SUMMER FOR ALL

LESSONS FROM 10 YEARS OF BOSTON SUMMER LEARNING

Boston After School & Beyond

160
PROGRAMS

14,000
STUDENTS

ONE
CITYWIDE GOAL:

SUMMER LEARNING FOR ALL

Dear friends,

Colleagues in other cities look at Boston's ambitious summer learning partnership and want to know how it came together: How did we bring 90 institutions together under a single mission? How have we achieved such strong results?

It began with a bold idea: use the whole city as a classroom for kids in the summer months. We and the Boston Public Schools incubated that concept with a group of partners who shared our vision, proved it was working with rigorous research, then facilitated its adoption citywide. Massachusetts has now funded other cities to follow our lead. Ten years in, we've learned a lot about what it takes to bring an engaging, impactful summer learning model to scale.

In honor of National Summer Learning Week, we present the top lessons from 10 years of Boston Summer Learning. We invite you to join us as we continue to learn, improve, and expand opportunities for youth—starting this summer.

Sincerely,

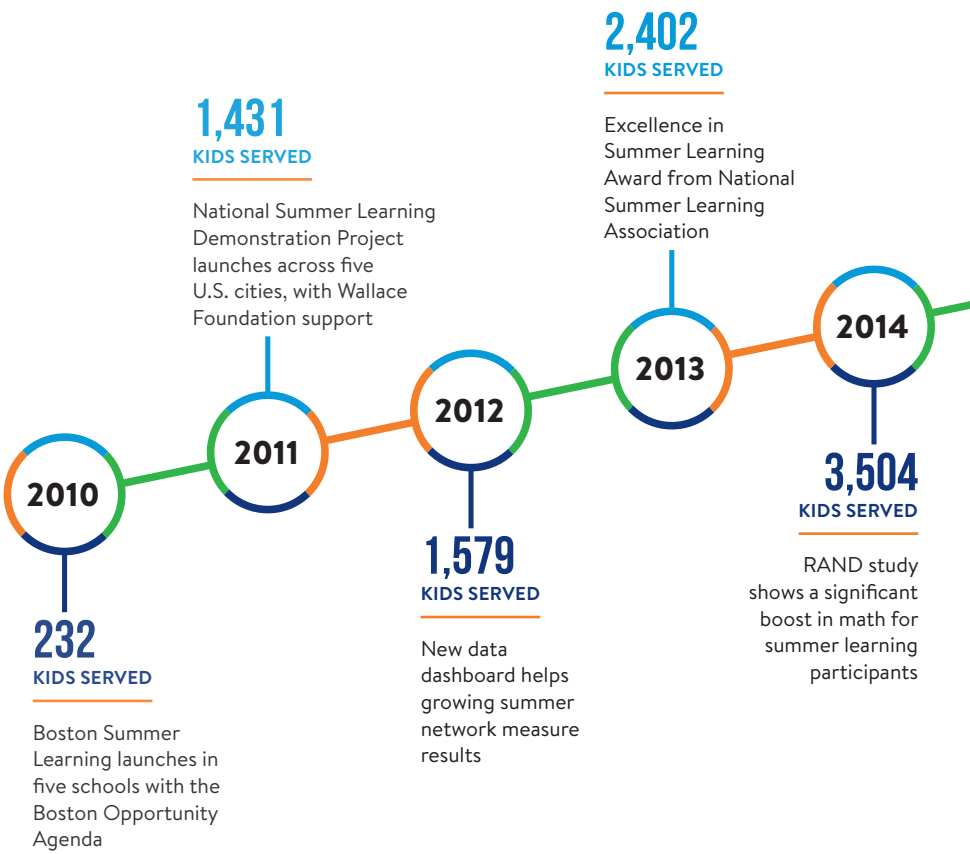
Chris Smith
Executive Director

We see the benefits of this program here in Boston. We see the potential. I invite the business community, higher education, and philanthropy to help us ensure that every child has access to high quality learning all year round.

MAYOR MARTIN J. WALSH

10 YEARS OF
EXPANSION AND RESULTS

Over 10 years, Boston After School & Beyond, the Boston Public Schools, and our collaborators have achieved major milestones in **GROWTH** (students served, partners engaged), **IMPACT** (rigorously measured results), and **REACH** (city and statewide commitments). Ours is a story of bold thinking, collaboration, and persistence… and we won't be done until we provide quality summer learning for every Boston kid.



PROJECTION FOR 2019

14,000
KIDS SERVED

160
SITES

19
MORE MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITIES WILL LAUNCH AND EXPAND SUMMER LEARNING WITH STATE SUPPORT

2015

5,626
KIDS SERVED

Mayor Walsh sets a goal to reach 10,000 students by 2017...and we hit the goal a year early!

