EVIDENCE & IMPACT

Evidence that brings possibility to life.

Rigorous internal and independent evaluations of BellXcel's afterschool and summer learning model.



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THE BELLXCEL IMPACT

Strong programs. Wider opportunity.

BellXcel empowers youth program providers with resources, connected technology, and support to create meaningful impact across communities. Arly brings program operations and program-quality tools together so local organizations can strengthen the experiences they offer.

Valuing continuous improvement, BellXcel studies what works in planning, implementing, and measuring afterschool and summer programs. Its evidence base brings together internal evaluations and research by independent third parties.

Evidence reviewed against ESSA standards

- Summer learning. The RAND Corporation's review identified BellXcel among 43 summer programs meeting the highest evidence levels in that review. [19]
- Afterschool learning. Research for Action identified BellXcel among 16 academically focused afterschool programs meeting the highest evidence levels in its review. [20]

Stronger local organizations

In exploratory interviews, partners described improvements in program outcomes and evidence, community relationships, organizational confidence, philanthropy and fundraising, and program planning and operations. [22]

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CHILDREN & LEARNING

Progress that continues beyond summer.

2 months

average literacy gains during summer

2.5 months

average math gains during summer

Findings across internal and third-party evaluations indicate that BellXcel's model:

- Supports continued academic progress. Youth experience academic gains during summer. [1, 2]
- Improves fall assessment performance. Participants perform higher on school-year measures such as DIBELS, NWEA MAP, and i-Ready. [3, 4, 5, 9]
- Improves spring assessment performance.* Youth perform higher on end-of-grade mathematics tests. [6, 7]
- Strengthens school-year attendance.* Summer participants have higher fall school attendance than similar peers. [2, 7, 8]
- Reduces behavioral referrals. Youth participants have fewer school-year behavioral referrals. [2, 8]
- Benefits different groups of learners.* Studies include pre-kindergarten, elementary and middle school youth; students with special education needs; Hispanic/Latino youth; dual language learners; and youth receiving free or reduced-price meals. [3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10]
- Builds engagement and social-emotional skills. Findings include stronger interest in learning, growth mindset, self-regulation, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, and self-confidence. Some youth also spend less time watching television and playing video games.* [1, 9, 17, 18]

** Compared with similar youth who did not attend a summer or afterschool program. See individual studies for details about comparison groups.*

PEOPLE & PROGRAM QUALITY

Learning reaches families and educators, too.

Family engagement

- More involvement in learning. Parents and caregivers increase involvement in their child's education, including reading to children* and encouraging them to read more frequently. [1, 9]

Educator practice

- Confidence and teaching practice. Educators begin the school year with new approaches, especially for growth mindset and positive behaviors. [11, 12]
- Energy and passion. Educators report increased energy and passion for teaching. [10, 11, 14]
- Student-centered practices. Summer educators are more likely than teachers not employed in summer programs to improve their use of student-centered practices. [14]
- Coaching and feedback. Educators receive feedback on instruction and classroom practice. [14]

High-quality implementation

- Strong program fidelity. Implementation aligns with national quality standards developed by RAND and the National Summer Learning Association. [2, 5, 13]
- Effective adaptation. Remote models supported continued learning, social-emotional development, and confidence using technology. [15, 16, 17, 18]
- Better staff experiences. Strong relationships, collaboration, flexibility, autonomy, and resources support educator satisfaction and reduced burnout. [21]
- Professional growth. Professional learning activities strengthen staff skills and support educator growth. [5, 10, 11]

** Compared with a comparison group. Findings come from the individual studies cited; see the reference list for dates and methods.*

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