



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
State Board of Education  
Department of Public Instruction

---

# **Report to the North Carolina General Assembly**

---

Report on implementation of and outcomes  
from school extension learning recovery and  
enrichment programs.

*S.L. 2021-7, HB82*

---

Date Due: J a n u a r y 1 5 , 2 0 2 2  
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2021-2022

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VISION: Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MISSION: The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is to use its constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right of a sound, basic education for every child in North Carolina Public Schools.

ERIC DAVIS  
Chair: Charlotte - At-Large

JILL CAMNTZ  
Greenville – Northeast  
Region

TODD CHASTEEN  
Blowing Rock - Northwest Region

ALAN DUNCAN  
Vice Chair: Greensboro-Piedmont-Triad Region

REGINALD KENAN  
Rose Hill - Southeast Region

DONNA TIPTON-ROGERS  
Brasstown- Western Region

MARK ROBINSON  
Lieutenant Governor: High Point - Ex  
Officio

AMY WHITE  
Gamer – North Central Region

J. WENDELL HALL  
Ahoskie- At-Large

DALE FOLWELL  
State Treasurer: Raleigh- Ex Officio

OLIVIA OXENDINE  
Lumberton - Sandhills Region

JAMES FORD  
At-Large

CATHERINE TRUITT  
Secretary to the Board: Cary

VACANT  
Southwest Region

## NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent: 301 N. Wilmington Street: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to:

Thomas Tomberlin, Director of Educator Recruitment and Support, NCDPI  
6301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6301 / Phone: (984) 236-2114 / Fax: (984) 236-2099

Visit us on the Web: [www.dpi.nc.gov](http://www.dpi.nc.gov)

## BACKGROUND

On April 29, 2021, the North Carolina General Assembly passed SL2021-7 Summer Learning Choice for NC Families<sup>1</sup>. The law established School Extension Learning Recovery and Enrichment programs and required public school units (PSUs) to implement those programs for at-risk students<sup>2</sup> as defined in G.S. 115C-105.41(a). Students who are *at-risk* include those students who are at risk for academic failure and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion and graduation, beginning in kindergarten. Identification shall occur as early as can reasonably be done and can be based on grades, observations, diagnostic and formative assessments, state assessments, and other factors, including reading on grade level, that impact student performance that teachers and administrators consider appropriate, without having to await the results of end-of-grade or end-of-course tests. The law stipulated that program proposals were to be evaluated and approved by NCDPI. The newly established Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration (OLR) was tasked with establishment of the guidelines consistent with the law and development of a process for approval. Program guidelines were as follows<sup>3</sup>:

### Instructional and Program Requirements:

- Eligible students will have access to either 150 hours or 30 days of instructional programming (instructional time does not include transitions, lunch, or physical activity).
- Students in kindergarten through second grade will be provided instruction in reading and math.
- Students in third through eighth grade will be provided instruction in reading, math, and science.
- All K-8 students will have a period of physical activity, meal service, and at least one enrichment activity.
  - Enrichment activities may include art, sports, music, or other activities at the discretion of the LEA.
- For eligible students, the LEA may integrate the unit's Read to Achieve (RtA) reading camp into the program.
- High school students must have access to in-person instruction in end-of-course subjects, access to modules and teacher support for credit recovery, including courses offered through the NC Virtual Public School, and in-person instruction for an elective course.
- All students shall have access to transportation services to the school facility housing the program and access to in-person social-emotional learning (SEL) supports.
- The program shall have time built into the instructional day for teachers to provide individual or small group instruction to at-risk students.

### Student Participation

- The LEA is required to identify at-risk students and notify parents or guardian(s) of student eligibility.
- The program is voluntary and at the discretion of the parent or guardian.
- In order to provide the opportunity for additional student participation, within space available, the LEA shall establish any criteria prioritizing additional students' participation in the program.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2021/Bills/House/PDF/H82v7.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ncleg.net/enactedlegislation/statutes/html/bysection/chapter\\_115c/gs\\_115c-105.41.html](https://www.ncleg.net/enactedlegislation/statutes/html/bysection/chapter_115c/gs_115c-105.41.html)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/districts-schools-support/office-learning-recovery-acceleration/school-extension-learning-and-enrichment-program-sl2021-7-hb82>

- Outreach to families and students, in an effort to increase participation, should address not only learning recovery but the development of a program that includes an engaging, positive environment that includes SEL supports and enrichment activities.

### **Teacher Compensation**

- Local boards of education are encouraged to find ways to incentivize highly effective teachers to participate in the program, such as increased compensation and varied contract durations.
- Teachers and other personnel hired to work in the program are considered temporary and on a contractual basis.
- From the COVID recovery funds available, a signing bonus of \$1,200 shall be offered to any teacher who had received a past teaching bonus for reading in grades 3, 4, or 5 or in mathematics in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 or has received National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification.
- Teachers who provide instruction in the program shall also receive a bonus of at least \$150 for each student who does not demonstrate reading proficiency on the third-grade end-of-grade reading assessment but becomes proficient in reading after completion of the program as demonstrated by an alternate assessment.

