UNITED WAY
Utah County

SOUTH FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CENTER 2026
SUMMER LEARNING REPORT













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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We are thrilled to share the impact of Summer Learning 2026 at United Way of Utah County's South Franklin Community Center.

This year marked the ninth year of the Summer Learning Program at SFCC, and we are astounded by its continued growth and impact. The program began with the goal of promoting academic continuity over the summer while providing meaningful opportunities for children and youth to build social connections. Summer Learning has expanded beyond the original vision and now serves 100 students, with many additional families on a waiting list hoping for the opportunity to participate.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, partnerships with community organizations, and the dedication of teachers and staff, Summer Learning provides a safe, welcoming environment where children can learn, have fun, build relationships, and grow throughout the summer.

The Summer Learning team consists of experienced teachers, two math specialists, two reading specialists, and a teacher dedicated to social-emotional learning and development. Students are grouped by grade level, from 1st through 7th grade, allowing us to keep classes small and enables teachers to tailor instruction to each student's learning level, helping students strengthen their skills while building confidence and a positive attitude toward learning.



Face painting at the Summer Carnival

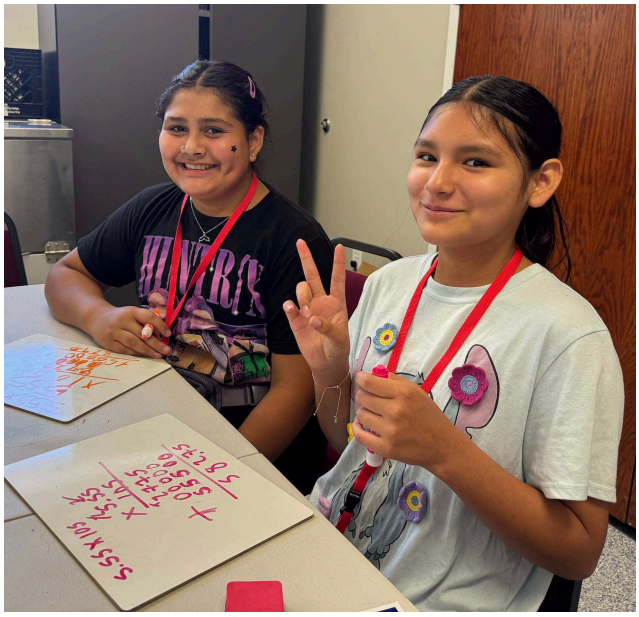

Excitement from the bottle flipping game


A game of tug-of-war

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Summer Learning team also included two student aides, and for the first time, three AmeriCorps VISTAs who provided additional support. In the month leading up to the program, the VISTAs worked diligently to prepare the center and develop engaging, hands-on STEM activities to complement classroom learning each day.

Throughout the program each VISTA was paired with a grade-level group, where they supported teachers, organized recess, and led STEM activities. This consistent presence helped foster strong relationships between staff and students while allowing students to receive individualized attention and support. Through their involvement, the team contributed not only to the daily tasks, but also by creating a positive, engaging environment for students to learn and build confidence..



Upper grade students in math class



Summer Learning Group Photo at Thanksgiving Point Fieldtrip

ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- YOUNGER READING

ACADEMIC RESULTS

Academic instruction and assessments focused on both reading and math, with results grouped into two grade-level ranges: 1st–3rd grade and 4th–7th grade. While teachers specialized in each subject for both groups, instruction was provided through separate classes for each grade level to better meet students' developmental and academic needs.

All students completed a pre-assessment at the beginning of the program to establish a baseline of their knowledge and skills in reading and math. At the conclusion of the four-week program, students completed a post-assessment to measure their academic growth.

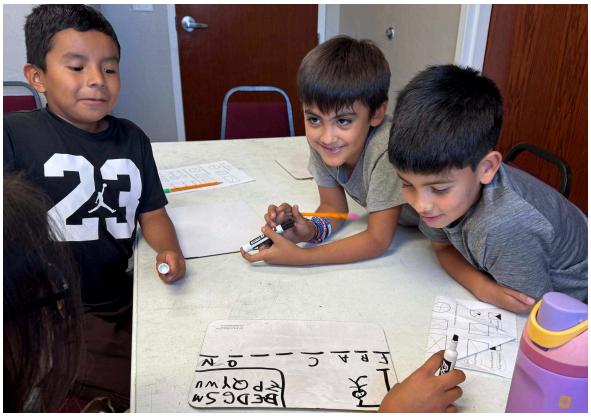
Overall, students demonstrated improvement in both reading and math across all grade levels. Greater growth was observed among the older students; however, the available data does not allow us to determine a specific cause for this difference. Several factors may have contributed, including differences in curriculum, students' familiarity with assessment strategies, English language proficiency, and teaching approaches or experience.



