

A Summer for Learning & Recovery

Recommendations for High-Quality Programs



This is Summer Learning in Hawai'i



The Need Is Essential

COVID-19 not only thrust a public health crisis through our communities, it also forced students to miss out on in-person instruction, leaving behind scores of children at risk of chronic absenteeism and performing below grade-level expectations. As of Q1 of SY2021, more than 20% of elementary students and 35%-40% of middle school students were behind grade-level on English Language Arts and Math screeners. Hawai'i's 185 Title I schools were disproportionately handicapped by the onset of the pandemic, experiencing higher rates of learning loss.

Historically, afterschool and summer programs (and funding for them) have been afterthoughts in addressing education, childcare, and economic issues. The pandemic forced a change of mindset. Children and families require more academic, social, and emotional supports than previous years. Many families have lost income during the pandemic, causing spikes in hunger, food insecurity, and unemployment. Summer learning programs are a lifeline for keeping kids safe, healthy, learning, and active.



The Opportunity Is Now

As schools relax restrictions and fill classrooms again, we must step boldly onto the path towards equitable recovery and accelerated learning. Summer programs are the first stop on the educational recovery path where all students, particularly those most impacted by the pandemic, should have access to free, expansive learning opportunities that meet their academic, social, and emotional needs. This year more than ever before, summer learning is a necessary game changer for re-engaging students in learning and reconnecting them with mentors and peers.

In Hawai'i, state and education leaders have decision-making power over more than \$412 million available through the American Rescue Plan to remedy learning loss and provide the supports students need to recover.

The Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance (HAA) recognizes the extraordinary efforts of school leaders and teachers who innovated and adapted throughout the pandemic to support students.

There are many afterschool and summer program providers in our network who stand ready to partner with you this summer, next fall, and into the future to ensure students' academic, social, and emotional needs are met.

We share your concerns about students' well-being and are uniquely qualified to help you achieve your goals for recovery. HAA offers these researched-based strategies for successful summer programs as a means to help schools accelerate planning to meet the needs of our children and families.

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The Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance works to ensure that all children in Hawai'i have access to quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

All Hands on Deck



Leverage community assets to provide a robust mix of academics and enrichment. Include community partners in planning and implementation for an array of activities that students can choose that meet their interests and are culturally responsive. Enrichment options incentivize engagement in academics.



Establish pathways for funding to reach community-based organizations, especially those that can assist schools with programs to nurture the whole child.



Include youth voices in planning and design programs around student interest and needs. Summer programs that are intentional about aligning activities with students' input and needs as well as intended outcomes yield better results, and keep young people engaged and attending regularly.



Offer free and fully accessible summer programs to all students, especially those most impacted by the pandemic.

While funding should allow for all students to benefit from summer recovery, priority should be given to programs and strategies that employ equitable recruiting processes and serve Title I schools or communities demonstrating the greatest need and fewest resources.



Meet youth and families' full needs. In addition to meeting academic needs, coordinated services should address youth and families' economic, health, food, and transportation needs.



Offer full-day programming that is voluntary and runs five days a week for at least five weeks, giving students the continuity and time they need to find success.



Summer Matters!

High-quality summer learning programs keep kids safe and engaged and make good use of buildings and playgrounds while parents are working. Rooted in local partnerships, these flexible programs operate at the nexus of schools, families, and communities to expand learning opportunities and essential support for all children.

Students who regularly attend summer learning programs:

- Make gains in reading and math
- Engage in fun, enriching activities that spark interest in learning
- Have access to nutritious meals and enjoy safe outdoor physical activity
- Connect with caring mentors and peers
- Have opportunities to earn high school or college credits
- Explore careers and gain workforce skills

Recommendations for the Hawai'i Department of Education

- Issue grants and contracts as quickly as possible. Program and staffing decisions for summer programs are being made now. Schools and providers anticipate large increases in demand for summer programs and require funding certainty to adequately plan.
- Allocate a portion of funds for fund administration and open up funding avenues for more public sector, youth development, community-based, and nonprofit organizations. Possibly look to a third-party administrator that can work more nimbly than the DOE with non-vendor organizations.
- Designate a DOE manager to coordinate summer programs and ensure a consistent quality standard statewide.
- Allocate flexible funding with consideration to four time frames: Summer 2021, SY 21-22, Summer 2022, SY 22-23.
- Prioritize programs that support students who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- Fund relevant professional development/training for coaching, consulting, and technical assistance to help schools establishing child and youth-centered programs.



Recommendations for Schools' Use of Federal Relief Funding

- Survey student interest to develop enrichment programs that complement academic offerings.
- Recruit staff who are connected to the local community with content expertise and enthusiasm. Ensure all staff participate in common training and professional development to assure consistent quality engagement with students and collective interest to maintain a welcoming, positive climate that promotes healthy relationships with adults and peers.
- Collaborate and contract with community-based and non-profit programs, libraries, and Parks & Recreation to support students and meet their interests so they remain engaged. Summer learning should include more than academics. Funding can support contracts with organizations to augment and enhance schools' academic and enrichment offerings. HAA has a [catalogue of community-based providers](#) with track records for success.
- Adhere to DOH/DOE guidelines regarding COVID-19 protocols.
- Execute a transportation plan to include free transportation for those in need.
- Provide critical services such as summer meals and supports for students' social, emotional, and mental health.
- Offer sufficient hours of programming to meet the needs of working families.
- Eliminate cost barriers to participation.



Let's Work Together

Summer learning programming will be more important than ever as we recover and rebuild our communities in the wake of COVID-19. Hawai'i must keep pace for the sake of our children and their families. HAA and its community partners stand ready to assist our schools. Together, we can effectively use funding to increase high-quality services and develop best practices towards equitable learning recovery for all our students.