### **Program Assessments**

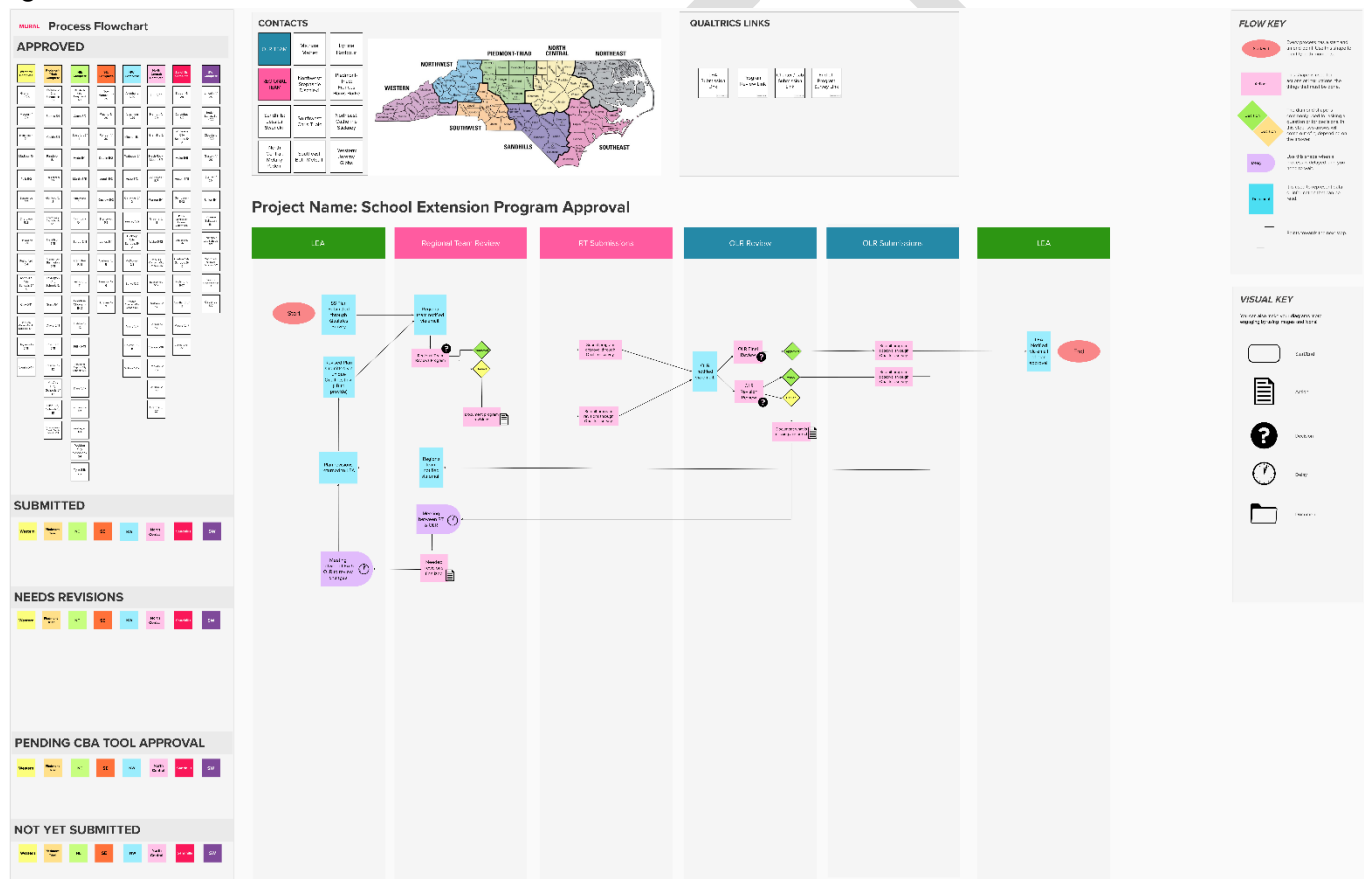
- For K-8 students, at a minimum, the program will be evaluated using competency-based assessments and progression and retention rates.
  1. For 9-12 students, at a minimum, the program will be evaluated by the number of students who receive credit recovery.
  2. Participating PSUs shall report all the following to NCDPI by October 30, 2021:
    - a. Results of competency-based assessment given to students in grades K-8 at the beginning of the program.
    - b. Results of competency-based assessment given to students in grades K-8 at the conclusion of the program.
    - c. The number of students who progressed to the next grade level after participating in the program.
    - d. The number of students who were retained in the same grade level after participating in the program.
    - e. The number of students who received credit recovery in high school.

## SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION

Once established as law, SL2021-7 was assigned to OLR as NCDPI's entity for guidance and oversight. OLR assembled a cross-disciplinary team of subject area experts to develop guidance and resource documents. The documents were carefully developed and reviewed to ensure they met the requirements of the School Extension and Enrichment program. These documents are on the OLR website<sup>4</sup>.

OLR held six technical webinars and two afternoon office hours to support PSUs' program development<sup>5</sup>. Prior to implementation, plans were submitted to the OLR. Each plan was assigned to one of NCDPI's Regional Directors for initial review. Programs that met all requirements were forwarded to OLR's Deputy Director for final approval. Those deemed insufficient by either the Regional Director or the Deputy Director were returned to PSUs for corrective action before final approval.

Figure 1.



## COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENTS (CBA)

On April 19, 2021, the State Board of Education approved PRC 178 to provide funds for a single competency-based assessment (CBA) per grade and subject for students in grades kindergarten through eight that may be taken at the beginning of the program and at the conclusion of the school

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/districts-schools-support/office-learning-recovery-acceleration/school-extension-learning-and-enrichment-program-sl2021-7-hb82>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/districts-schools-support/office-learning-recovery-acceleration/school-extension-learning-and-enrichment-program-sl2021-7-hb82#events>

extension program.

PSUs identified their CBA tools utilized in fulfillment of the CBA requirement set forth in HB82. The utilized tools, which were approved by the NCDPI, are outlined below.

Table 1. District competency-based assessment (CBA) tool of choice

<b>CODE</b>	<b>PSU</b>	<b>CBA TOOL</b>
010	Alamance-Burlington Schools	4-8 Reading & K-8 Math: AimsWeb Plus K-3 Reading: Renaissance Star
422	Weldon City Schools	Classworks
590	McDowell County Schools	Edgenuity
460	Hertford County Schools	Edmentum Exact Path
690	Pamlico County Schools	Edmentum Exact Path & Classworks
660	Northampton County Schools	Edmentum ExactPath and Edmentum Study Island
160	Carteret County Public Schools	Fastbridge
862	Mount Airy City Schools	Imagine Language and Literacy Imagine Math
310	Duplin County Schools	iStation
920	Wake County Schools	iStation (K-4 reading) i-Ready
420	Halifax County Schools	K-3 iStation 4-8 Edmentum Exact Path
260	Cumberland County Schools	K-3 Istation Reading 4-8 SuccessMaker Reading K-8 SuccessMaker Math
150	Camden County Schools	K-3 iStation 4-8 i-Ready
292	Thomasville City Schools	K-3 iStation 4-8 i-Ready
870	Swain County Schools	K-3 iStation 4-5 students will be assessed using MobyMax. 6-8 students have used Achieve 3000. MobyMax for their pre-and post-assessments in math and science.
240	Columbus County Schools	K-4 iStation 5-8 i-Ready
830	Scotland County Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 iReady
640	Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 Edmentum Exact Path
182	Newton Conover City Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 i-Ready
820	Sampson County Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 i-Ready
940	Washington County Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 i-Ready
995	Yancey County Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 i-Ready
880	Transylvania County Schools	K-5 iStation 6-8 IXL OR Edmentum Exact Path
890	Tyrrell County Schools	K-5 mClass and Imagine Math Grades 6-8 iReady

280	Dare County Schools	K-5 students will be assessed using mClass (reading), DreamBox (Math) and SchoolNet (Science) assessments 6-8 students will be assessed through Classworks
491	Mooreville Graded School District	K-6 iStation 7-8 i-Ready
980	Wilson County Schools	mClass
680	Orange County Schools	mClass & Edmentum Exact Path
400	Greene County Schools	Renaissance STAR
410	Guilford County Schools	NWEA MAP Growth
510	Johnston County Schools	NWEA MAP Growth
540	Lenoir County Public Schools	NWEA MAP Growth
600	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NWEA MAP Growth
810	Rutherford County Schools	NWEA MAP Growth
111	Asheville City Schools	Renaissance STAR
120	Burke County Schools	Renaissance STAR
140	Caldwell County Schools	Renaissance STAR
190	Chatham County Schools	Renaissance STAR
250	Craven County Schools	Renaissance STAR
960	Wayne County Public Schools	Renaissance STAR
970	Wilkes County Schools	Renaissance STAR
861	Elkin City Schools	Renaissance STAR Reading & Math Study Island Science & American Book Company
020	Alexander County Schools	i-Ready
030	Alleghany County Schools	i-Ready
040	Anson County Schools	i-Ready
050	Ashe County Schools	i-Ready
060	Avery County Schools	i-Ready
070	Beaufort County Schools	i-Ready
080	Bertie County Schools	i-Ready
090	Bladen County Schools	i-Ready
100	Brunswick County Schools	i-Ready
110	Buncombe County Schools	i-Ready
130	Cabarrus County Schools	i-Ready
132	Kannapolis City Schools	i-Ready
170	Caswell County Schools	i-Ready
180	Catawba County Schools	i-Ready
181	Hickory City Schools	i-Ready
200	Cherokee County Schools	i-Ready
210	Edenton-Chowan Schools	i-Ready
220	Clay County Schools	i-Ready
230	Cleveland County Schools	i-Ready
241	Whiteville City Schools	i-Ready
270	Currituck County Schools	i-Ready
290	Davidson County Schools	i-Ready
291	Lexington City Schools	i-Ready
300	Davie County Schools	i-Ready
320	Durham Public Schools	i-Ready
330	Edgecombe County Public Schools	i-Ready
340	Winston Salem/Forsyth	i-Ready

