ROAD MAP SUMMER LEARNING EXPLORATORY STUDY

White Paper

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

About the Study

- Two year study, summers 2016 and 2017

- 14 summer programs from 7 organizations participated
  - More than 50% of served youth need academic support (K-12)
  - Minimal dosage requirement (16 days, 3 hours per day)
  - Low or no cost, scholarships available
  - Outcome goals include academic growth or maintenance

- Data collected included participant demographics, attendance, academic pre/post assessment and Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment observation (SLPQA).

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Learning Questions

- What is the **summer program quality** overall and by cohort member, as measured by the SLPQA?

- What measures are sites currently using to **assess** program impact on **academic outcomes**?

- What **strategies** and **tools** are most useful and can be replicated at more sites?

- Are we able to draw any conclusions about the **impact** of summer programs on academic growth, and the relationships among program quality, student attendance, program features, and academic impact?

- What recommendations can we make for next summer to **improve data collection**?

- What recommendations can we make for next summer to **improve summer programs**?

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Findings

- Program Similarities

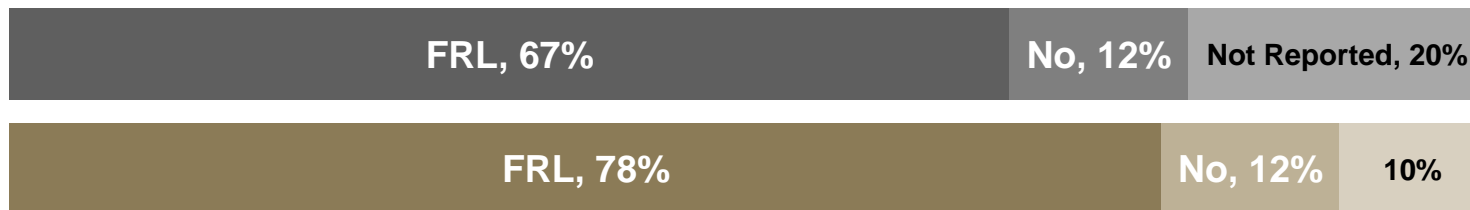- Program Differences

- Successes

- Challenges

Similarities
High need youth served

Study programs aim to serve high need youth, including those who live in poverty or speak English as a second language.

Family Qualification for Free or Reduced Lunch in School

FRL, 67%	No, 12%	Not Reported, 20%

FRL, 78%	No, 12%	10%

Participant Home Language		2017	2016
	English	30%	26%
	Spanish	26%	21%
	Somali Languages	9%	22%
	Ukrainian	4%	<3%
	Other	12%	10%
	Not Reported	19%	19%

...oment Executives of King County
...er to advance the youth development field

Similarities
Common program components

All participating programs had the following as core parts of their program delivery:

- Partnerships
- Field trips
- Meals
- Family engagement

Similarities
Disconnect from the school year

The summer programs in this study displayed varying degrees of collaboration with the schools attended by participants. Program staff members from all sites want more partnership with schools as they search for the best ways to support students academically, socially, and emotionally.

- Limited cooperation
- Independent programming

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Differences
Who is Served, and When

The participating cohort was recruited based on similar program characteristics; nonetheless they exemplify diversity in:

- The ways young people are served
- Age of students served
- Program length

Differences
Organizational Umbrella

Differences in organizational size, budget and program location resulted in program delivery differences

- Resources available (space, assessment)
- Proximity to youth
  - Public housing site-based
  - Community facility-based
  - Public school-based

Differences
Academic Support Goals and Delivery

This study uncovered the lack of similarities among program in defining academic growth goals for summer programs.

