

Summer Success Camp Pilot Report

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During Summer 2019,

Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) piloted a Summer Success Kindergarten Readiness Camp (SSC) to help families with incoming kindergarteners prepare for school. SSC was developed by the Schoenbaum Family Center and Crane Center for Early Childhood Research at The Ohio State University (SFC). Dr. Stephen Myers, Associate Vice Provost of Outreach and Engagement, recommended CML as a community partner capable of scaling this proven program beyond the university. Guided by Dr. Laura Justice and staff at the SFC, CML implemented the camp for 26 rising kindergarteners who had little or no formal early learning experiences.

The camp focused on skills needed for school readiness in four academic domains, including language and literacy, math, social-emotional development and motor development. OSU staff completed a pre- and post-screener to evaluate academic gains of the children. Results from the screener showed gains in all domains assessed. CML also assessed the logistics of replicating the program in the library setting. Results are being used as an evidence base in which to validate scaling the program at CML and/or to influence revisions to other CML kindergarten readiness programs.

SUMMER SUCCESS CAMP QUICK FACTS:

- Held at Northern Lights and Parsons branches
- 3 hours daily for 4 weeks (60 hours)
- Intended for children only; no parents or caregivers
- Led by certified teachers + 2 student assistants
- 26 students completed

SUMMER SUCCESS RESULTS:

- **84.6%** of students showed literacy improvement
- **73.1%** of students showed math improvement
- **69.2%** of students showed self-regulation improvement



SSC at the Northern Lights Branch.

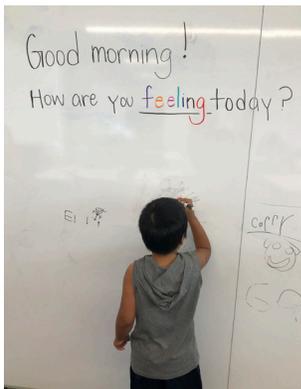
BACKGROUND

A child's academic success relies greatly on their readiness at kindergarten entry. The skills acquired prior to starting kindergarten are crucial to developing a solid foundation for academic success. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is given to children in Ohio public and community kindergarten programs in order to measure a child's readiness for engaging with instruction aligned to Ohio kindergarten standards. During the 2017-2018 school year, KRA scores indicated that only 41% of students in Franklin County demonstrated kindergarten readiness. Looking closer at the data, only 29% of economically disadvantaged children and 13.5% of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students were kindergarten-ready. In the target neighborhoods of Parsons and Northern Lights, a disproportionate number of Columbus City Schools (CCS) students scored in the lowest tier of the literacy assessment, meaning that they were not on track to read on grade level (see table below). These results indicate need for kindergarten readiness camps serving children from these communities. Northern Lights has an additional challenge given the high number of LEP individuals who live in the area.



Staff modified activities to meet the developmental level and skills of each student.

Given the cost per child (~\$1,000 per student), several funding sources were sought in order to implement SSC, including an OSU Connect and Collaborate grant and gifts from CML donors Melissa and Jonathan Kass and the Columbus Blue Jackets Foundation.



Working daily on social-emotional skills enabled students to practice communication and self-regulation.

Community / Library Branch	CCS Elementary School	Students not on track to read on grade level (2017-18)
Parsons	Lincoln Park	75.51%
Parsons	Livingston	51.67%
Parsons	Siebert Street	62.75%
Parsons	Southwood	43.48%
Parsons	Stewart	10.87%
Northern Lights	Columbus Global Academy	Scores not available
Northern Lights	Columbus Spanish Immersion	37.74%
Northern Lights	Huy / A.G. Bell	53.75%
Northern Lights	Innis	84.85%
Northern Lights	North Linden	79.73%
Northern Lights	Oakland Park	29.55%

Source - Ohio Department of Education website

CAMP IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of SSC was a team effort, with CML staff working closely with OSU to provide a high-quality program. Experts from SFC served in a consulting role and oversaw the evaluation of the pre- and post-screener results. Guided by the SFC curriculum, CML sought to implement the program as designed. A certified teacher and two student assistants were hired to run each camp along with library staff.



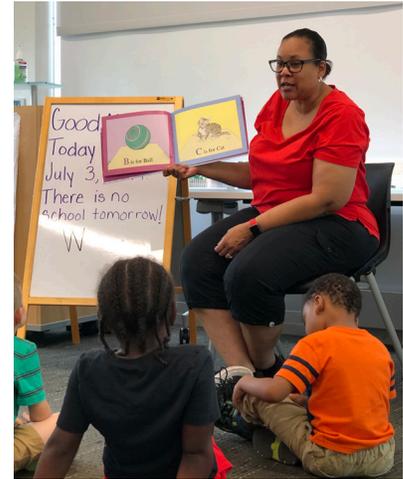
Small group activities allowed students to explore at their own pace while instructors connected the activity with the learning target.