	County Schools	
350	Franklin County Schools	i-Ready
360	Gaston County Schools	i-Ready
370	Gates County Schools	i-Ready
380	Graham County Schools	i-Ready
390	Granville County Schools	i-Ready
421	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	i-Ready
430	Harnett County Schools	i-Ready
440	Haywood County Schools	i-Ready
450	Henderson County Schools	i-Ready
470	Hoke County Schools	i-Ready
480	Hyde County Schools	i-Ready
490	Iredell-Statesville Schools	i-Ready
500	Jackson County Schools	i-Ready
520	Jones County Schools	i-Ready
530	Lee County Schools	i-Ready
550	Lincoln County Schools	i-Ready
560	Macon County Schools	i-Ready
570	Madison County Schools	i-Ready
580	Martin County Schools	i-Ready
610	Mitchell County Schools	i-Ready
620	Montgomery County Schools	i-Ready
630	Moore County Schools	i-Ready
650	New Hanover County Schools	i-Ready
670	Onslow County Schools	i-Ready
681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	i-Ready
700	Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	i-Ready
710	Pender County Schools	i-Ready
720	Perquimans County Schools	i-Ready
730	Person County Schools	i-Ready
740	Pitt County Schools	i-Ready
750	Polk County Schools	i-Ready
760	Randolph County Schools	i-Ready
761	Asheboro City Schools	i-Ready
770	Richmond County Schools	i-Ready
780	Public Schools of Robeson County	i-Ready
790	Rockingham County Schools	i-Ready
800	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	i-Ready
821	Clinton City Schools	i-Ready
840	Stanly County Schools	i-Ready
850	Stokes County Schools	i-Ready
860	Surry County Schools	i-Ready
900	Union County Public Schools	i-Ready
910	Vance County Schools	i-Ready
930	Warren County Schools	i-Ready
950	Watauga County Schools	i-Ready
990	Yadkin County Schools	i-Ready



## SCHOOL EXTENSION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The following summary of local implementation was gathered from PSU submissions to the *End of Program Survey* (due October 30, 2021).

PSUs designed, developed, offered, and supported summer programs at 1622 unique locations as part of School Extension Learning Recovery and Enrichment (see Table 2). PSUs could determine start and end date, up to October 1, 2021, but programs were required to last at least 150 hours or 30 days. Year-round schools were encouraged to participate, but not required.

Table 2. Summer programs offered by grade spans

	Number of LEAs	Number of Locations	Start Dates		End Dates	
			Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
<b>Grades K-5</b>	115	769	06/01/2021	06/29/2021	06/22/2021	09/30/2021
<b>Grades 6-8</b>	115	402	06/01/2021	06/29/2021	06/22/2021	09/30/2021
<b>Grades 9-13</b>	115	369	06/01/2021	06/29/2021	06/15/2021	09/30/2021
<b>Other Grade Combination</b>	17	82	06/07/2021	07/13/2021	07/09/2021	08/12/2021

### Program Participation

PSUs were required to first identify and invite at-risk students. PSUs with additional seats could then open enrollment to other students. Of 700,000 K-13 invited students, 247,912 students (36%) enrolled. 213,467 (86%) of enrolled students were identified as “at risk” by their PSU (see Table 3).

Table 3. Student participation in the school extension program

<b>Grades</b>	<b>All Students Invited</b>	<b>At Risk Students Invited</b>	<b>All Students Enrolled</b>	<b>At Risk Students Enrolled</b>
<b>K-5</b>	336,343	231,525 (69%)	141,194	121,119 (86%)
<b>6-8</b>	170,783	115,025 (67%)	53,085	46,303 (87%)
<b>9-13</b>	191,029	119,394 (63%)	53,633	46,045 (86%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>698,155</b>	<b>465,944 (67%)</b>	<b>247,912</b>	<b>213,467 (86%)</b>

Table 4 compares demographics between students enrolled in summer programming and North Carolina’s student 2020-21 student population. These demographics support the idea that “at-risk” students are demographically similar between PSUs. At the state-level, summer programs were disproportionately composed of male and historically disadvantaged students.

- More male students than female students participated in the summer program. Males were also over-represented compared to the overall state student population.
- More Black and Hispanic students than White students participated in the summer program. Students of color were also over-represented compared to the overall state student population.
- Economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners were over-represented in the summer program compared to the overall state student population.

Table 4. Demographics between students enrolled in summer programming

	<b>State 2020-21</b>	<b>Summer 2021</b>	<b>Summer K-5</b>	<b>Summer 6-8</b>	<b>Summer 9-12</b>
--	----------------------	--------------------	-------------------	-------------------	--------------------

<b>Male</b>	51.26%	53.99%	52.11%	54.27%	57.91%
<b>Female</b>	48.74%	46.01%	47.89%	45.73%	42.09%
<b>American Indian</b>	1.14%	1.70%	1.82%	1.94%	1.13%
<b>Asian</b>	3.77%	2.25%	2.83%	1.85%	1.41%
<b>Black</b>	24.82%	37.13%	35.22%	39.39%	38.85%
<b>Hispanic</b>	19.78%	25.35%	26.54%	25.91%	22.02%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	4.86%	5.20%	5.42%	4.94%	5.01%
<b>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	0.14%	0.14%	0.15%	0.12%	0.14%
<b>White</b>	45.49%	28.23%	28.02%	25.86%	31.43%
<b>Economically disadvantaged</b>	39.19%	55.81%	56.20%	57.91%	52.51%
<b>Students with disabilities</b>	12.44%	18.46%	18.52%	19.64%	16.98%
<b>English learners</b>	8.46%	14.59%	17.53%	14.66%	7.88%

Most PSUs reported they were able to serve all students interested in enrolling in the school extension program. When asked specifically about difficulty with student recruitment, LEAs reported greater difficulty recruiting high school students (see Table 5).