None of the programs fall neatly into the instructional or experiential learning category; both kinds of learning are balanced differently in each program.
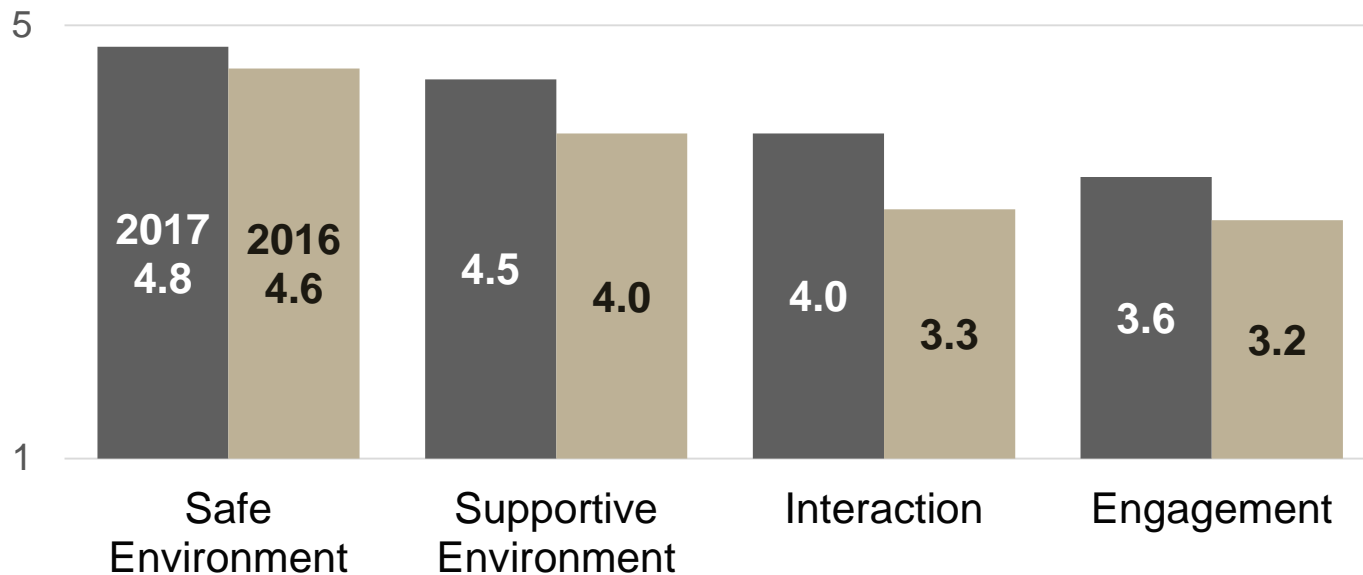
Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Successes
Program Quality Improvement

SLPQA scores improved year over year
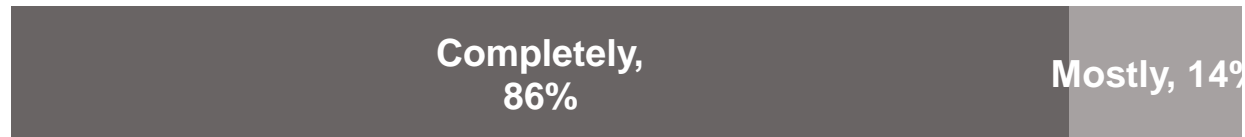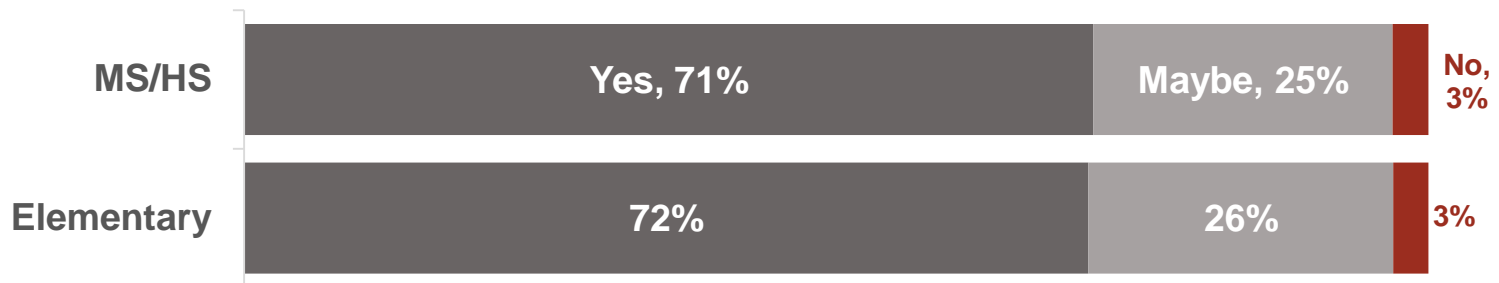
Staff report the process was productive

Successes
Stakeholder Satisfaction

Families and students report satisfaction with program

Are you satisfied with your child's summer program?

Completely, 86%	Mostly, 14%

Would you recommend this program to a friend or return next year?

	Yes / No	Maybe	No
MS/HS	Yes, 71%	Maybe, 25%	No, 3%
Elementary	72%	26%	3%

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Challenges
Staffing

Every organization cited **hiring** and **retaining qualified staff** as a **chronic challenge**.

Site managers agree that consistent staffing during the summer is important to delivering a high-quality program.

