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SCRI

Rise

Evidence Summary: *Rigorous internal and external third-party evaluations*

The BellXcel Impact

BellXcel is a nationally-recognized leader empowering youth program providers with innovative solutions, services and resources to scale and create meaningful impact across a variety of settings and communities. Through Arly, its innovative software solution and services, youth programming providers are enabled to scale the quality, evidence and impact of their experiences. To strengthen the strategic and operational capacity of youth development professionals to better serve their communities, affiliate SCRI delivers consulting and evaluation services. RISE initiatives round out the pathways BellXcel has established in pursuit of its collective mission. RISE directs resources to qualified youth program providers in rural and indigenous communities to help them to create desired change.

Valuing continuous improvement, BellXcel strives to learn more about what works to ensure that our solutions and services meet the needs of our customers in planning for, implementing, and measuring their out-of-school-time programs.

Through rigorous internal and third-party evaluations BellXcel has built a robust evidence base, aligned with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence standards. Taken together, this evidence base illuminates the power and potential of partnering with BellXcel to narrow the opportunity gap, increase school engagement, enhance the work of educators, and meet family and community needs.

Externally-Validated to Meet ESSA Evidence Standards

Third-party reviews confirm that BellXcel Summer and Afterschool meet ESSA evidence standards.

 The RAND Corporation's independent review of summer programs nationwide confirms BellXcel meets the highest levels of evidence – one of only 43 summer programs in the U.S. with that distinction.¹⁹

 Independent review by Research for Action found that BellXcel meets the highest levels of evidence – one of only 16 academically-focused afterschool programs nationwide.²⁰

* Compared to a comparison group of similar students who did not participate in a summer or afterschool program. See each individual study for more details on the comparison group.

Evidence of Scholar Success

Rigorous internal and external third-party evaluations confirm that BellXcel's model for summer and afterschool programs have strong, positive impacts on the academic and social emotional skills of youth. Findings indicate that the model:

- **Provides continued academic progress during the summer.** Youth, on average, experience 2 months of academic gains in literacy and 2.5 months in math during the summer.^{1,2}
- **Improves performance on school-year standardized assessments.** Youth perform higher on national standardized tests administered in the fall such as Dibels, NWEA MAP, and iReady.^{3,4,5,9}
- **Improves performance on spring school-year tests.** Youth perform higher* on end-of-grade math achievement tests.^{6,7}
- **Improves school year attendance.** Participants in the summer model have higher school attendance in the fall than their peers*.^{2,7,8}
- **Reduces school year behavioral referrals.** Youth participants have fewer school year behavioral referrals.^{2,8}
- **Improves school year academic performance among various student groups.** Youth in key subgroups gain literacy and math skills and/or perform higher on school-year assessments*:^{3,4,5,8,9,10}
 - Pre-kindergarten
 - Elementary grades K–4
 - Middle school grades 5–8
 - Special education needs
 - Hispanic/Latino students
 - Dual language learners
 - Students receiving free and reduced price meals
- **Increases engagement and interest in learning.** Youth who participate in BellXcel's summer model enter the school year with improved attitudes toward learning and increased eagerness to learn.¹ Additionally, youth* watch fewer hours of television and play fewer hours of video games.⁹
- **Strengthens key social-emotional skills.** Youth experience growth in key social-emotional competencies such as growth mindset, self-regulation, self-awareness, responsible decision making, and self-confidence.^{1,17,18}

Evidence of Family Engagement

The BellXcel model is intentionally designed to engage families in their child's learning, resulting in:

- **Increased family engagement** in their child's learning. Parents/caregivers increase their involvement in their child's education, including reading to their children* and encouraging their child to read more frequently. ^{1, 9}

Evidence of Improved Educator Practice

Educators participate in BellXcel's professional development while gaining real-world learning experiences through ongoing coaching and reflection that positively impacts their school-year teaching.

BellXcel's comprehensive staff professional development has been shown to positively impact teacher practice and:

- **Enhance school year teacher practices and confidence.** Educators start the school year with new and enhanced approaches to teaching and more confidence to implement new practices, particularly in the areas of growth mindset and supporting positive behaviors. ^{11, 12}
- **Increase energy and passion for teaching.** Educators start the school year with increased energy and passion for teaching. ^{10, 11, 14}
- **Improve use of student-centered practices.** Summer educators are more likely than teachers not employed in a summer program to improve their use of student-centered practices. ¹⁴
- **Increase opportunities for coaching and feedback.** Summer educators receive important feedback and coaching about how to improve instruction and classroom practices. ¹⁴



* Compared to a comparison group of similar students who did not participate in a summer or afterschool program. See each individual study for more details on the comparison group.

Evidence of High-Quality Program & Implementation

A key factor in strong positive findings for youth, families, and educators is high-quality program implementation. Internal quality assurance and external third-party studies confirm that BellXcel's model:

- **Aligns with high quality and strong fidelity according to national standards.** BellXcel's summer model is implemented with strong fidelity and with high quality relative to national program quality standards developed by the RAND Corporation and National Summer Learning Association (NSLA). ^{2, 5, 13}
- **Enables effective adaptations.** Flexible solutions for remote environments enabled programs to successfully adapt to their remote learning needs resulting in youth learning, social-emotional skill development, and enhanced confidence and skills with using remote learning technology. ^{15, 16, 17, 18}
- **Provides educators with experiences to increase satisfaction and decrease burnout.** BellXcel's partner programs created high-quality staff experiences by incorporating strong relationships, support, collaboration, a positive environment for teaching, flexibility, autonomy and readily available resources. ²¹
- **Supports professional development.** BellXcel's professional development model and activities are recognized for strengthening staff professional skills and supporting educator growth. ^{5, 10, 11}

Evidence of Systems Change for Customer Organizations

BellXcel interviewed partners and found that a BellXcel partnership positively influenced organizations in several ways. Partners noted the following areas were strengthened as part of working with BellXcel: ²²

- **Program outcomes and evidence**
- **Community relationships**
- **Organizational confidence**
- **Philanthropy and fundraising**
- **Program planning and operations**

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