Table 5. PSUs responses on serving and recruiting students

	<b>Served all interested students</b>				<b>Had difficulties recruiting students</b>			
	No		Yes		No		Yes	
	# PSUs	% PSUs	# PSUs	% PSUs	# PSUs	% PSUs	# PSUs	% PSUs
K-5	28	24.35	87	75.65	73	63.48	42	36.52
6-8	19	16.52	96	83.48	52	45.22	63	54.78
9-13	12	10.43	103	89.57	45	39.13	70	60.87

The following selected responses to the *End of Program Survey* provide a representative sample of the potential causes of recruiting difficulties for each grade span:

#### **What were the difficulties in recruiting K-5 students?**

- *Students needed a break* - Families expressed their students needed the break after the intense virtual/hybrid school year.
- *Vacations* - Pre-planned vacations took precedence over the program.
- *COVID-19 safety concerns* – Many parents chose not to send their children to the face-to-face summer program due to continuing safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- *Program length* - Many parents didn't want to commit to students attending 6 hours a day for 6 weeks.

#### **What were the difficulties in recruiting 6-8 students?**

- *Short window for communication* - The quick enrollment turnaround made it difficult to effectively communicate critical information to parents, such as sessions offered, transportation access, etc.
- *Vacations/camps/sports* - Pre-planned activities, such as vacations, camps, and sports took precedence

- *COVID-19 safety concerns* – In addition to continuing safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, students were exposed to and/or contracted COVID-19 and were quarantined.
- *Students needed a break* - Students were exhausted after the difficult year and many families wanted a break from school.
- *Credit recovery not required* - Since students in Grades 6-8 do not need to complete "course recovery" to pass the grade level
- *Program length* - Many parents did not want to commit to students attending 6 hours a day for 6 weeks.
- *Parents'/guardians' work* - Summer work schedule did not allow for full participation

#### **What were the difficulties in recruiting 9-12 students?**

- *Short window for communication* – Coordinating initial logistics (sessions offered, transportation access, etc.) was difficult based on the timeframe to advertise, recruit, and setup the summer programming
- *Vacations/camps/sports/driver's education* - Pre-planned vacations, conflicts with summer camps, summer sports, and driver's education took precedence
- *COVID-19 safety concerns* - In addition to continuing safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, students were exposed to and/or contracted COVID-19 and were quarantined
- *Students needed a break* - Students were exhausted after the difficult year and many families wanted a break from school.
- *Credit recovery* – Students left after recovering necessary credits.
- *Summer jobs* – Many high school students wanted to work rather than attend summer learning
- *Lack of student interest* - High school students may have been uninterested in improving their academic standing.
- *Families did not see the value* - Students already promoted did not see the need to attend
- *Program length* - The required program length may have deterred students from attending

Teacher recruitment was a state-wide difficulty. Many PSUs reported hiring alternative staff, such as teacher assistants or college students (see Table 6).

Table 6. PSUs selected statements that best describe teacher recruitment for the school extension programs.

	<b>Grades K-5</b>		<b>Grades 6-8</b>		<b>Grades 9-13</b>	
	<b>N LEAs</b>	<b>% LEAs</b>	<b>N LEAs</b>	<b>% LEAs</b>	<b>N LEAs</b>	<b>% LEAs</b>
<b>We had more than enough teachers sign up to teach.</b>	43	37.39	56	48.70	67	58.26
<b>We were not able to employ enough teachers.</b>	52	45.22	42	36.52	32	27.83
<b>We had teachers come out of retirement to help.</b>	55	47.83	33	28.70	15	13.04
<b>We hired teacher/instructional assistants.</b>	101	87.83	80	69.57	53	46.09
<b>We hired college students.</b>	22	19.13	9	7.83	7	6.09

<b>We worked with a community partner.</b>	37	32.17	32	27.83	11	9.57
--	----	-------	----	-------	----	------

The following selected responses to the *End of Program Survey* provide a representative sample of the strategies used by PSUs to address staffing issues, many of which were reportedly due to fatigue from the prior two school years.

- *Targeted recruitment* - “We had to actively recruit and piece together day by day and week by week.”
- *Flexible staffing* - “Very few were available to teach the entire program. We had situations in which we had split shift programming because teachers did not want to commit to a full summer program. We also had to utilize certified teachers as substitutes to cover pre-planned vacations. We had just enough to cover summer learning. Several teaching positions were divided into halves so that teachers hired did not have to work the entire program. We allowed teachers to split the 6-week period into two 3-week sessions so that they could sign up to work one session or the other or both.”
- *Used college and high school volunteers* - “We had college students volunteer time. The PSU employed High School students to assist in the classes alongside a certified staff member for the afternoon portion of the day.”
- *Leveraged administrators* - “We did not have enough teachers in a few content areas, so we had to hire administrators to teach in their content area.”
- *Salary increases* - “We offered an additional 10 percent pay increase locally. We paid teachers (and all other employees that assisted with summer camp) their hourly rate plus an additional \$10 per hour that they worked. We paid an additional local bonus that seemed to generate interest. We offered a signing bonus to all teachers regardless of previous growth status for scores. We offered a competitive wage per hour; offered reduced hours to allow for summer planning; provided substitutes for already scheduled family vacation time.”

Staffing needs in food and transportation services were even more acute (see Table 7).

Table 7. PSUs selected statements that best describe recruitment of non-classified staff for the school extension programs.

	<b>Grades K-5</b>		<b>Grades 6-8</b>		<b>Grades 9-13</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>% Agree</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% Agree</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% Agree</b>
<b>We were able to hire enough staff to fully execute meal services.</b>	105	91.30	105	91.30	106	92.17
<b>We were able to hire enough staff to provide adequate transportation.</b>	98	85.22	98	85.22	99	86.09

The following selected responses to the *End of Program Survey* provide a representative sample of the issues experienced by PSUs related to non-classified staff to successfully support the school extension program:

- “Bus drivers were in short supply so some of our teachers also drove the bus.”
- “We provided bonuses for non-certified staff.”

- “It was a constant rotation trying to get things covered, teachers and administrators were having to fill in as bus drivers and everyone pitched in with cleaning.”
- “Teaching assistants had to cut classroom time short to drive buses, and our custodians drove too.”
- “The summer meal service dept maintained adequate staff but reported that obtaining enough food was a struggle.”

### School Extension Program Activities

Summer Learning Choice for NC Families (SL2021-7) outlined specific guidelines, including requirements for academic, health and well-being, and enrichment activities.

### Academic Activities

PSUs offered various supports, but all PSUs used summer programming to deliver at least some remediation/learning recovery services. Acceleration was the second most common service (see Table 8).

Table 8. Types of instructional opportunities PSUs offered during the School Extension Program.

	N LEAs	% LEAs
<b>Remediation / Learning Recovery</b>	115	100.00
<b>Acceleration</b>	54	46.96
<b>AIG / AP</b>	20	17.39
<b>Bridge program (rising K)</b>	22	19.13
<b>Bridge program (rising 6th)</b>	26	22.61
<b>Bridge program (rising 9th)</b>	38	33.04
<b>Pre-K Summer School</b>	29	25.22

### Student Health and Well-Being Activities

PSUs provided a variety of health and well-being supports, such as digit check-ins, dedicated SEL spaces, and on-site counselors (see Table 9).