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES

- 1. Focused Recruitment:** Recruitment was prioritized for children from low-income backgrounds with little to no formal early-childhood education who were preparing to enter kindergarten. Families were recruited through relationships with CML customers. Unlike many CML programs, this camp was offered solely to children with no parents or caregivers present.
- 2. Intensive Kindergarten Preparation:** Camp provided 60 hours of targeted instruction designed to develop critical skills needed for school readiness in academic and non-academic areas. The curriculum emphasized skills in the following domains: language and literacy, math, social-emotional and motor skills.

Community performers such as COSI and the Turtle Lady were hired to engage the group in hands-on learning experiences to enrich the students' academics. In addition, each participant received a book collection for their home that supported objectives learned at SSC.

- 3. Parent Communication:** To extend kindergarten preparation beyond the camp, a family event was held and weekly updates were shared with parents. Parents were invited to attend a family night kickoff event consisting of a brief introduction to the SSC program and its goals followed by dinner and a picture book reading demonstration. A weekly newsletter for parents included an update on their student's progress and suggestions for readiness activities to complete at home.



Literacy-based lessons were a starting point for introducing learning targets.

SSC CURRICULUM FOCUSED ON FOUR ACADEMIC DOMAINS:

1. Language and Literacy

- Identify upper- and lowercase letters
- Identify beginning sounds of words
- Sequence story events

2. Math

- Count and write numbers 1-20
- Sort and classify objects

3. Social-Emotional

- Express emotion
- Follow rules and routines

4. Gross Motor

- Demonstrate object control skills such as catching and throwing
- Engage in daily physical activity



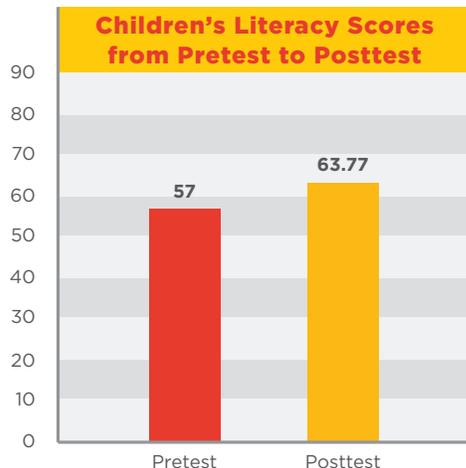
Large group activities allowed students to practice classroom skills like taking turns and following directions.

RESULTS: EVALUATION AND FINDINGS

CML evaluated SSC in two ways: student academic gains and implementation logistics. To look at academic gains, SFC researchers completed an evaluation of the camp's impact on student outcomes across three domains using a pre- and post-screener developed by OSU specifically for the program. Due to library facility restraints, motor development was not evaluated. SFC staff used the pre/post data to evaluate the program formatively and summatively. Given that CML was replicating a proven approach for improving school readiness, we expected to see positive effects on children's academic outcomes. As expected, students showed improvement in all three of the academic domains evaluated.

ACADEMIC PRE- AND POST-SCREENERS RESULTS

The three graphs below (provided by the Crane Center at The Ohio State University) show average scores on each of the three pre- and post-screeners. (The top number on the left axis of the graph shows the maximum points available on that assessment. For example, on the literacy assessment, there were a total of 90 points available.)



LITERACY SCREENER

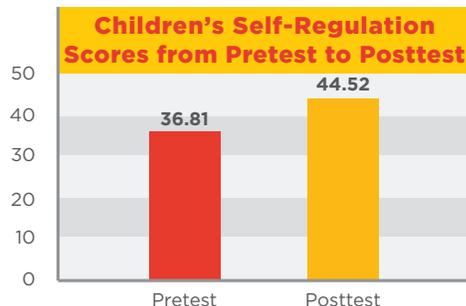
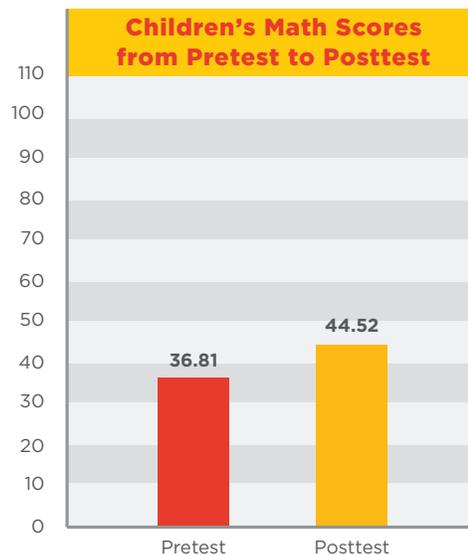
By the end of Summer Success Camp, on average:

- Participants at Columbus Metropolitan Library significantly improved their literacy scores from 57.00 to 63.77.
- Statistical analysis showed similar improvement on children's literacy scores between the Northern Lights and Parsons branches.