Younger students getting help with math



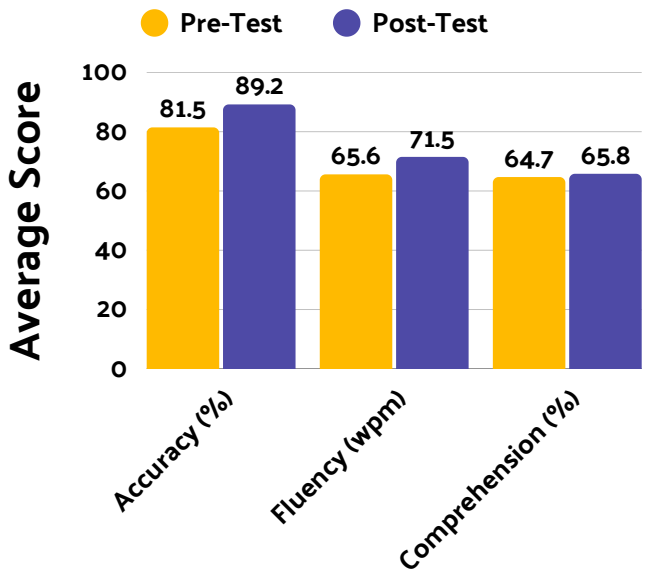
Younger students doing a coloring activity



Playing hang man with the younger students

ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- YOUNGER READING

Grades 1-3 Reading Results (42 Students)



1ST-3RD GRADE READING RESULTS

Overall, we saw an improvement of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension in reading from our 1st-3rd graders.

The 1st graders were also measured on other basic reading skills such as letter recognition and sightwords.

There were more positive results from the 1st and 2nd grade groups. The 3rd grade group saw a significant drop in fluency and comprehension, but feedback from the teacher suggests the test given wasn't at the correct level.

Based on all results, improvements can be made to the younger reading curriculum to promote more growth.

1st Grade Reading Results Average (14 students)						
	Lowercase Letter Recognition	Sightwords	Consonant-Vowel-Consonant Words	Fluency (WPM)	Accuracy	Comp.
Pre - Test	90.4%	82.1%	78.6%	53.79	76.35%	71%
Post-Test	96.2%	83.8%	90.1%	67.79	88.71%	78.57%
Change:	+ 5.8%	+ 1.7%	+ 11.5%	+ 14 WPM	+ 12.36	+ 7.57%

ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- OLDER READING

K-3RD GRADE READING PRE/POST TEST SCORE OUTCOMES (42 STUDENTS)	
IMPROVED	**60.52%**
MAINTAINED	**31.57%**
DECREASED	**7.8%**



Younger grade reading

2nd Grade Reading Results Average (11 Students)			
	Fluency (WPM)	Accuracy	Comprehension
Pre - Test	53.4	72.1%	50%
Post-Test	70.6	80.8%	61%
Change:	+ 17.2 WPM	+ 8.7%	+ 11%

ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- OLDER READING

4TH-7TH GRADE READING RESULTS

It is common that over the summer, children's reading ability decreases. In only four weeks, our older students showed significant growth in their reading. On average between all 4th-7th graders, the reading level increased by almost a whole grade level, with our seventh grades jumping more than two grade levels.

Not only did the reading level increase, but comprehension increased by an average of 4.5% and we saw only slight dips in word accuracy and fluency (words per minute). Considering that the students were testing at a higher level all together, only a small decrease shows that they were prepared to move up and read more difficult material, while increasing their capacity to understand new information.

Burns/Roe IRI Pre-test					
Actual Grade Level (completed last yr)	Asessment	Avg. Grade Reading Level	Accuracy	Fluency (WPM)	Comprehension
4th	Pre-Test	4.36	97.45%	112.45	85.45%
	Post-Test	5.18	97.73%	106	88.63%
5th	Pre-Test	6.71	98.93%	134.71	87.85%
	Post-Test	7.71	98.36%	126.64	95%
6th	Pre-Test	6.875	98.63%	148	96.25%
	Post-Test	8.75	99%	147.63	97.5%
7th	Pre-Test	6.7	99.5%	151.7	89%
	Post-Test	8.6	98.4%	136.4	95.5%

ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- OLDER READING

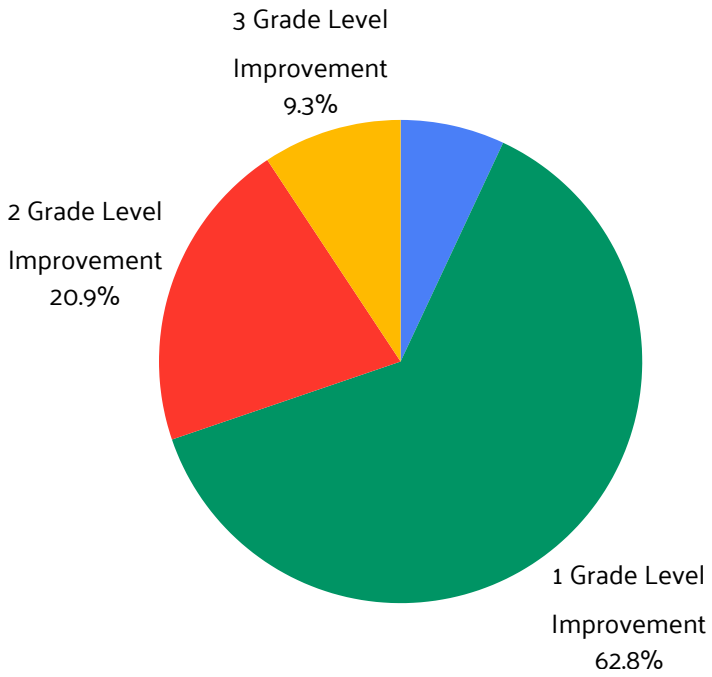
4th-7th Overall Results Pre-Post Tests (40 Students)					
Pre - Avg. Grade Reading Level	Post - Avg. Grade Reading Level	Pre - Accuracy	Post - Accuracy	Pre - Comprehension	Post - Comprehension
6.61	7.56	98.63%	98.44%	89.63%	94.15%
Change:	+0.95	Change:	-0.19%	Change:	+4.49%



ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS- OLDER READING

On an individual level, 93% of the 4th-7th grade students improved their reading level, with 7% maintaining their reading level. No students ended the program with a lower level than prior to the program. 30% of students even increased their reading level by two or three grades in only four weeks.

GRADES 4-7 IMPROVEMENT BREAKDOWN			
MAINTAINED READING LEVEL		IMPROVED READING LEVEL	
6.97%		93.02%	
Maintained Reading Grade Level	One Grade Level Improvement	Two Grade Level Improvement	Three Grade Levels Improvement
6.97%	62.79%	20.93%	9.30%





Outdoor reading with older student

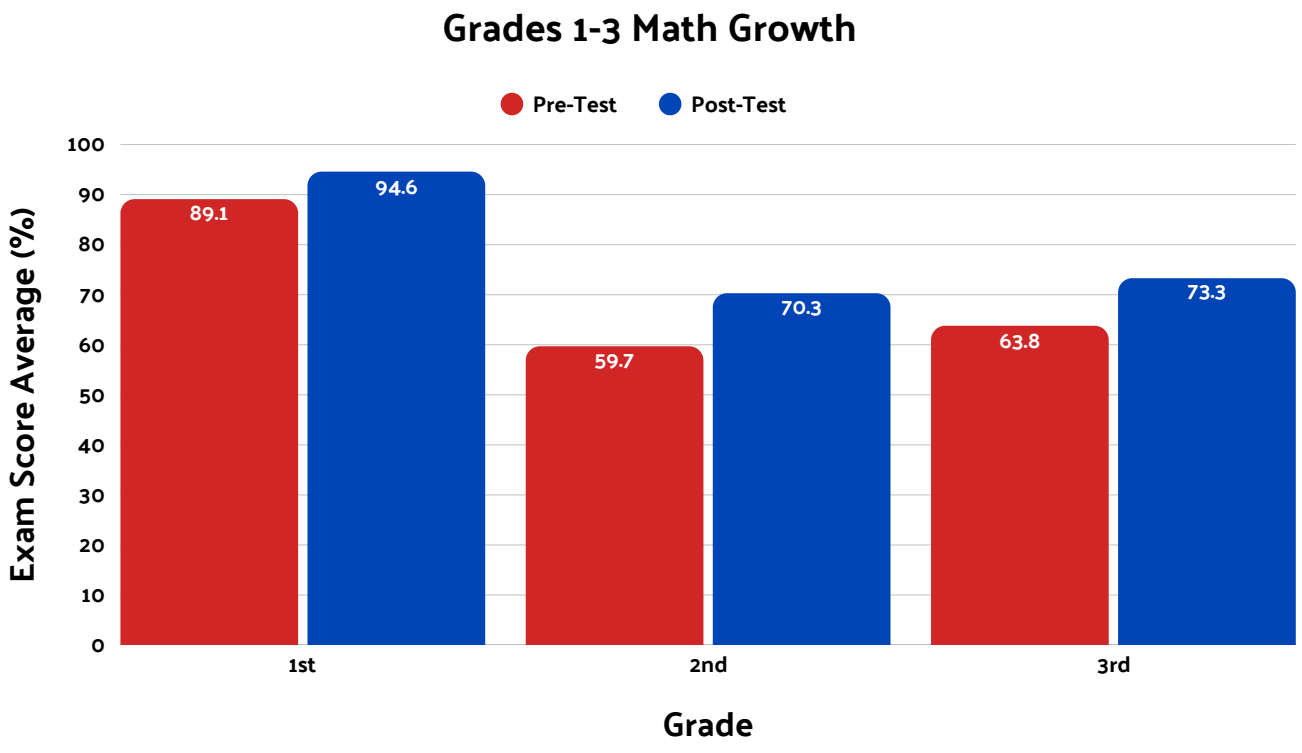
ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS - YOUNGER MATH

1ST-3RD GRADE MATH RESULTS

Though less dramatic of an increase compared to the older group, the younger grades still showed positive growth. The curriculum was focused on reviewing past material so students are prepared for the school year to come. The decreased scores were from students who scored highly to begin with and made marginal mistakes during the final exam.