Table 9. Types of social-emotional learning activities

	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-13	
	N LEAs	% LEAs	N LEAs	% LEAs	N LEAs	% LEAs
<b>Digital check-ins</b>	22	19.13%	21	18.26%	24	20.87%
<b>Dedicated SEL spaces</b>	24	20.87%	18	15.65%	14	12.17%
<b>On-site counselors</b>	103	89.57%	104	90.43%	107	93.04%
<b>Integrated SEL practices</b>	110	95.65%	107	93.04%	93	80.87%
<b>Other</b>	26	22.61%	27	23.48%	20	17.39%

The following selected responses to the *End of Program Survey* provide a sample of “other” health and well-being activities provided in the school extension program: “Brain Breaks,” emotional well-being in literacy, greeting and welcoming activities, journaling, lessons from certified counselors, mindful arts, mindful movements, morning meetings, morning advisory/circle time, on-site mental



- *Project-based activities:* drones, masonry, cooking, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, makerspace exploration, art, agriscience, carpentry, campus art and beautification activities, car repair, cooking

PSUs partnered with a wide variety of local organizations to support their enrichment activities, such as:

- *Agricultural organizations:* Union County Agricultural Center, Sampson County Ag Extension
- *Community centers:* Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, 4-H
- *Faith-based organizations:* Baptist Men's Association
- *Industry:* BASF, WOVV radio station
- *Institutions of higher education:* NC Coastal Studies Institute, Richmond Community College, Appalachian State University, Lees McRae
- *Local arts centers:* Maggie's Music Academy, Danny Antoinne's Karate Academy, New Vision's Gymnastics, Happy Hill Arts, Bright Star Theatre, Toe River Arts Council, Bricks for Kids, Gem Mining, Penland School of Crafts, Community Music School
- *Museums:* Discovery Place, the Monroe Science Center, The Raptor Center, Fort Fisher Aquarium, Catawba Science Center, Asheville Museum of Science, NC Aquarium
- *Municipalities:* Cities of Rockingham, Hamlet, and Ellerbe
- *Public services:* Police Department, Fire Department, Public Library
- *State/national parks:* Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Nantahala Learning Center, Grandfather Mountain, Weymouth Woods, Mitchell Recreation, Avery County Parks and Recreation

## SCHOOL EXTENSION PROGRAM IMPACT

### Promotion and Retention

Promotion and retention data were collected from the 2020-2021 Retention/Promotion Data Collection in PowerSchool. At the beginning of each school year, PSUs enter and verify whether each student was promoted or retained. For the purposes of Summer Extension Program reporting, student level enrollment records for students designated as enrolled in the summer extension program were matched to the student level Retention/Promotion data collection (see Table 10). This matching was done at the state level.

Table 10. Summer Extension Promotion and Retention Rates

Grade Level	Summer Extension Promotion Percent	2020-2021 State Promotion Rate	Summer Extension Retention Percent	2020-2021 State Retention Rate
All Grades	92.7%	95.7%	7.3%	4.3%
Grades K-5	96.0%	98.1%	4.0%	1.9%
Grades 6-8	97.9%	99.1%	2.1%	0.9%
Grades 9-12	79.3%	89.7%	20.7%	10.3%

Summer students were less likely to be promoted and more likely to be retained than the state average. Across all grades in the summer extension program, 92.7% of the student were promoted to the next grade. For elementary and middle grades, 96.0% and 97.9% of the students were promoted. In the high school grades, 79.3% of the students enrolled were promoted to the next grade. For all

grades as well as the elementary, middle, and high school grades, these percentages are lower than the state's 2020-2021 promotion rate. Conversely, across all grades in the summer extension program, 7.3% of the students were retained. High school grades had the highest retention rate of 20.7%.

### Credit Recovery for High School Courses

Data on the number of course credits recovered for students enrolled in the summer extension program were collected from PowerSchool. Summer extension student enrollment records were matched to course credit data for courses designated as credit recovery and taken during the summer (see Tables 11-12). The matching for these records was conducted at the state level.

During the school extension program, students recovered 12,369 course credits (see Table 11). 94.23% of credit recovery courses were successfully completed. Students had the highest frequency of course credit recovery in the core areas of Mathematics (3,453), English/Language Arts (3,243), Science (2,360), and Social Studies (2,574).

Table 11. Credits Recovered During the Summer Extension Program.

Course Department	Number of Credit Recovery Courses Attempted	Number of Courses Successfully Completed	Percent of Credit Recovery Successfully Completed
All Courses	13,126	12,369	94.23%
Arts Education	29	29	100.00%
Career and Technical Education	226	217	96.02%
Extended Content Standards	24	24	100.00%
English/Language Arts	3,416	3,243	94.94%
Health and PE	217	214	98.62%
Mathematics	3,744	3,453	92.23%
Other/Miscellaneous	116	115	99.14%
Science	2,486	2,360	94.93%
Social Studies	2,726	2,574	94.42%
World Languages	136	134	98.53%

Twelfth graders took and recovered the most credits (4,163) and did so with the highest success rate (97.27%). Ninth graders took and recovered the fewest (1,044) and did so with the lowest success rate (87.07%) (see Table 12).

Table 12. Credits Recovered During the Summer Extension Program by High School Grade.

Grade Level	Number of Credit Recovery Courses Attempted	Number of Courses Successfully Completed	Percent of Credit Recovery Successfully Completed
Grade 9	1,199	1,044	87.07%
Grade 10	4,091	3,787	92.57%
Grade 11	3,556	3,375	94.91%
Grade 12	4,280	4,163	97.27%



## Pre and Post Assessment Data

At the direction of the State Board of Education, NCDPI selected Curriculum Associates' i-Ready assessment for Reading and Mathematics as the recommended competency-based assessment (CBA) for all LEAs. However, LEAs were not required to use i-Ready. Because original assessments might be on different scales or represent differing underlying developmental constructs, NCDPI required the corresponding Lexile and Quantile score for student's pre and post assessments in reading and mathematics, respectively. These Lexile and Quantile estimates allow for comparison across the different assessments. For more information on the Lexile and Quantile measures refer here (Lexiles: <https://lexile.com/educators/understanding-lexile-measures/>, Quantiles: <https://metametricsinc.com/educators/quantile-for-educators/>).

- Curriculum Associates provided pre and post assessment data from PSUs that used i-Ready for at least some of their assessments.
- Renaissance Learning provided pre and post assessment data for six PSUs that used Star and who had current data sharing agreements with NCDPI.
- For PSUs who did not use i-Ready or whose data was not provided by Renaissance Learning, NCDPI specified the data needed for analysis. Each district was to provide two data files: one for reading and one for mathematics. The datafiles were to be delivered to NCDPI using a secure file transfer system.

## Limitations and considerations

Analysis included only students with scores for both the pre- and post-assessment scores. High schools did not administer assessments. Charter schools did not submit assessment data. Some LEAs were unable to provide either the pre- or post-assessment data and/or were unable to provide all of the necessary variables.

