment Staffing Worksheet
- Family Engagement Plan
- Partnerships with Families
- Summer Program Ad Example

Slide Deck 3: Domain 2 - Personnel
Goal:
Establish roles and responsibilities for instructors and administrators.
Tools:
- Information Session Guide
- Sample Interview Questions
- Teacher Recruitment Plan
- Staff Preparation Guidance

Slide Deck 4: Domain 3 - Program Structure
Goal:
Determine the class size and program duration that best meet student needs.
Tools:
- Planning for Summer School
- Summer Learning Acceleration

Slide Deck 5: Domain 4 - Content
Goal:
Align curriculum and content for academic and enrichment activities.
Tools:
- Content Guidance - ELA
- Content Guidance - Math
- Case Study - Lenoir City
- Case Study - Union County

Slide Deck 6: Measurement & Assessment
Goal:
Determine metrics for success and prepare measurement systems.
# 8 Evidence-Based Design Principles Across 4 Domains

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<th>Students</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Attendance</td>
<td>2. Academic Instructors</td>
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<td>5. Duration</td>
<td>3. Enrichment Instructors</td>
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<td>6. Class Size</td>
<td>4. Administration</td>
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<th>Program Structure</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<td>7. Enrichment Activities</td>
<td>8. Academic Curriculum</td>
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In addition to slide decks on each domain, the final slide deck covers measurement and assessment for summer programs. While measurement and assessment are not specific design principles, all summer programs should be planned and constructed in a way that allows for accurate and timely evaluations of key programmatic metrics.

Using site climate data, one district hired staff to focus on student behavior the following summer and thereby greatly reduced the amount of bullying and physical fighting reported in teacher surveys in subsequent summers.

One district improved the cost-effectiveness of their programs by accounting for the prior summer’s no-show rates and, accordingly, hiring fewer staff at the site level OR admitting more students to fill slots.
What makes summer learning programs effective?

**Dosage**
Scheduled days of programming, student attendance, hours of academic time on task, and teachers’ use of time.

**Quality**
The extent to which programs adhere to and incorporate key evidence-based design principles.

Quality academic summer programs can produce significant and meaningful academic improvement for students who receive sufficient dosage. Benefits can be up to 15% of typical annual gain in a school year after one summer and 20-25% of typical annual gain after two summers.
Pre-Planning Reflection + Next Steps

Instructions: Spend time individually, or as a team, thinking through the following questions as you begin planning for summer.

To discuss:
• What did your LEA or organization try last summer for programming?
• What worked?
• What was challenging?
• What is the goal for this year’s summer programming?
• Where are you in the planning stage for this coming summer?
• How do you plan to build-in measurement and assessment protocols?

Next Steps:
1. Bring together the right planning team
2. Establish key summer program goals

Dive deeper into planning with tools from TNTP and TN SCORE.