OVERALL, SCORES IMPROVED BY AN AVERAGE OF 8.5%

1-3RD GRADE MATH PRE/POST TEST SCORE OUTCOMES (42 STUDENTS)	
IMPROVED	81%
MAINTAINED	11.9%
DECREASED	7.1%



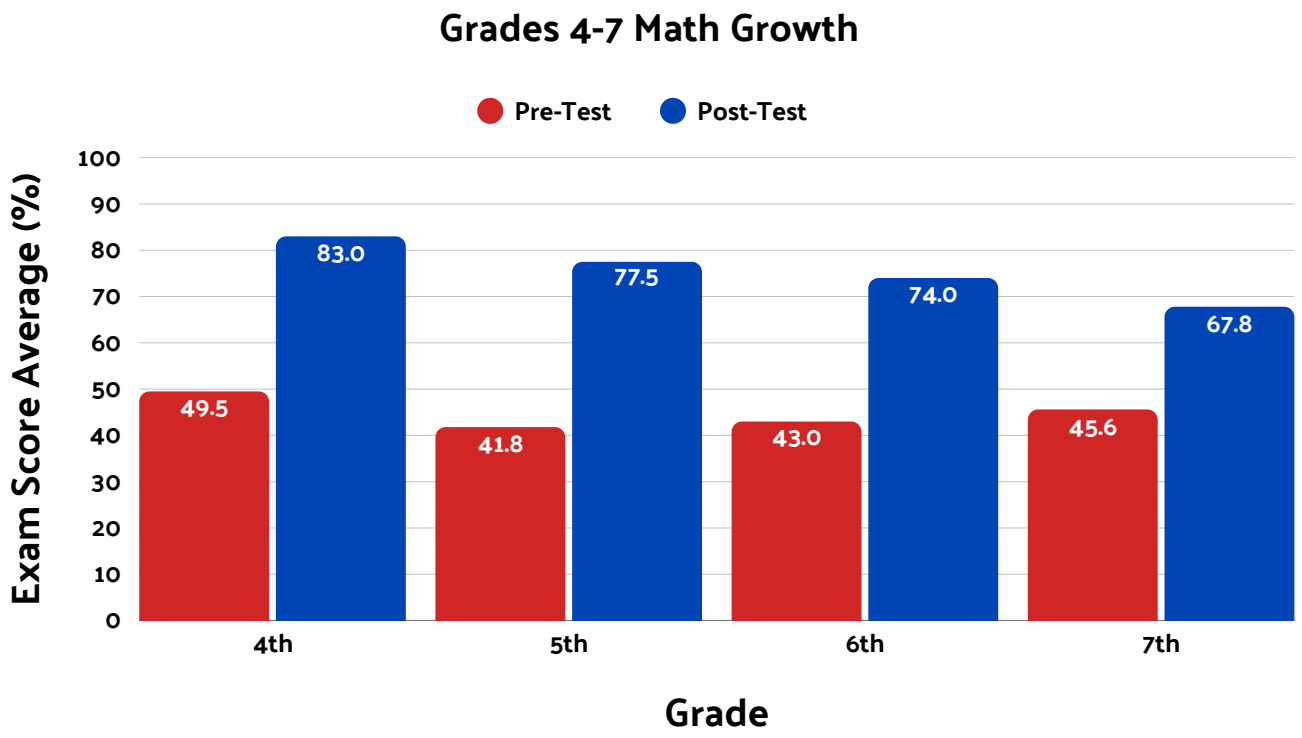
ACADEMIC CLASSES & RESULTS - OLDER MATH

4TH-7TH GRADE MATH RESULTS

Our older students saw significant growth in math over a 4 week period, with 95% of students improving their scores. Under the tutelage of Michael Bachler, who has been with Summer Learning since the beginning, students find a safe and encouraging environment to learn.

OVERALL, SCORES IMPROVED BY AN AVERAGE OF 30.6%

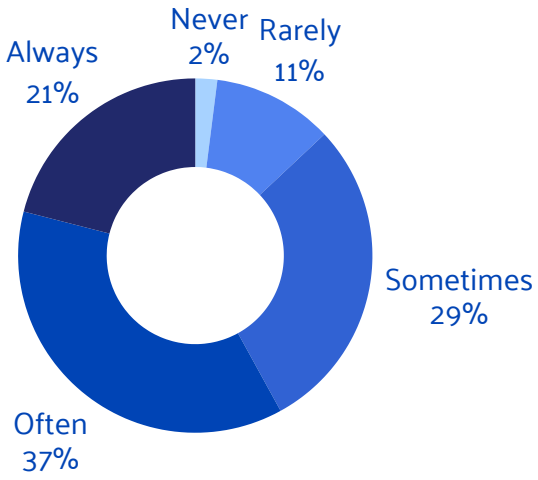
4-7TH GRADE MATH PRE/POST TEST SCORE OUTCOMES (40 STUDENTS)	
IMPROVED	95%
MAINTAINED	-
DECREASED	4.8%



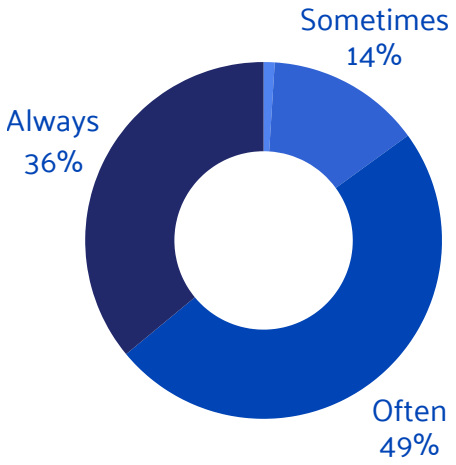
PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMENTS

Parents were given a survey at the end of Summer Learning to receive feedback and share their perception of their children's growth.