Further, LEAs and sites within LEAs determined their own pre- and post- assessment windows: some LEAs and sites used 2020-21 end-of-year assessment data as their pre-assessment and 2021-2022 beginning-of-year test data as their post-assessment, others collected pre assessment data at the beginning of the program and collected the post assessment data at the end of the program. As such the length of time between the pre and post assessment varied across LEAs and sites.

## Data analysis

For both the pre- and post-assessment, each student was classified as "on grade-level" if that student's score was equal to or greater than the national median Lexile or Quantile measure for that student's grade level in reading and mathematics. Measures below the median were considered "below grade level". Additional information on Lexile and Quantile measure median scores can be found at <https://hub.lexile.com/lexile-grade-level-charts> and <https://hub.lexile.com/quantile-grade-level-charts>.

## Reading

Across all grade levels on the pre-assessment, 85.4% reported a Lexile measure below grade level and 14.6% at or above grade level (see Table 13). These findings are consistent with PSUs reporting that 86.1% of enrolled students were at risk. This percentage was similar for Grades K-5 and Grades 6-8.

Table 13. Percent of Pre and Post Assessments Below or At or Above 50<sup>th</sup> Percentile Lexile Measures – Reading

Lexile Measure	Pre-Assessment - Reading		
	All Grades	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8

<b>At or Above 50th percentile</b>	10025 (14.6%)	7808 (15.22%)	2217 (12.75%)
<b>Below 50th Percentile</b>	58660 (85.4%)	43487 (84.78%)	15173 (87.25%)

The average, across all pre- and post-assessments, 65.0% of students maintained (6.9%) or gained (58.2%) in the Lexile measure. This percentage of students maintaining or gaining between pre- and post-assessments was higher in Grades K-5 than Grades 6-8 (see Table 14). The average gain on the Lexile measures from the pre- and post-assessment was 149.92 points on the Lexile Scale and is indicative of student growth between the pre- and post-assessment.

Table 14. Change in Lexile Scores between Pre and Post Assessments – Reading.

<b>Reading</b>	<b>Percent of Assessments</b>		
<b>Change Pre/Post Lexile</b>	<b>All Grades</b>	<b>Grades K-5</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>
<b>Showed maintenance or improvement</b>	44686 (65.06%)	34243 (66.75%)	10443 (60.06%)
<b>Gained</b>	39945 (58.16%)	29856 (58.2%)	10089 (58.02%)
<b>Maintained</b>	4741 (6.90%)	4387 (8.55%)	354 (2.04%)
<b>Do not show improvement</b>	23999 (34.94%)	17052 (33.24%)	6947 (39.95%)

### Mathematics

Across all grades on the pre-assessment, 72.46% of the pre-assessment Quantile measures were below grade level (see Table 15). Grades 6-8 had the highest percentage of below grade level Quantile measures. Due to local control and flexibility in Mathematic curriculum being different across the PSUs, the Quantile measure has variability across districts.

Table 15. Percent of Pre and Post Assessments Below and Above Grade Level – Mathematics.

	<b>Pre-Assessment - Mathematics</b>		
<b>Quantile Measure</b>	<b>All Grades</b>	<b>Grades K-5</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>
<b>At or Above 50th Percentile</b>	19277 (27.54%)	17048 (32.99%)	2229 (12.17%)
<b>Below 50th Percentile</b>	50711 (72.46%)	34629 (67.01%)	16082 (87.83%)

For all students, 66.35% maintained or gained in the Quantile Measure between the pre- and post-assessment, with 8.3% maintaining and 58.0% gaining (see Table 16). This trend is consistent across all grade spans. The average gain in the Quantile measure between the pre- and post-assessment was 111.71 on the Quantile Scale indicating student growth.

Table 16. Change in Quantile Scores between Pre and Post Assessment – Mathematics.

<b>Quantile Measure</b>	<b>Percent of Assessments</b>		
<b>Change Pre/Post</b>	<b>All Grades</b>	<b>Grades K-5</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>
<b>Showed maintenance or improvement</b>	46437 (66.35%)	34148 (66.08%)	12289 (67.11%)
<b>Gained</b>	40617 (58.03%)	29478 (57.04%)	11139 (60.83%)
<b>Maintained</b>	5820 (8.32%)	4670 (9.04%)	1150 (6.28%)

<b>Did not show improvement</b>	23551 (33.65%)	17529 (33.92%)	6022 (32.89%)
---------------------------------	----------------	-------------------	---------------

## REFLECTIONS FROM LOCAL LEADERS

LEAs reflected on their successes and areas for improvement. The following responses to the *End of Program Survey* provide a representative sample of feedback submitted from local leaders.

### Examples of Excellence

#### ***In what ways did your school extension program excel this summer?***

- “At the high school level, 119 students earned at least one credit, with 264 credits being earned. 12 students were able to graduate, 51 were able to be promoted, and 39 may be able to be double promoted for the 2021-2022 school year.”
- “The instruction and student learning within the programs was excellent. For our students who took advantage of participating in the program, they benefited academically, socially, and emotionally. Our students were engaged for many weeks during the summer -- affording them great interactions with peers and staff, fun activities, and meals. Our High School students were also able to complete numerous course recoveries during their summer work.”
- “Many students have been virtual since the release of school due to Covid in March 2020. These students were engaged and enjoyed the learning opportunities made available. For these students, the summer program provided a time of transition back to school, as they will attend in the 21-22 school year. Teachers provided rich learning activities, resulting in students being highly engaged and enjoying learning.”
- “Able to get all RtA students proficient.”
- “Great enrichment program to provide students with other things they do not usually experience. Great attendance as students were excited and happy to be in school”
- “770 high school credits were recovered or earned; 55 high school students graduated; 23 1st/2nd grade students became proficient; 34 3rd grade students met a pathway; 93,224 meals served”
- “83% of attending students were able to earn placement or promotion to the next grade level. 82% of students received at least 80% instruction for the summer learning program. Students had on average 13-point growth in reading and 3-point growth in math.”
- “Attendance was high on all grade levels; parental support was outstanding when dealing with attendance or discipline concerns during the summer program; 95% of students that attend the summer program earned placement into the next grade; students demonstrated growth on the end-of year diagnostics in reading (on average 31-points) and math (on average 16.1 points).
- “Students were engaged for 4 weeks and loved the curriculum we chose---We were able to give teachers and non-certified a bonus this summer”
- “Building relationships between students and teachers”

- “Parents of K-8 students reported that experiential learning activities had positive outcomes for their children. Around 85% agree these activities helped reinforce academic content, added value to their children’s summer experience, and helped increase their children’s interest and engagement.”
- “Stakeholders think the social and personal aspects of the program are effective. Large majorities of parents (86%) and staff members (99%) think students’ summer programs helped them build positive relationships with adults. Parents and staff also agree the programs helped students become more independent and enhance students’ forms of communication.”
- “Almost all staff (99%) reported that after being in Summer Learning 2021 their students are better prepared to start the next grade in the fall.”