MATH SCREENER

By the end of Summer Success Camp, on average:

- Participants at Columbus Metropolitan Library slightly improved their math scores from 36.81 to 44.52.
- Statistical analysis showed similar improvement on children's math scores between the Northern Lights and Parsons branches.



SELF-REGULATION SCREENER

By the end of Summer Success Camp, on average:

- Participants at Columbus Metropolitan Library significantly improved their self-regulation scores from 19.88 to 29.23.
- Statistical analysis showed similar improvement on children's math scores between the Northern Lights and Parsons branches.

DISTRIBUTION CHANGES FROM PRE- TO POST-SCREENER

In order to better understand the academic impact of the program, data was pulled to illustrate assessment results on the pre-screener as compared to the post-screener. The table below shows the percentage of student scores that either improved or were maintained from the pre-screener to the post-screener. For example, 84.6% showed improvement in literacy.

	Children who improved		Children who maintained	
	Number of Children	Percent Improved	Number of Children	Percent Maintained
Literacy	22	84.6%	2	7.7%
Math	19	73.1%	-	-
Self-Regulation	18	69.2%	1	3.8%

SUMMER SUCCESS CAMP ATTENDANCE

Both locations retained the majority of children who started the program. Attendance was considerably higher at Northern Lights (see table on the right) even though a similar number of children were recruited at both locations. One explanation could be

Location	Students registered	Students starting	Students starting
Northern Lights	24	19	19
Parsons	19	8	7

the customer makeup of each camp. Northern Lights was comprised 100% of families for whom English is not their first language, whereas Parsons had only one such family. In our experience, ESOL families at Northern Lights who participated were particularly dedicated to strong attendance.

NEXT STEPS

Implementing SSC was an invaluable learning opportunity which will inform CML's Ready for Kindergarten efforts moving forward. Students left the camp with significantly improved literacy and self-regulation scores. Staff learned methods for scaling activities based on a student's abilities and engaging all students around academic goals. At the same time, factors including elimination of parent participation, facility restraints and safety concerns were a challenge to library staff. While physical considerations could be ameliorated with some building adaptations and the addition of new safety protocols, the biggest drawback was the loss of opportunity to reach parents. The library has a valuable connection with parents and caregivers and strives to immerse them in school readiness knowledge. CML will continue to target this caregiver connection, which is a key piece of our Young Minds Strategy.

After extensive consideration contrasting SSC to CML's existing Kindergarten Bootcamp program, the way is clear for 2020: using strengths from Kindergarten Bootcamp (hands-on parent involvement) and strengths from SSC (standardized curriculum, professional evaluation), CML will create a new Kindergarten Readiness Camp model, called Kindergarten Success Camp, to implement at select locations in summer 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

for Future Public Library Implementation

Although CML will not replicate this program in 2020, it is important to note the importance of this pilot. Offering a program like SSC provided CML the unprecedented opportunity to step outside of a traditional library model and partner with a research organization.

We recommend the following for a public library interested in implementing:

- 1. Increase opportunities for family engagement and involvement in the learning process.** Although CML presented a family night at the start of each camp and sent a weekly newsletter home, additional opportunities to increase parental communication should be explored.
- 2. Protocols for keeping children safe and planning for facility challenges.** Using multi-use meeting rooms for the camp presented logistical challenges, such as adult-sized tables and chairs and the need to remove all camp materials from the room daily. Safety concerns around children using public areas of the building required additional staff protocol.
- 3. Assess children before the start of the camp or administer a quick screener on the first day.** Pre-screener data early in the program would allow teachers to differentiate instruction for each child from the start of the camp. Administering the pre-screener on the first day did not allow for the results to be communicated in time to adjust individual lessons based on the results.
- 4. Streamlined, less material-intensive activities.** To implement the curriculum, the library purchased many supplies. Keeping these materials organized and communicating expectations about the materials to the camp staff were such a challenge that we recommend planning simple activities around each learning target.