2016

10,084
KIDS SERVED

RAND study finds significant, long-term benefits in math, reading, and social-emotional skills for high attenders

2017

10,338
KIDS SERVED

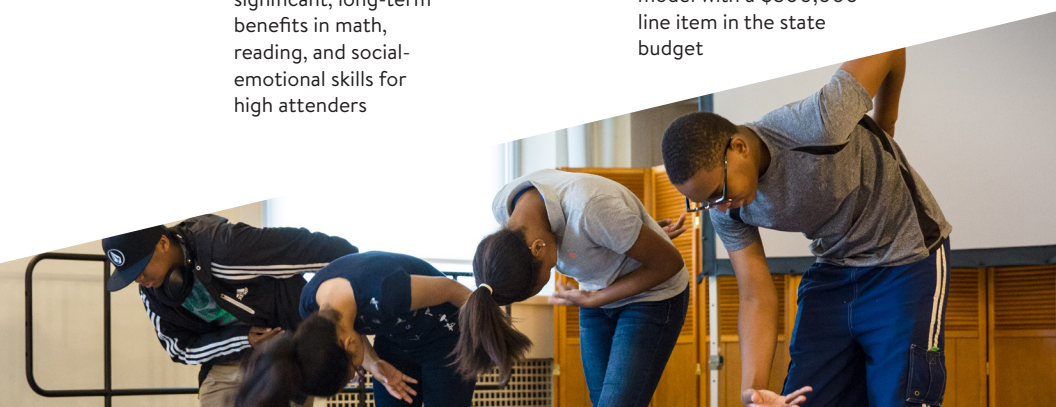
Boston Public Schools launches 5th Quarter of Learning, shifting from summer *school* to summer *learning*

2018

12,552
KIDS SERVED

Massachusetts legislature and Governor Baker fund statewide expansion of Boston's model with a $500,000 line item in the state budget

2019



LESSON 1

THINK BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Achieving quality summer learning at scale requires an expanded notion of how and where learning happens. In Boston, we've mobilized the whole city as a classroom, proving that students can make big strides in academic and life skills while engaged in fun, meaningful projects on boats, college campuses, the harbor islands, and more.

LEARNING CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE.
A variety of learning sites can meet students' diverse interests and needs with skill-rich programs that expose them to new environments and relevant content simultaneously.

REAL-WORLD LEARNING CHANGES MINDSETS.
When youth have opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills in the real world, they return to school more motivated to learn, poised to succeed, and enthusiastic about the future.

RELATIONSHIPS FLOURISH IN SUMMER.
Summer learning gives students a chance to form strong connections with peers, teachers, and other adults in a fun, personalized setting. These relationships support healthy youth development year round.

TEACHERS BENEFIT TOO.
In their work with community partners, teachers get to think about curriculum in fresh ways, try out innovative teaching practices, and discover real-world connections they can bring back to their classrooms.

LESSON 2

CULTIVATE A DIVERSE NETWORK

It takes a community to provide youth with the opportunities they need to navigate life's challenges and become thriving adults. Working together with city and philanthropic leadership, partnered institutions can maximize their resources and have a bigger impact on student outcomes than they can working in isolation.

MANY TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY. Whether it's a park, museum, or business, summer learning gives local partners a common cause and a clear structure for equipping youth with the skills they'll need to contribute to the workforce and civic life.

EVERYONE HAS SOMETHING TO ADD. The mayor, superintendent, and philanthropic leaders provide important input and resources necessary for expansion, while practitioners from every sector bring valuable expertise and capacity to guide and grow the network.

COORDINATION IS CRUCIAL. Complex networks need a convener. Whether it's a nonprofit intermediary or a public-private partnership, someone must facilitate involvement and make the summer learning network their daily focus.

PARTNERS GROW STRONGER TOGETHER. The mutual accountability and support of the network generates higher quality programs, better results for students, and more visibility for everyone, which in turn, attracts support that amplifies everyone's work.

LESSON 3

FOCUS ON CROSS-CUTTING SKILLS

Summer is a great time to develop skills for navigating college, work, and life. We've identified a core set of skills that every adult needs, every sector values, and that can be learned in a range of settings. These *Achieve*, *Connect*, *Thrive* skills guide our summer learning partnership and provide a common framework for every site.

WE KNOW WHICH SKILLS MATTER.
College admissions officers, human resource professionals, and a convincing body of research all point to a core set of skills—like critical thinking and teamwork—that produce success in college, the workplace, and life.

SKILLS CAN BE TAUGHT AND LEARNED.
With the right tools and practices, adults in any setting can create opportunities for students to activate and apply important skills and, over the course of a summer, demonstrate measurable improvement.

