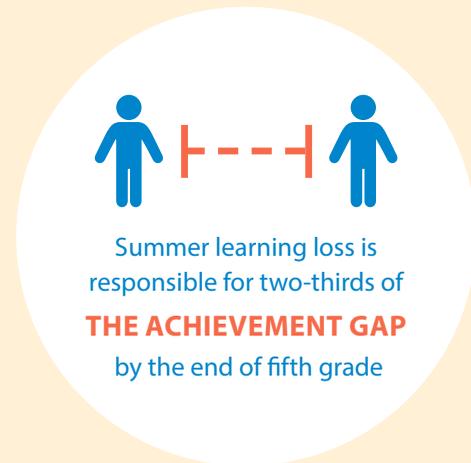




ESSA Creates New Opportunities for Summer Learning Success

Student success depends on much more than what happens in the classroom. With summer learning loss responsible for two-thirds of the achievement gap by the end of fifth grade, opportunities for youth (especially those at-risk) to stay engaged during the summer months matter tremendously to schools and families. And the strong evidence base proving positive effects for youth makes summer learning a natural complement to the school year.

State plans for implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reveal many strategies for schools to combine federal and state investments and help drive student success with targeted summer activities. These include places where summer is explicitly named as a programmatic strategy or allowable use of funds, as well as provisions within ESSA that are a natural fit for summer opportunities.



COLORADO Department of Education

The Colorado Summer Migrant Youth Leadership Institute (SMYLI) brings 80 secondary students to a college campus for a 10-night program designed to motivate and enable migrant students to earn high school credit, improve academic skills and social skills, and to develop as community leaders.

Migratory students thrive with summer opportunities

Educating migratory children in the summer has been a common strategy across states for many years. States recognize that this is a critical time to provide intensive, targeted instruction for students who may be behind their peers due to factors beyond the school building. Of course, each state's migratory youth plan varies based on local conditions, playing to one of the strengths of ESSA. Northern states like Illinois and North Dakota are home to many migratory families only during the summer season, and their ESSA plans include intensive and comprehensive services for these children and families during that time. These plans include detailed assessment and metrics for growth, classroom work, tutoring and online instruction, pre-school services, and family engagement. Notably, one detail includes sharing student data with the southern states where these same students live during the school year, ensuring more seamless and aligned services for youth, and a more efficient use of resources for schools and districts.





Flexible funds foster creative summer programming



Less populous states that receive only mandatory minimums of funding for block grant programs sometimes combine pots of ESSA funding into a “Consolidated Application for Federal Title Funds.” This process allows school districts to submit a consolidated application for several related federal programs that may support a comprehensive plan for student support, including: Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; and Title IV, Part A.

States find in the new Title IV, Part A “Student Success and Academic Enrichment” (SSAE) grant program many activities that are a good fit for the summer. SSAE emphasizes a “well-rounded education” and allows activities such as STEM learning, arts education, foreign language, environmental education, and computer science. Many of these activities already take place outside of regular classroom hours, and districts will look to this funding to boost or expand the summer enrichments they already provide. While some plans explicitly reference summer in their SSAE plans, all states allow districts and schools the flexibility to use these funds year-round.

Because appropriations for SSAE have been uncertain, many states like Vermont and Maine have folded

implementation of SSAE into a larger strategic plan for student support, enrichment, and well-being. Nevada plans to use SSAE to expand funding for Victory Schools and ZOOM schools, which provide the highest poverty, lowest performing schools with many additional resources and services, including summer academies. Some states like Tennessee and New Mexico have connected this funding to existing statewide initiatives, such as targeting summer services for early elementary students to ensure they are reading on grade-level by the end of grade three. Illinois plans to use all Title IV funds to coordinate state level strategies to support a positive climate in challenged schools. Other states like Louisiana will put these and other funds toward activities that support one specific outcome like chronic absenteeism.

SUPPORTING YOUTH THROUGH KEY SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

States also plan to make strategic use of ESSA funds for bridge programs that help students and families successfully make critical transitions between grade levels.

The **DELAWARE PLAN** describes summer home visits and “transition academies” targeting the summer between elementary and middle school.

OREGON’S PLAN describes drop-out prevention activities during the middle school to high school transition, such as summer academies for students who are struggling academically, and induction and orientation programs for all incoming ninth graders.

The **NEW JERSEY PLAN** specially targets the issue of summer melt, and will support enrolling high school seniors in service that will send them automated text messages about key steps in the college application process.

MASSACHUSETTS plans to support older migratory youth in exploring both career and college opportunities during the summer, for successful transition to the post-secondary path that best fits.



New Jersey’s plan specifically targets the issue of **SUMMER MELT**



Summer support for teachers

Beyond direct services for youth, states will also use summertime for targeted professional development. Teachers and school leaders will receive intensive training on key ESSA-era issues like supporting:

- English-language Learners (Tennessee)
- Advanced Placement Course Instruction (New Mexico)
- Career and Technical Education (New Mexico)
- Leadership Development (Maine)

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

One of the most important themes of ESSA is collaboration.

States are being thoughtful about integrating school-based summer programming with the federal Summer Nutrition Programs, state offices of early learning, the National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment (NCASE), career and technical education, and other related educational, health, and human services agencies that touch the lives of children and families throughout the year. We also see states tapping community stakeholders with expertise about what kids need outside of school to select and implement the most effective strategies.

Student learning and development doesn't stop when the bell rings, and we can't afford to waste the opportunities that summer offers. Summer is not only a time to catch or keep up academically, but also an opportunity for students to explore their interests, for teachers to refine their practice, and for schools to build relationships with families.

Under ESSA, states are committing to important investments in summer learning and enrichment that have the power to reverse summer learning loss, keep kids on track between grade levels, and ensure students go back to school each year ready to move forward.



**national summer
learning association**