Challenges
Resources

Program staff easily reached consensus on opportunities to improve program quality that are common across programs. They also easily identified strategies to address those needs, but lack the resources to implement many of them.

- Program Planning
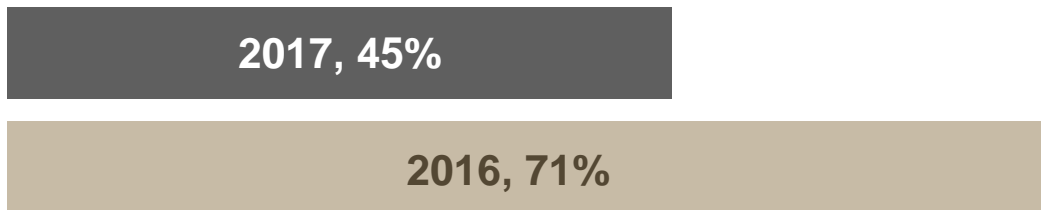- Staff Training
- Program Delivery Resources

Challenges
Academic Assessment

Programs struggle to identify and implement an appropriate and valid measure of growth or maintenance over this short time frame.

Percentage of Assessed Students

2017, 45%

2016, 71%

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Recommendations

- Communication between summer and school year
- Use of SLPQA Academic scales
- Fit of student to program
- Invest in quality and capacity building
- Grapple with tensions

Foster better communication and continuity between the school year and summer programs

Institutional leaders should work to decrease institutional barriers to communication to improve how students are served year-round.

Rely on academic scales of SLPQA for academic assessment

The SLPQA offers a way to measure the quality of academic enrichment offered in a summer program. Programs found the information useful and supportive of capacity building.

SLPQA Academic Support Scales

5

| | 2017 4.0 | 2016 3.7 | 3.3 | 2.5 |

1

Literacy | Math
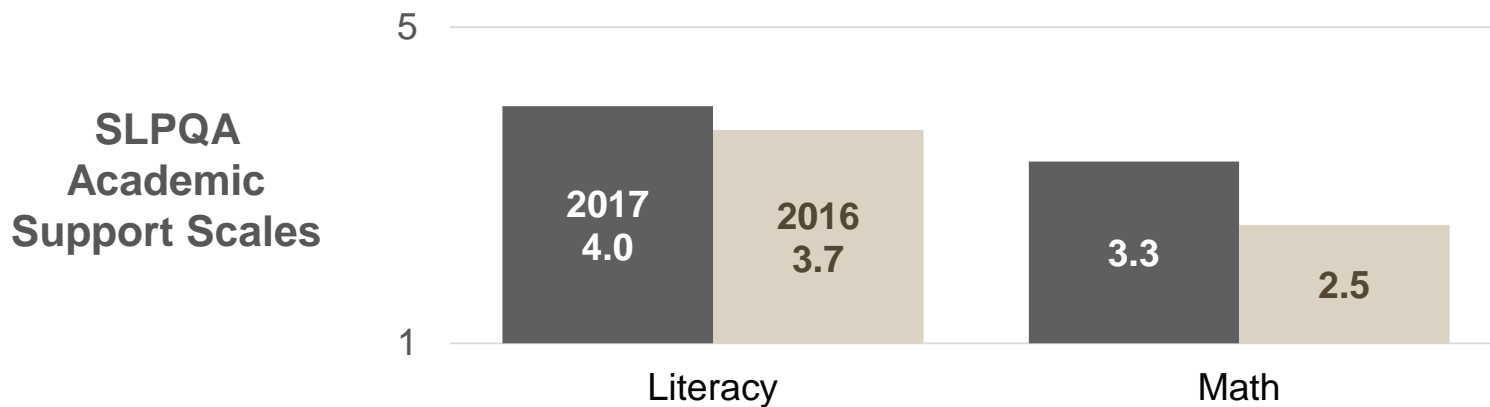
Work to improve systems of matching students with best-fit programs

The sector would appreciate stronger collaboration with schools to identify, recruit, and even serve students could improve the fit between student needs and program offerings.

