



Too often, students are less proficient on the first day of school than they were on the last day of the previous school year. However, this "summer slide" can be prevented with interventions aimed at keeping students engaged and learning over the summer.

This week's newsletter highlights the different ways states are encouraging continued learning during the summer months to advance educational equity and student success.

Visit StatesLeading.org and follow #StatesLeading on social media to learn more and join the conversation.

State Spotlights



To help encourage a love of reading, especially during the summer, the **Alaska** Department of Education and Early Development's Alaska State Library recently launched a new website where Alaskans of all ages and abilities can access free books.

In collaboration with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Alaska Library Network, the Ready to Read Resource Center loans board books and toys statewide, the Alaska Digital Library provides e-books and audiobooks, the Alaska Mail Services offers books to Alaskans living in towns without a public library, and the Talking Book Center supplies audiobooks to Alaskans with disabilities.

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As part of the **Oklahoma** State Department of Education's efforts to leverage out-of-school time to better address student needs, the state partnered with the 21st Century Community Learning Center to create a nine-week immersive summer program to expand continuous learning.

Through this program, Pre-K through eighth grade students have the opportunity to explore a wide array of topics from NASA to Native American culture.

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The **Pennsylvania** Department of Education (PDE) launched the #SummerOfSTEM campaign to celebrate the diverse STEM programs operating throughout the summer and across the state.

This campaign aims to prevent “summer slide,” grow the STEM workforce, and expand computer science and STEM in K-12 education. #SummerOfSTEM has spurred an online dialogue with educators and other stakeholders that has fostered the relationship between PDE, education stakeholders, and the media.

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The **Rhode Island** Department of Education sponsors a cohort of 150 junior high school students through their PrepareRI initiative to participate in a business boot camp.

Through this initiative, students learn business skills such as public speaking, problem-solving, and effective communication that accumulates in a competition for summer jobs with companies like CVS, Hasbro, Gilbane, Citizens Bank, and others.

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The **New Hampshire** Department of Education has partnered with MetaMetrics to provide free reading recommendations and a six-week mathematics program in an effort to help students retain knowledge and information during the summer months. The initiatives – Find A Book NH and Summer Math Challenge – are completely free to any parent interested in accessing the programs.

Families also have access to online certificates that celebrate and reinforce summer reading and mathematics accomplishments.

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OKLAHOMA
STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION
— JOY HOFMEISTER —
STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The **Oklahoma** Department of Education is offering teachers paid summer externships to give them hands-on experience in STEM-related career tracks that they can then share with their students.

A product of the Oklahoma's Teacher Shortage Task Force, the program aims both to interest kids in science and to help teachers be inspired and excited about STEM-related teaching.

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Through the Jump Start Summer program, the **Louisiana** Department of Education is providing over 1,900 students from 46 school districts with career-focused classes to earn school credit, an industry-recognized credential, and a paycheck.

The program has received support from businesses and industry groups that partner with the school systems to provide supplies, expertise, and job shadowing opportunities.

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Must Read

On the most recent episode of NCSL's "Our American States" podcast, Matthew Boulay, founder and CEO of the National Summer Learning Association, and Oregon Representative Barbara Smith Warner talk about how reversing the "summer slide" is the key to closing achievement gaps. The podcast sheds light on how summer learning programs can act as the "sweet spot" between traditional summer school and summer camp to address educational inequalities.

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In the Media



Critical to its focus on combating summer learning loss, this **North Carolina** school district used the support for family engagement under ESSA to secure funds for more than 120,000 books to reinforce home-based reading interventions during the summer.

Through the program, called "Break with a Book," more than 20,000 students in 49 Title I elementary schools had the opportunity to select six books to bring home for the summer.

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MOST NETWORK

MARYLAND OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

This U.S. News article highlights **Oregon** and **Maryland** as states where stakeholders are making innovative use of libraries to offer summer learning opportunities to their communities and students.

OregonASK, a nonprofit working to address child nutrition for students who receive free and reduced-price school lunches, partnered with state library systems to keep libraries open and transform them into food sites during the summer.

Similarly, Maryland Out of School Time (MOST) teamed up with Baltimore City Schools to use libraries as centers for arts and reading programs during the summer. Since the creation of the program, MOST has found that students who attended the summer programs either improved in standardized testing in the fall or regressed less than their peers.

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Tools & Resources



The National Summer Learning Association is delighted to partner with CCSSO to publish *Summer Playbook for State Education Agencies*, a resource created to elevate and celebrate the essential role summer learning plays in helping every student succeed.

This playbook helps states harness the power of summer to ensure students are better prepared to thrive in the school year ahead and beyond.

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During NCSL's Education Standing Committee meeting in Santa Fe, New Mexico, last month, state legislators and legislative staff from across the country visited two local summer learning program sites to see innovative strategies for engaging students and bridging opportunity gaps during the summer months.

Legislators and staff observed students at Cesar Chavez Elementary participating in cultural history projects that incorporated the arts, as well as middle school students at the Early College Opportunities High School using project-based technical skills to explore various careers and apply classroom concepts in math, science, and language arts.

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We want to hear from you!

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to communications@ccsso.org



The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

Thank you to our proud partners:

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