## **Successful Pilots**

### ***What were you able to beta test this summer that you plan to fully integrate into your academic year?***

Create functional maker spaces; implementing the thematic units; focus on essential skills; small group instruction; incorporate SEL into lessons; math intervention for K-5; project-based learning; interactive read alouds; new core literacy program; literacy based instructional approach; phonemic awareness program; STEAM integration; drones; strengthened the community partnerships; leaders revised, tested and implemented an existing walkthrough tool and process; experimenting with standards-based grading; math fluency games; 2nd Step SEL programming; new cohorts, bell schedules, and intervention block; integrated art and science; engaging in more outdoor learning; CTE Expo; student data notebooks.

## **Areas for Improvement**

### ***In what ways could you have improved the school extension program?***

#### ***Time:***

- “Due to mandated hours/days for the summer program, it had to start immediately following the end of the regular school year. This was a difficult transition for teachers and program directors to close out the school year while also planning for the upcoming summer students. Having more flexibility with start and stop times, hours, etc. would provide teachers an opportunity to PLC, review student data and group students prior to being assigned to teachers and offer teachers more transition time between school years and summer program. Additionally, more time would have allowed teachers to prepare for instructional pacing and identifying priority needs.”
- “The 150-hour requirement needs to be reduced. We can capture a great summer program in 3 weeks and have good student participation as well as the ability to hire high-quality staff.”

#### ***Additional Programming Options:***

- “We could have engaged more community partners to increase the enrichment opportunities for students. We also could have incorporated field trips and other off-site learning experiences.”
- “Next summer, we would like to expand our summer learning offerings to include short-term camps such as ACT prep, robotics, Science Olympiad, arts, and STEM activities.”

## PROMISING PRACTICES

North Carolina has many pockets of exemplar work happening across the state among our Public School Units (PSUs). The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Promising Practices initiative seeks to highlight the exemplars aligned to Learning Recovery and Acceleration (OLR). The mission of OLR is to serve the PSUs by providing the information and support needed to make evidence-based decisions to combat the impact of lost instructional time and accelerate learning for students – to bring needed solutions to long-standing challenges faced in NC public education exacerbated by the pandemic. OLR will identify and facilitate adoption of evidence-based policies and practices that drive improvements in educational acceleration for all, with a focus on steps to understand and close gaps in opportunity/access, quality, and/or outcomes across student subgroups. The OLR will highlight Promising Practices of exemplar implementations and impacts as it seeks to inform for extension, scalability, and sustainability among programs that show impact.

As it pertains to the components of HB82, several exemplars regarding Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Workforce Development, School Extension Programs, and Competency-Based Assessments (CBA) from PSUs across all eight (8) State Board Regions are noteworthy of highlighting:

Meadowview Magnet MS Surry School District		
Observer:	Key Observations:	Possible Ideas to Share:
Dr. Harris-Burke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Superintendent share District Strategic Plan - Leadership Development</li><li>• Student exposure to concepts</li><li>• Middle School implement CTE</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student exposure to standards through projects</li><li>• Alignment of programs with strategic plan</li><li>• Focus on leadership development - pipeline</li></ul>
Laura Papsun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partnerships within community for CTE</li><li>• Hands-on activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Options for student choice in schooling</li></ul>

### BERTIE COUNTY, NORTHEAST, REGION 1

The Bertie County school extension program showed growth in all grade levels according to Pre- and Post- iReady data. Students earned a total of 237 credits at the high school level, and they had 10 students earned enough credits to graduate from high school. A graduation ceremony was held for the students with visiting guests. Because of their extensive partnerships, students were provided many enrichment opportunities that motivated them for learning. Attendance was at an all-time high for our summer school extension program. Bertie implemented a Literacy based instructional approach that would engage all students during the summer program. Several of the teachers have continued and shared those practices with their colleagues during the academic school year.

### LENOIR COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SOUTHEAST, REGION 2

Lenoir County Public Schools expanded work-based learning experiences for students to include paid youth apprenticeship positions while in high school and guaranteed jobs after graduation. LCPS is piloting cutting-edge, first-of-its-kind internship youth apprenticeship programs in partnership with

Spirit Aerosyst.

### **CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS, NORTHCENTRAL, REGION 3**

Chatham County used research based instructional programs and strategies during their Summer Program. In K-3, they trained teachers on Recipe for Reading, and students benefited from the multisensory, Orton-Gillingham based explicit instruction. In 6-8, ELA teachers used reciprocal teaching as a way to grow students in their comprehension. The curriculum team integrated culturally responsive texts in grades K-8. Teachers have since incorporated more diverse texts into their instruction. Some of these strategies were adopted by teachers in their academic year classrooms.

### **SCOTLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS, SANDHILLS, REGION 4**

Scotland County Schools developed CTE Family Nights that were held on Tuesday evenings, from 5:30-7:30PM. Dinner was served by a business sponsor during each event, and each event was also themed. The themes, sponsors, and additional information are captured below:

#### **June 8, TLC Channel Night - Healthy Families**

- *Sponsored by Scotia Village, Scotland Memorial, Village Dental, RCC*
- Grow what you eat
- Healthy Meals
- First Aid for your Family
- Take away: food, vegetables, first aid kit

#### **June 15, Discovery Channel Night - Small Business**

- *Sponsored by Chamber of Commerce, RCC*
- Family Portraits
- Entrepreneur Lab
- Drone Business
- Cupcake, cookie lab
- Marketing and promotion
- Take away: family pictures, t-shirts, food.

#### **June 22, Food Network Night - Let's Eat**

- *Sponsored by Local Restaurants*
- Pizza 101
- Grow a vegetable garden
- Baking Bootcamp
- Cooking Good Food
- Take away: kitchen tools, food or vegetables

#### **June 29, SyFy Channel Night - Technology/STEM**

- *Sponsored by FCC, Service Thread, Cascades, RCC*
- Drone Pilot Lessons
- Robotics
- Easy Tech Fixes
- Adobe Lab
- Welding
- Take away: small robotics/drone kits, photos

#### **July 13, DIY Night/HGTV Night**

- *Sponsored by Lowe's, Manis Home Builders, McCarter Electrical, RCC*
- Install a faucet, Plumbing
- Install a ceiling fan, Electrical
- Build a birdhouse
- Grow a garden/Composting
- Take away: toolkit from Lowe's

### **July 20, YouTube Night - Become an Influencer**

- Take Instagram Worthy Photos
- Adobe Lab
- Start a Blog
- Digital Marketing
- Computer Science
- Take away: swag from the presenters, photos, books

### **DAVIDSON COUNTY, PIEDMONT-TRIAD, REGION 5**

Davidson County created thematic camps within their middle school summer programs. Morning meetings kicked off the day with themes of “relationships, confidence, progress.” One theme was “Base Camp” where students were assigned based on assessments not by grade bands. The theme was integrated into enrichment activities, curriculum, instruction, and hands-on learning experiences. The summer AIG camp was themed “Summer Camp: Stranger Things Could Happen.” The AIG camp was packed with project-based courses that were STEAM aligned, including Create a “BRAND” New opportunity for students interested in entrepreneurship, Crime Solving Detectives: Forensics for the science-minded students, and APPs, Podcasts, Oh My! for students interested in creating their own digital content.