SKILLS PROVIDE A SPECIFIC, YET FLEXIBLE, FRAMEWORK.
Skills drive the curricular focus of summer learning without dictating subject matter. This allows partners to design industry-specific learning experiences that push students to practice new skills as they tackle interesting real-world problems.

SKILLS PROVIDE A POWERFUL COMMON AGENDA.
Skill development is a practical, intuitive agenda that can unify educators, nonprofits, businesses, and professionals across all sectors.

LESSON 4

MEASURE AND LEARN TOGETHER

A central tenet of Boston Summer Learning—and a requirement for joining—is the commitment to continually assess student progress and program quality. Shared measures solidify our network's common focus, inform continuous program improvement, and keep everyone intent on what matters: better outcomes for kids.

WITH MUTUAL SUPPORT COMES MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY. To create an effective, citywide summer learning system, we need to know what's working and what's not. That requires transparency among partners on shared measures of program quality, student participation, and student learning.

DATA INFORMS IMPROVEMENT. Community providers need (and want) meaningful opportunities to learn. We teach into what the data tells us, with cross-site professional development sessions and site-specific coaching that address measurable needs.

DATA DRIVES INNOVATION TOO. Diverse summer learning options appeal to students and inspire a healthy exchange among adults. The trick is to keep program design flexible while adhering to consistent goals and measures to ensure a continuous arc of improvement.

GREAT PRACTICE IS INFECTIOUS. Strong outcomes should be celebrated and best practices shared. When we invest in capturing and elevating effective models of summer learning, those practices spread and evolve, producing better results for more students every year.

ARE YOU READY TO GO

ALL IN FOR SUMMER LEARNING?

FIND OUT HOW WE DO IT

Check out our online resources:

bostonbeyond.org
Impact reports, program profiles, and more...

insight.bostonbeyond.org
Best practices from our most effective summer sites

JOIN US AND MAKE IT HAPPEN

Contact:

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LET'S MAKE OUR GOAL:
SUMMER
LEARNING
FOR ALL

Boston After School & Beyond activates program providers, schools, businesses, higher education, and the philanthropic sector to deliver high-quality learning opportunities for Boston youth. We're grateful for the ongoing commitments and contributions of our summer learning partners:

ACEDONE • Achieve • Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention • Another Course to College • Apprentice Learning • BATA • BellXcel • Bethel Math and Science Scholars • BGA Summer Academy • Boston Centers for Youth and Families • Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center • Boston Day & Evening Academy • Boston Green Academy • Boston Latin School • Boston Public Health Commission • Boston Scores • Boston University • Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston • Boston Public Schools • Breakthrough Greater Boston • Brigham and Women's Hospital • Brighton High School • Burke High School • Camp Harbor View • Charlestown High School • CitySprouts • Community Academy • Community Music Center of Boston • Courageous Sailing • Crossroads for Kids • Dearborn STEM Academy • Donald McKay K-8 School • DotHouse Health • East Boston High School • Edwards Middle School • Elevate Youth • English High School • Excel High School • Freedom House • Generation Teach • Girls LEAP • Grove Hall Alliance • Hale Reservation • Harlem Lacrosse • Harvard-Kent Elementary School • Haynes Early Education Center • Health Resources in Action • Horace Mann School • Horizons • Immigrant Family Services Institute • Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción • Jackson Mann K-8 School • Joseph M. Tierney Learning Center • Josiah Quincy Elementary School • Madison Park Technical Vocational High School • Mario Umana Academy • Mass Audubon • MassArt • National Park Service • Neighborhood Network Center Inc. • New England Aquarium • Northeastern University • O'Bryant School of Math and Science • Phillips Brooks House Association • Piers Park Sailing Center • Snowden International School • Sociedad Latina • Sportsmen's Tennis and Enrichment Center • St. Stephen's Youth Programs • STEAM Ahead • TechBoston Academy • The 3 Point Foundation • The Calculus Project • The Paraclete Center • The Steppingstone Foundation • Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center • Trinity Boston Foundation • UMass Boston • Warren-Prescott K-8 School • Wentworth Institute of Technology • West End House • World Ocean School • WriteBoston • YMCA of Greater Boston • Zoo New England

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Barr Foundation • Boston Centers for Youth & Families • Boston Public Schools • City of Boston • The Boston Foundation • The Boston Opportunity Agenda • Charles Hayden Foundation • Eos Foundation • Klarman Family Foundation • Liberty Mutual Foundation • Michael & Susan Dell Foundation • Nellie Mae Education Foundation • New Profit • TJX Foundation • United Way • The Wallace Foundation • Wellington Management Foundation • Yawkey Foundation

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PARTNER?

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