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**Evaluation for:**  
**NCEBC Summer Literacy Center**  
**Performed by:**  
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**Executive Summary:**

Typically referred to as the “summer slide,” students tend to lose more than two months of progress during the summer break (Gambrell, 2008). In addition, summer break presents optimal opportunities when students are more likely to be faced with choices and situations that lead them to fall victims to mischief and crime and (Hanes, C., Rife, E. and Laguna, L., 2003). Schools boards, policy makers, and educational theorists have argued that summer should be geared toward continuous structured learning and fun activities and those students who engage in both are more likely to excel during the regular school year (Cooper, 1996).

In efforts to decrease the likelihood of unsupervised time and ramp up educative time, NCEBC, instituted a summer Literacy program aimed at MSDL Township students entering grades 2-6. The summer program took place at Crestview Elementary where the poverty rate is reportedly 75% and students of color comprise 65% of the school’s total population. The summer center engaged with students daily from 9:00 am-3:00 pm. Seven teachers and five instructional assistants provided guided learning activities to 127 students at the learning site. Three classes of students for each subject area (about 15 students in each section) rotated through reading- literacy and vocabulary, math, and science each morning for 30 minute increments. The afternoons included co-curricular enrichment activities, such as healthy living, sports, indoor and outdoor activities, arts and crafts, culinary arts, and music. Further, students were able to engage in cultural activities including a trip to the circus.

Multiple providers delivered important services such as the YMCA offering activities in character development, recreation, and fitness. The Peace Learning Center, Claude McNeal Production, and Act-Out Program, provided character development and anti-bullying lessons. The

Indianapolis Art center supported the program with activities focused on art and Spanish. All providers participated in programming needs for the children two days per week.

Each of the Indiana Academic Standards was addressed in each teacher’s curriculum. Teachers used sample items pulled directly from the Indiana Department of Education’s website to provide pre and post-tests, in addition to weekly lessons, quizzes, and other assessment tests throughout the summer. In addition, students used the Pearson Success Maker Software ©, “which is uniquely designed with a robust reporting system that helps teachers make instructional decisions based on appropriate data. This differentiation allowed the teachers to serve students at all skill levels at the same time and to simultaneously track their success “ (SuccessMaker©, 2011).

**Methods**

Formative and summative evaluations were conducted during the summer of 2011. Students, faculty, and parent surveys were used to assess staff effectiveness, and student and parent satisfaction. The evaluator reported findings from the formative evaluation for staff at the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Other aspects of the evaluation will address best practice strategies that address individual student needs, integration of academic standards into program activities, enrollment, and retention issues. Statistical data was also collected to inform the program about performance measurements on weekly tests and activities such as Success Maker © and I-STEP sample tests (Pre and Post) for Math, Science and Reading.

**Results: From Summer Slide to Summer Enrichment**

Results show that participating students experienced tremendous growth in three academic areas, science, math and reading, as

evidenced by ISTEP sample tests, other assessment items and quizzes. For instance, in science, all three-class rotations showed an average gain of 17%. In other words, students who tested at 60% at the beginning of the session typically tested around 77% by the end of the 5-week session. Math growth were even more significant where the average gain hovered at approximately 40%. In addition, there was one group with a 74% improvement from pre-test to post-test! Reading showed some improvement as evidenced by SuccessMaker ©.

SuccessMaker ©, too, provided students with academic growth. Students were able to access a variety of academic practice problems in math and reading at appropriately assigned levels that are machine collaborated, in real time, while the student progresses through the activities. Post-test results revealed that students performed significantly better following the five week summer program. SuccessMaker © notes that average gain for a 25 hour instruction module is about a grade level (over the course of a school year). Students who participated in the summer 5-week classes gained on average 0.07 grade levels in math and on average about 0.1 grade levels in reading<sup>1</sup>. Given that they participated for a small fraction of the regular school year, it is likely that students who participated in this session should be more prepared for school in the fall of 2011 and less likely to suffer from Summer Slide.

#### **Students, Parents and Teachers Surveys:**

Interestingly, students overwhelmingly remarked that they really enjoyed math more than anything offered during the summer. The significant achievement growth also indicate they performed well in a subject they enjoyed. While the students were adamant that they enjoyed the program, they also suggested that the program incorporate more sports and outdoor activities. As one student noted, the entire year is spent in the classroom. It is summer time. While the program's focus is on cultivating success for the

next academic year, and decreasing the probability of summer sliding (forgetting what was learned), there should be a healthy balance between school work and physical activity. The administrative team agreed that it would likely change the curriculum to include more co-curricular activities.