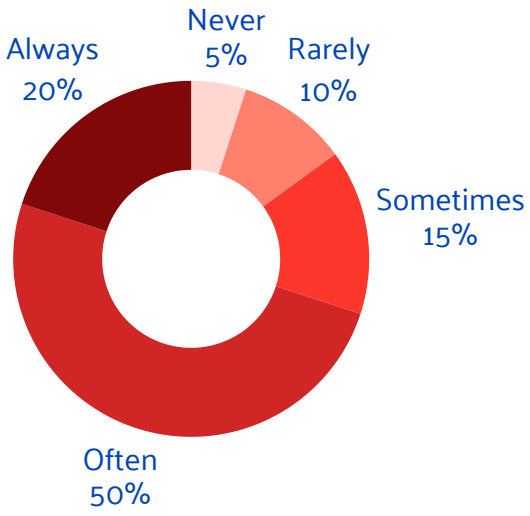
How often did your child eagerly engage in reading activities before participating in the Summer Learning Program?



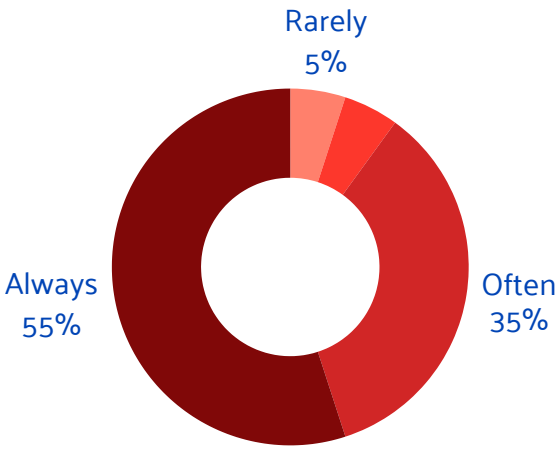
How often did your child eagerly engage in reading activities after participating in the Summer Learning Program?



How often did your child eagerly engage in math activities before participating in the Summer Learning Program?



How often did your child eagerly engage in math activities after participating in the Summer Learning Program?



PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMENTS

WHAT NEW STRATEGIES OR SKILLS HAVE YOU NOTICED YOUR CHILD USING TO HANDLE THEIR EMOTIONS SINCE HE (SHE) HAS TAKEN THE CLASS?

"She is more comfortable telling me about her feelings."

"We sit down to talk it through before things go too far."

"Patience."

"She seems more engaged and interested and her communication skills have improved."

WHAT NEW STRATEGIES OR SKILLS HAVE YOU NOTICED YOUR CHILD USING STEM KNOWLEDGE SINCE HE (SHE) HAS TAKEN THE CLASS?

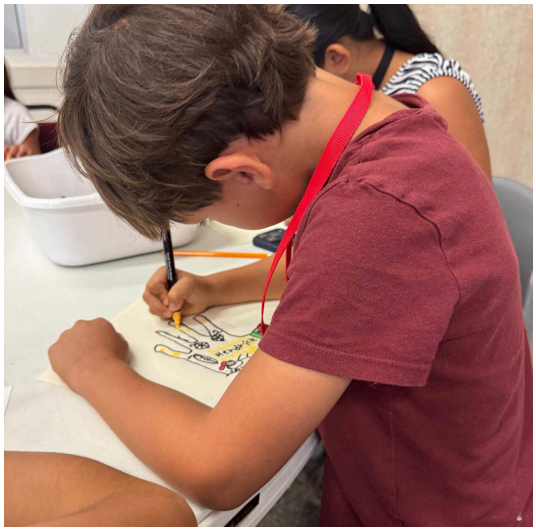
"She has been getting excited about launching/creating things."

"Overall more curious about things."

"They started seeing things more different than before."



Launching of bottle rockets



Making an "identity" handprint

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMENTS

"A very nice atmosphere. The kids talked a lot about their teachers (thanks to the teachers who dedicated their time). Good organization of the field trips."

"The reading approach that helps children understand the importance of reading habits is great. The safe space allows the children to feel socially accepted. Field trips really motivate the children to give their best in the other activities."

"They help foster independence and responsibility, and ensure continuity in reading and math practice during the vacation."

"Encouraging daily reading helps children expand their vocabulary. Teaching respect for classmates and teachers is a great way to show respect for others. I love that this is an important value within the program."

"My son made friends. He shed some of his shyness. He learned and had fun. He began to love reading and math more."

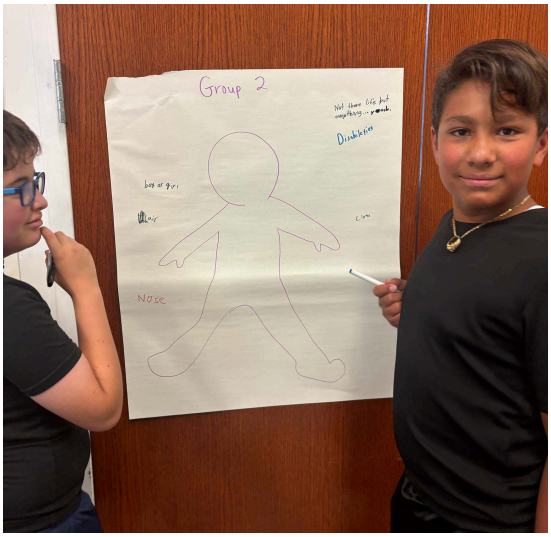
SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CLASS

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CLASS

A favorite of the students, Social & Emotional Class helps children develop in aspects beyond academics. Teaching kids to recognize their emotions and how to healthily deal with them is important in their development. Many parents commented on their kids increased respect, ability to manage emotions, and build social connections.
The class is an interactive, creative, discussion-based class. It helps all students get engaged and connected with each other, putting into practices the principles they are learning.

