

In September 2014, Lewiston's Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Coalition, Lewiston Public Schools, and the greater Lewiston community, with the generous support of the John T. Gorman Foundation, commissioned the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to conduct a landscape assessment of summer learning programs in the community. This report summarizes the key data points from that assessment.



Lewiston, Maine | 2014 Summer Learning Community Assessment

Summer Learning in Lewiston

The city of Lewiston, with a 2010 population of 36,592, is a close-knit community in Androscoggin County, Maine. There is broad agreement in Lewiston that summer is a unique time to engage with youth who need additional support, including youth from the refugee and immigrant population.

Summer learning is crucial to the success of Lewiston's youth. Research shows that every summer youth from low-income households lose two to three months in reading achievement, while their higher income peers make slight gains. Additionally, most youth lose an average of two months in math skills in the summer. Without accessible, high-quality summer learning programs, the Lewiston community cannot close the achievement gap.

Beginning in fall 2014, NSLA and Lewiston Public Schools conducted a community assessment of summer learning programs in the city using surveys, focus groups, and interviews. This community assessment offers the Lewiston community a chance to learn more about the range of summer learning opportunities available to the city's youth. Additionally, the findings can help identify potential areas for collaboration around the summer learning space and target gaps and barriers to serving more youth.



IN TOTAL, NSLA RECEIVED DATA FROM EIGHT ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING 16 SUMMER PROGRAMS IN LEWISTON. THESE 16 PROGRAMS, ENROLLING 2,750 YOUTH IN SUMMER 2014, HAD THE POTENTIAL TO SERVE UP TO 51 PERCENT OF LEWISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS OF LEWISTON

Total 2010 City Population ¹	36,592
Percent of Persons below Poverty Level ¹	22.9%
Percent of Adults with at Least a High School Diploma ¹	85.6%
Percent of Adults with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher ¹	15.4%
2014 Lewiston Public Schools Student Enrollment ²	5,303

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *State and County Quick Facts for Lewiston, Maine*.

² *Lewiston Public Schools Enrollment Summary*.

Summary of Findings

- Lewiston Public Schools and the Lewiston Recreation Division were the largest summer program providers in the city, enrolling approximately 850 youth each. Lewiston Public Schools was the largest funder, with over \$200,000 in School Improvement Grant, 21st Century Community Learning Center, and local funding committed to their 2014 programs. The commitment of these two public institutions is essential to future system building.
- Lewiston organizations budgeted a total of \$601,732 for 2014 summer programs, equivalent to an average of \$218.00 per participant or \$1.28 per participant per hour of programming. This figure does not include in-kind support. In 2009, a study of out-of-school time programs commissioned by The Wallace Foundation found an average cost of \$4.00 per slot per hour for those serving elementary and middle school youth and \$8.00 for those serving teens.
- Local program providers believe a dedicated city-wide summer learning coordinator is necessary to organize marketing and outreach across programs, oversee applications for joint funding, and deliver professional development focused around summer program quality. The local summer learning community should identify an organization to house this coordinator and a plan to pursue the funding necessary to support the position.
- Lewiston providers face severe funding constraints that restrict their ability to hire specialized staff and threaten the overall sustainability of summer programming in the city. There may be opportunities to increase program effectiveness and sustainability by negotiating partnerships at the community level.

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS IN LEWISTON



Over 50%
OF SUMMER PROGRAMS OFFERED CONTENT FOCUSED ON SPORTS AND RECREATION, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING, ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT, HEALTH AND NUTRITION, AND/OR STEM ACTIVITIES

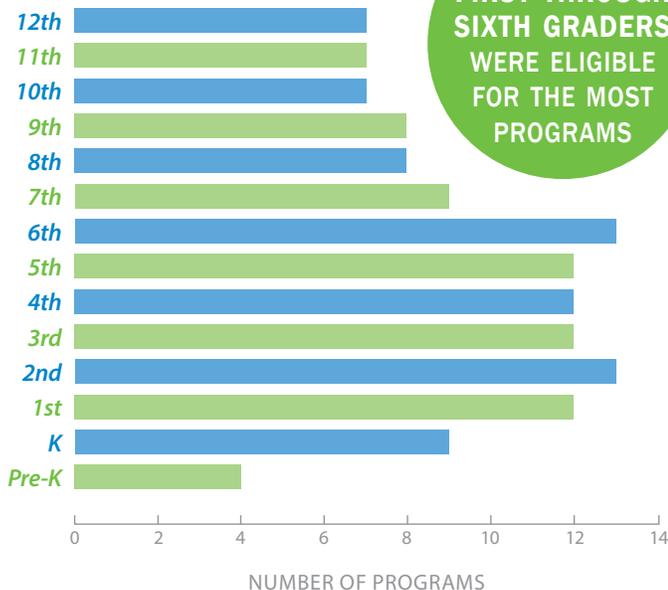
Youth Enrolled in a 2014 Summer Program by Sector



LEWISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE LEWISTON RECREATION DIVISION ENROLLED THE GREATEST NUMBER OF SUMMER PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