### **ANSON COUNTY, SOUTHWEST, REGION 6**

Jump into Art Music and Movement, or JAMM, is an initiative through Anson County Schools that engages students in the creative process by exploring connections between art, music, and movement with other subject areas. During summer learning camp, students were able to dive deeper into thematic units of study as they “traveled around the world” by participating in interactive, kinesthetic, and authentic cultural learning activities. This was a nontraditional space where students’ social, emotional, and physical needs were met.

### **ASHE COUNTY, NORTHWEST, REGION 7**

Students were engaged in rigorous learning recovery throughout the program. At K-5, there was a deep focus on early literacy and minimizing learning gaps from extended remote instruction. At 6-8, students had a high level of choice in their programming and were engaged throughout the summer in ELA, Math, Science, and enrichment courses. High school students regularly supported the middle school summer program. The middle school program used the house system to establish and promote strong relationships with teachers and peers and build community. The high school program enrolled students in full time courses who had previously failed to recover not only the credit but have grade replacement. This model will be considered for future summer programming.

### **CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOLS, WESTERN, REGION 8**

Cherokee County Schools’ summer camp excelled in recruiting and retaining enrolled students. The elementary programs centered learning around thematic units that incorporated learning activities, art, SEL, and extracurricular events. Each thematic unit was concluded with exciting field trip opportunities including a trip to the aquarium and a Braves baseball games. The Middle Schools worked to create a summer camp style atmosphere with creative, fun, learning activities, intramural activities, project-based learning projects, and artistic endeavors from Morris Dancing to stop motion filming. High Schools focused on real-life skills and enrichment activities that helped students learn vehicle maintenance, culinary skills, and allowed them to stretch their artistic skill.

### **NCDPI ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**ResilART: Enrichment Opportunity for participating PSUs.**

The Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration (OLR), in collaboration with partners from the Office of Academic and the NC SEL Implementation Team, created an opportunity for students to express what they experienced in the 2020-21 school year, or what they hope to experience in the upcoming school year.

The ResiliART Project was an opportunity to celebrate our students' resiliency this past year and was open to any PSU with students participating in the 2021 school extension program. This optional project was meant to be a supplemental enrichment opportunity during the school extension program. Additionally, the project aligned with the Vision for Social and Emotional Learning in NC Public Schools.

Three themes, GROWth Mindset, Planting a Seed, Overcoming Obstacles centered around resiliency and growth. Students were able to choose one of the three themes and interpret it through their personal lens, which could be visual arts, performing arts, spoken word, poetry, prose, musical composition, etc.

Guiding questions were provided, as well. Those questions included the following:

- How do you shine bright even amidst obstacles?
- The sun always rises again. How have you risen after facing obstacles?
- What seeds have you planted in yourself that you hope will spout and grow over the next year?

## **Lessons Learned and Next Steps**

The 2020-2021 academic year was considered by all to have been both unprecedented and significantly challenging. After a year marked by continued disruption, PSUs across North Carolina worked diligently to provide students with an opportunity to reengage in their public schools. The School Extension program provided more than 247,000 students with an opportunity to engage in academic content, participate in enrichment activities, and receive additional social-emotional supports. Of the more than 247,000 students who attended over 213,000 were identified as "at-risk" roughly 86% of the participants. Early estimates indicated that roughly 345,000 students were deemed to be at risk due to the disrupted learning experience resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, school extension programs therefore served roughly 62% of the population of at-risk students. In addition to serving at-risk students vulnerable student populations (students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students of color) all participated in rates greater than their average proportion.

PSUs faced significant challenges in program implementation for a variety of reasons, particularly staffing. While many PSUs were able to fully staff their programs, it was accomplished using a variety of methods including hiring college students, TAs, and working with external vendors.

Despite the implementation challenges, due to the tireless efforts of PSUs throughout North Carolina, a number of positive outcomes were realized for students. Across all grade levels more than 92% of participating students were promoted. At the high school level more than 12,000 credits were recovered and students were able to graduate, who prior to program participation were not eligible. An equally significant result was the development of innovative approaches to program development by PSUs. Two such examples were the "jump start" and "career credentialing" programs. After evaluation of these programs, the OLR collaborated with PSUs to develop two initiatives for Summer 2022, Summer Bridge Academies and Career Accelerator. These programs are currently under



development by PSUs and have been funded using appropriations set forth in HB196<sup>6</sup>, utilizing ESSER II funding. The OLR will provide regular updates to the NC State Board of Education on the implementation of these programs and will provide a detailed analysis of the overall impacts of each program. Based on the results of each program, a recommendation will be made to either continue the program with or without modification in summer 2023 using ESSER III funding or to discontinue the program.

### **PRC 176, Summer Bridge Academies**

To address the lost instructional time due to the COVID-19 pandemic the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$40,000,000 to be held in reserve by the Department to be allocated to public school units to support in-person instruction programs to address learning loss and provide enrichment activities in the summer.

The Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration held a virtual roundtable with LEAs to receive input on summer bridge programs. PRC 176 Policy and Guidance Document were then developed by the Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration. These documents were shared with senior staff in the department for initial feedback, refined, and shared with DPI Federal Programs and Finance and Business Services for a final review and approved by the State Board of Education in September 2021.

This appropriation was used to develop the North Carolina Summer Bridge Academy in eligible and participating PSUs. The intention of this grant program is to fund high-quality, evidence-based learning and enrichment programs in the summer to address the academic impact of lost instructional time and responds to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students. The program is designed for students deemed “at-risk” or those the PSU has demonstrated to have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved programs will provide a minimum of 50 hours of programming, no less than 25 of which will be dedicated to academic learning acceleration. For the context of this program, academic learning acceleration refers to appropriate grade-level content. For example, rising 9th grade students will be provided 9th grade material and not 8th grade remediation. The remaining hours of programming will be left to the discretion of the PSU. It is expected that this intensive instruction will be led by highly effective teachers in small group settings.

### **PRC 177, Career Accelerator Programs**

To address the lost instructional time due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$26,046,144 to be held in reserve by the Department to be allocated to public school units to support COVID -19 related needs, including in-person instruction programs, to address learning loss and provide enrichment activities in the summer.

The Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration met with Ms. Kristie VanAuken, Special Advisor to the Superintendent for Workforce Development, and Mr. Trey Michael, Director for Career and Technical Education, to design a summer program that supports workforce-aligned summer acceleration programs for at-risk students. PRC 177 Policy and Guidance Document were then developed by the Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration. These documents were shared with senior staff in the department for initial feedback, refined, and shared with DPI Federal Programs and Finance and Business Services for a final review and approved by the State Board of Education in

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2021/Bills/House/PDF/H196v8.pdf>

September 2021.

This appropriation was used to develop the Summer Career Accelerator Programs for participating PSUs. The intention of this grant program is to fund high-quality, evidence-based learning and workforce aligned programs in the summer to address the academic impact of lost instructional time and responds to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students grades 6-12. The program is designed for students who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PSUs will have the opportunity to opt into Learning Cohorts with participating PSUs. Cohorts will meet monthly to collaborate and plan their programs with the goal of identifying, sharing, and establishing best practices. Cohorts will meet again at the conclusion of the program to discuss outcomes.