THE CLASS COVERED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Sharing feelings
- Listening versus hearing
- Self-identity and self-love
- Focusing of what we can control instead of what we cannot
- Conflict resolution
- Empathy and caring for others
- Expressing ourselves when something bothers us
- How to resist peer pressure



Students showing their self-identity diagram

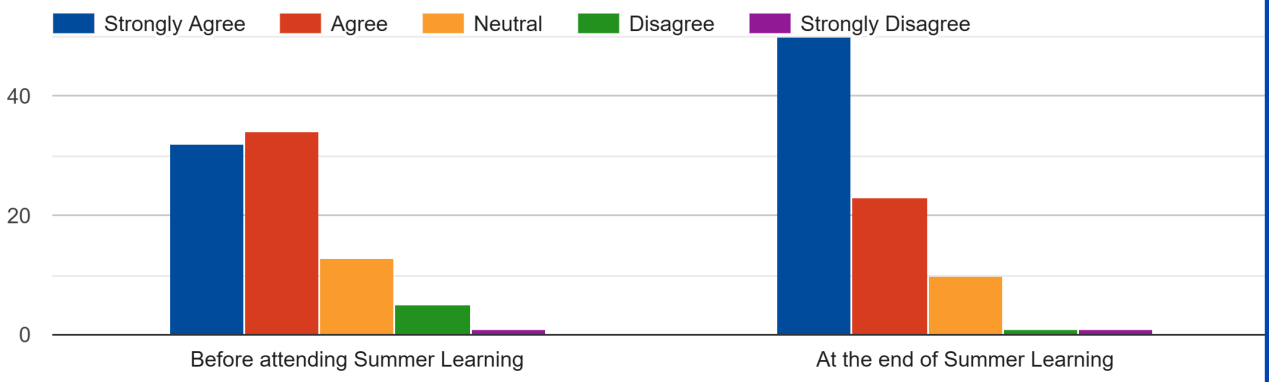

Younger kids playing the game “knock-knock, who am I?”


Kids pointing out their handprint they drew

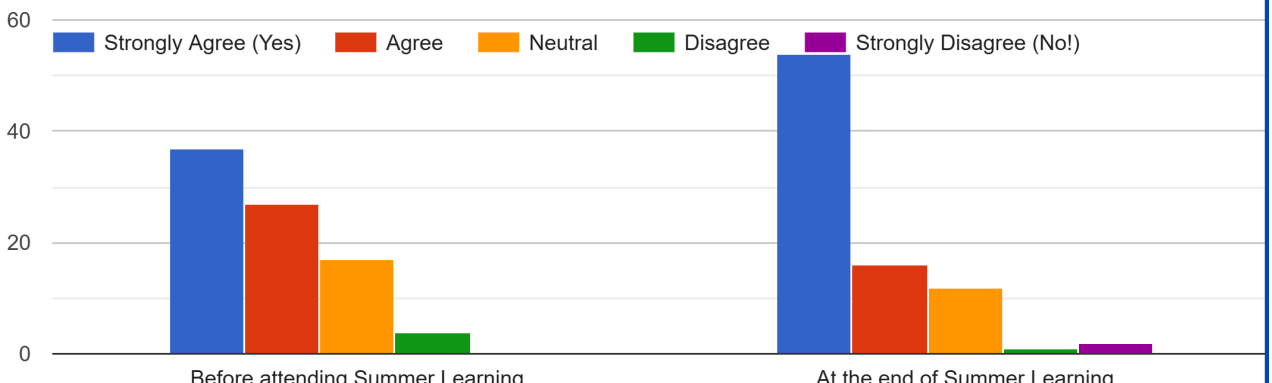
SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CLASS

Each child was given a survey at the beginning and the end of the Social & Emotional class to measure their self-confidence, emotional management, and belonging. We have included some highlights from the results.