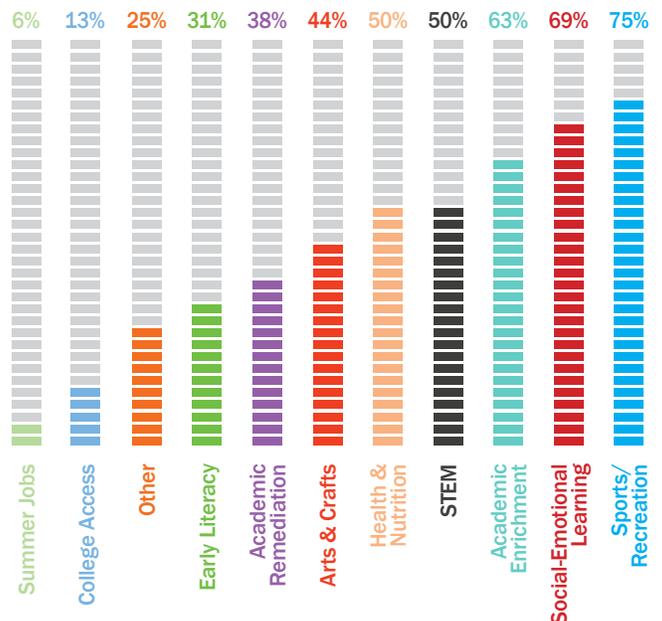
Eligibility for Programs

(by school grade)



FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADERS WERE ELIGIBLE FOR THE MOST PROGRAMS

Program Content Areas



SUMMER LEARNING SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

NSLA has developed a three-phase approach to summer learning system building to help communities reach more youth with high-quality summer opportunities. Fundamentally, this approach is about fostering collaboration between local community organizations and institutions. During the community assessment process NSLA utilizes the *Community Indicators of Effective Summer Learning Systems* rating scale to assess the size, scope, and features of a summer learning system within six key domains.

Through Lewiston's Campaign for Grade Level Reading Coalition, the city has begun to collaborate around summer opportunities for youth up to third grade. Yet the summer learning system for all school-age youth is still in its beginning stages. There are many opportunities to improve coordination between the city's summer providers and increase access to high-quality programs for those most in need at all grade levels. This report may provide an opportunity to begin exploring the components of a summer learning system that supports summer opportunities for all school-age youth.

 **Shared Vision and City-Wide Coordination**
There is broad agreement among community members, summer program providers, and local institutions including Lewiston Public Schools, the Bates College Harward Center, the YMCA of Central Maine, and the Lewiston Recreation Division, that summer is a key time to engage with youth who need additional support, including the refugee and immigrant population.

 **Engaged Leadership**
Local program providers believe that a dedicated city-wide summer learning coordinator is necessary to convene community members, coordinate marketing and outreach across providers, oversee applications for joint funding, and provide trainings and professional development focused around summer program quality.

 **Data Management System**
While summer programs in Lewiston collect data independently, there is no formal mechanism for sharing that information with other programs. In Newark, New Jersey, adopting a common summer reporting template allowed program providers and funders to compare data across programs serving over 17,000 youth in summer 2014.

 **Continuous Quality Improvement**
Program providers believe that summer could be used as a testing ground for good educational practices and as a training opportunity for teachers. This could improve program implementation during the summer and instruction during the school year. Baltimore City Public Schools used their premier K-3 summer learning program, *Read to Succeed*, as a training opportunity for teachers. Summer teachers received a week of professional development prior to the start of the program, worth several continuing education credits, and dedicated coaching support throughout.

 **Sustainable Resources**
Lewiston providers face severe funding constraints that restrict their ability to hire specialized staff, such as translators and social workers, and threaten the overall sustainability of summer programming in the city.

Lewiston associations and local businesses have a history of supporting summer programming through financial and in-kind contributions to specific programs or providers. Individual partnerships have been key to the success of existing summer programs in Lewiston. There may be opportunities to increase effectiveness and sustainability by negotiating partnerships at the community level, especially around transportation and participant recruitment.

 **Marketing and Communications**
Program providers in Lewiston lack sufficient familiarity with each other's programs to recommend them to youth and families that they are unable to serve in their own programs.

Program providers believe that families prefer full-day programming. There may be opportunities to connect half-day or partial programs into a coherent continuum that parents would find attractive.

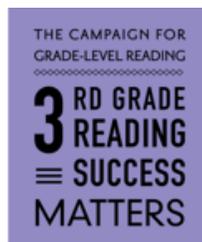


About the National Summer Learning Association

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works, offers expertise and support for programs and communities, and advocates for summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. NSLA's work is driven by the belief that all children and youth deserve high-quality summer learning experiences that will help them succeed in college, career, and life.

NSLA's **Community Initiatives** aim to align existing resources and to increase community capacity to deliver high-quality summer learning at scale. Designing strategies that are unique to the local context, NSLA's Community Initiatives support community assessment; partner coordination; strategic planning; and capacity building with local intermediaries and stakeholders.

www.summerlearning.org



Lewiston Campaign for
Grade-Level Reading Coalition

JOHN T. GORMAN
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