#### **Parents**

Parents, too, enjoyed the program. Parents said that the cost was important, however, it was also critical that their students had something to do during the summer. They were also pleased with the academic program and location. Parents were most pleased with instructional staff and "work reports" that indicated a child's areas of strength and where their student needed help. Parents also recommended activities that are more athletically focused.

#### **Teachers:**

In general, teachers enjoyed working with the program and will likely return the following summer. All agreed that the staff are committed and supported each other. Teachers recommended more training in class management, academic enrichment, literacy, activity planning, and working with diverse student populations.

Parents and students noted the relationship between students and staff, which included respectful and caring relationships, high expectations for student success, and transparent communication with parents.

#### **Recommendations**

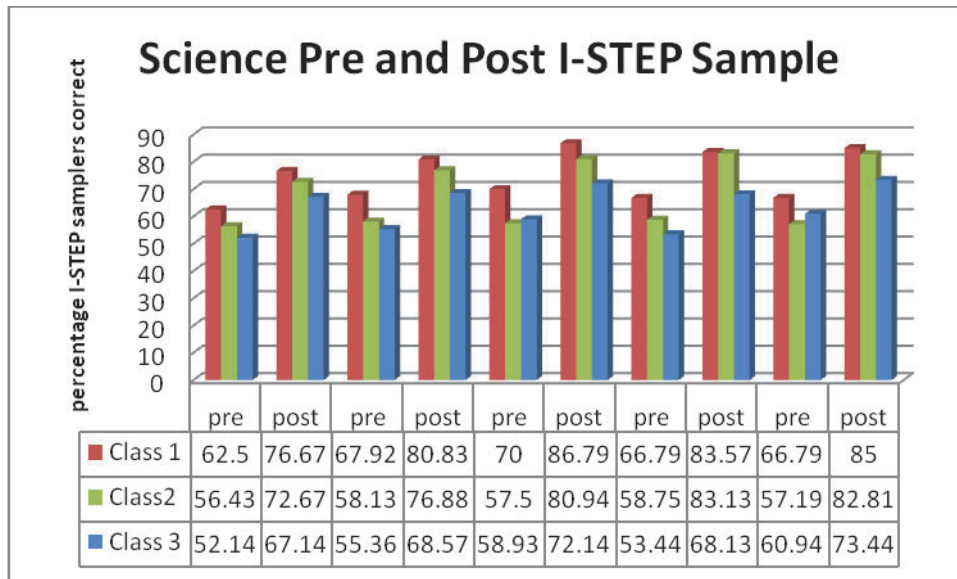
While the evaluator agreed that there needed to be more time allotted to outside activities, one cannot overlook the significant growth realized during a short 5-week session across all academic domains. It is suggested that incorporating out of class activities should be a part of the program, however, the program should also continue with its major focus on academic rigor and high

expectations. For example, an extra day per week or an extra week overall could insure that students receive the same or more instruction

time during the summer in addition to more out of class experiences.

### I-STEP SAMPLER ASSESSMENTS

Students who participated in the summer Literacy Center Program at Crestview were administered pre and post ISTEP sampler test weekly during the 5 week summer session. The following graphs report how students scored on Math, Science and Reading pre and post test. There were three sections or classes per teacher. There were two Math Teachers. They are labeled Teacher A and Teacher B and represented in Figures 2 and 3 respectively. The y-axis in Figures 1-4 indicates percentage of I-STEP sample test items correct. The x-axis, labeled with whole numbers from 1-19 (in at least one figure), denotes the Standard. See the Legend 1 below. Growth is displayed in Tables 1-4 for Science, Math and Reading.



**Figure 1: Science Pre and Post Test I-STEP Sample.** Students who participated in the summer Literacy Center Program at Crestview were administered pre and post ISTEP sampler test weekly during the 5 week summer session. The graph above reports how students scored on Science pre and post test. Teachers were assigned to three classes.

Class	Science Growth Standard 1	Science Growth Standard 2	Science Growth Standard 3	Science Growth Standard 4	Science Growth Standard 5
Class 1	14.17	12.41	16.79	16.78	18.21
Class 2	16.25	18.75	23.44	24.38	25.62
Class 3	15	13.21	13.21	14.70	12.49

**Table 1: I-STEP Sampler Gain Percentages**

The chart below displays a real summer depiction of summer pre and post test scores for all summer science school participants who took the ISTEP sample quiz. There were three classroom rotations throughout the summer.