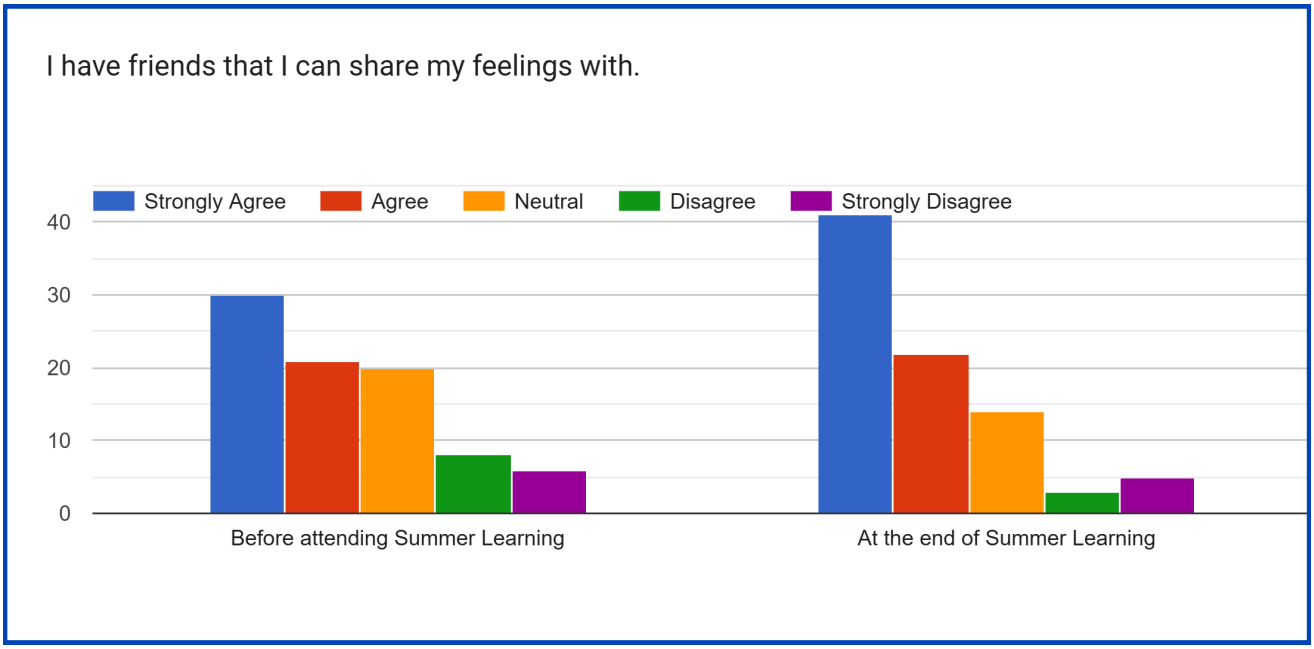
I know what to do to make myself feel better when I am upset.



I like myself.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CLASS



WHAT DID STUDENTS LEARN THIS SUMMER IN SOCIAL CLASS?

"I practiced my English. I learned how to manage my emotions."

"I learned what it's like to have a community that I can be myself in and learned how to fill that bad emptiness in my heart with everything going on in my life. And learned if I ever need someone to go to that this is one of the places i can go to and would always love to come back."

"That you can be your self and no one will judge you."

"If you are sad someone is by your side."

"I have learned that it is ok to feel sad or any emotions. And I have also learned, how to be a good friend, how to communicate better, and how to deesclate arguments."

"Learning from mistakes."

"That it is important to talk with others."

"That everyone is amazing in there own way."

STEM CLASS

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING LEARNING:

STEM classes consisted of interactive activities that got students building and creating. They were developed by our AmeriCorps VISTA's through the month of June and taught by them throughout the program.

Each week had a different focus to explore several aspects of STEM. One focus for the entire week allowed students to build up knowledge and apply it with different experiments each day.

- Week 1: Natural Sciences
- Week 2: Flight & Aviation
- Week 3: Coding
- Week 4: Physics



Egg drop experiment



Bottle rocket activity



Younger kids showing off their balloon rocket



Face of concentration during a building session

FIELD TRIPS

Students went on a field trip each Friday encouraging a sense of community connection.

Week 1: Thanksgiving Point - Museum of Ancient Life Students got to explore the museum in small groups, learning about ancient species, dinosaurs, and how the earth has changed throughout time. They also got to enjoy interactive play with the museum's water table.

Week 2: Carnival
Students and their families enjoyed a carnival celebrating summer. The event featured games, food, prizes, a bounce house, a petting zoo, and more. Supported and funded by staff and students from Noorda College of Medicine, the carnival saw over 400 attendees and included various food and game stations.

Week 3: Holiday
We had one less fieldtrip than normal this year because the state holiday Pioneer Day (July 24th) fell on a Friday.

Week 4: Kids Play International
This year we partnered with Kids Play International, another non-profit founded by Utah Olympians. Students from all three Summer Learning Programs (South Franklin, American Fork, and Payson) went to Greenwood Elementary where they learned about healthy play, good sportsmanship, and positive mental health through various outdoor activities.



Older students taking a break at Thanksgiving Point



Students playing in the sand at Thanksgiving Point



Celebrating a win playing cornhole



Cooling off after a day of play with Kids Play International

TEEN MENTOR PROGRAM

TEEN MENTORS

This was the second official year of the South Franklin Summer Learning Teen Mentor Program, which began informally when former Summer Learning students started returning as volunteers to help with social class. These students wanted to give back to the program that had been meaningful in their own lives.

Thanks to funding from the Sorensen Grant, the program became official under the direction of our social teacher, Aly Leavitt. This year, 14 former Summer Learning students ages 14–18 volunteered as Teen Mentors. They attended daily, assisted in classes, built relationships with younger students, and helped with projects to improve the program.