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

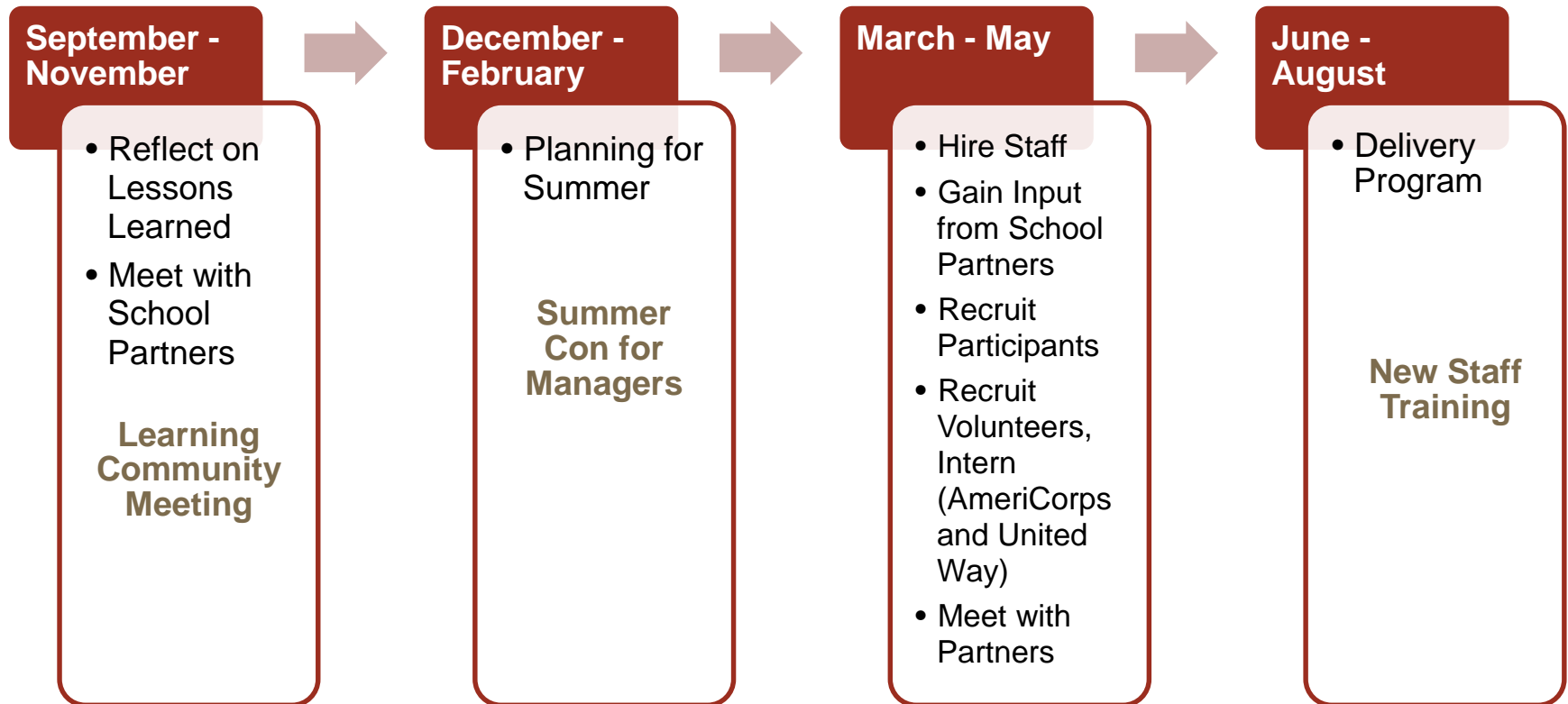# Support programs to find the resources they need to deliver quality programs

The most commonly cited needs include higher pay and more hours of staffing for summer staff, increased professional development, and program delivery resources related to curriculum, field trips, and assessment.

Staff training needs to include:

- Trauma informed structure, policy, staff supports
- Restorative justice
- Structural racism
- Cultural responsiveness
- Behavior management
- Academic support

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Capacity Building Timeline

September - November

- Reflect on Lessons Learned
- Meet with School Partners

Learning Community Meeting

December - February

- Planning for Summer

Summer Con for Managers

March - May

- Hire Staff
- Gain Input from School Partners
- Recruit Participants
- Recruit Volunteers, Intern (AmeriCorps and United Way)
- Meet with Partners

June - August

- Delivery Program

New Staff Training

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Continue to grapple with difficult questions about how to address opportunity gaps

As summer programs respond to the **growing emphasis on summer learning loss**, they are increasing their focus on academic skill-building activities.

This focus is **in tension with** the desire to use summer time to **address opportunity gaps** in ways that are not possible during the school day or within after-school programs.

Advocates for bolstering summer programs' role in closing the achievement gap should consider the **unintended impact** that such a shift in summer programs could have on student experiences.

Youth Development Executives of King County
Working together to advance the youth development field

Discussion