The Teen Mentor Program provides valuable support to Summer Learning while giving mentors opportunities to develop leadership, responsibility, and service skills. Each Wednesday, mentors met with community professionals to learn about careers, overcoming challenges, and pathways to success. This year, they heard from a social worker serving an Indigenous community, met with our Senior Community Center Director, and visited Provo City Hall to meet with Mayor Marsha Judkins.



Teen Mentors helping out at the Summer Carnival



Teen Mentors visit with Provo Mayor, Marsha Judkins



A teen mentor playing with a younger kid

TEEN MENTOR PROGRAM

TEEN MENTOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

The Teen Mentor Program is creating a lasting impact not only on the younger students in Summer Learning, but also on the mentors themselves. Former Summer Learning participants are returning as role models, demonstrating to younger students that their experiences at the center can be the beginning of a path toward leadership, education, and future success.

STUDENT SL EXPERIENCE VIDEO

Our mentors have continued to achieve remarkable academic and personal success. Emeraude, who recently completed her junior year of high school, has already been offered a place at the University of Colorado Boulder to study Astrophysics. Gabriela, one of the students who helped establish the Teen Mentor Program, received a scholarship awarded to only 12 students nationwide in recognition of her work and service at South Franklin Community Center.

TEEN MENTOR EXPERIENCE VIDEO

Their accomplishments demonstrate the power of creating opportunities for young people to serve, lead, and give back. As mentors grow in confidence and leadership, they also become positive examples for the younger children in Summer Learning–showing them what is possible when they continue to learn, serve, and invest in their community.



Students, teen mentors, and teachers supporting STEM projects made by the students

2026 SUCCESS STORIES

We are continually inspired by the growth, confidence, and friendship that flourishing during the program. Here are a few stand-out stories.

NEW KID TO STAR STUDENT

Brennan was new to the neighborhood when he first came to the center for Ping Pong Club. We invited him to join Summer Learning. Over the course of the program, Brennan grew more confident and developed strong friendships. He consistently showed kindness and respect towards everybody. His reading improved by two grade levels, and his math score increased by 25%. At the end of the summer, Brennan received the Student of the Summer Award in recognition of his positive attitude and dedication.



Brennan enjoying the petting zoo at the Summer Carnival



A student eating popsicles during lunch

FINDING A SAFE PLACE

When Dylan first arrived, he was uncomfortable participating and even attempted to leave the program. With patience, and consistent support from teachers and staff, Dylan gradually began to feel safe and connected. By the end of summer, he was excited to come to Summer Learning, interacted positively with teachers and classmates, an fully participated in activities. Dylan's journey is a powerful reminder that sometimes the most meaningful growth is not measured by a test, but by a child who learns trust, and feels that he belongs.



Dylan participating in math class

2026 SUCCESS STORIES

SUMMER LEARNING LEGACY

Alana participated in the Summer Learning Program for years as a kid. When she aged out, she decided she didn't want to leave, and became one of the first un-official teen mentors, sparking the creation of the program. She has been a mentor for four years, and just graduated high school. Typically the teen mentors attend one of the two sessions everyday. Alana stayed for both session everyday, taking the role of a student aide with our 5th grade group. Her care and mentorship for the students was highly impactful. She has been accepted to the University of Utah on a full-ride scholarship to study Pre-Med. Alana is a great example of the long-term benefits of participating in Summer Learning.



Alana posing with students' art projects



A student celebrating her birthday with the class

CONFIDENCE IN ENGLISH

The majority of our students speak English as a second language. Though some are fluent, many are still mastering it. Valeria is one of those students. She just finished 4th grade and began the summer at a 3rd grade reading level, only achieving 50% comprehension of what she read. With the support and care of her reading teacher, Gary, she jumped up to a 4th grade level, and her comprehension improved to 80%. She absolutely loved the Magic Treehouse books. She is now much better prepared to begin the next school year on a more level playing-field with her English-speaking peers.



Valeria shows off her book with SL Coordinator

2026 SUCCESS SUMMARY

The 2026 Summer Learning Program provided 100 students with a safe, engaging environment where they strengthened academic skills, built meaningful friendships, and gained confidence for the coming school year. Through small-group reading and math instruction, hands-on STEM activities, social and emotional learning, field trips, and mentoring opportunities, students experienced growth both inside and outside the classroom. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our donors, community partners, and dedicated staff.

Students made encouraging academic gains across all grade levels, with older students increasing their reading level by nearly one full grade on average, 93% improving their reading level, and 95% improving their math scores. Parents also reported increased enthusiasm for reading, stronger emotional skills, and greater confidence. Beyond academics, the Summer Carnival welcomed more than 400 community members, the Teen Mentor Program continued to develop future leaders, and stories like Brennan, Dylan, Valeria, and Alana demonstrate the lasting impact Summer Learning has on children, families, and the community.



Smiling during recess time


Two friends at recess


A student going down a slide at the park

2026 SUCCESS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Reading Logs:** This was the first year we introduced reading logs to the program. Students were encouraged to read 30 minutes a day at home, and those who completed it received a prize. 78% of the kids participated and they were more engaged and excited about their reading. Parents also saw a difference in their childrens' love for reading.

- **Carnival:** Now a tradition at South Franklin, the Summer Carnival was a huge success! Thanks to the help and support of Noorda Medical school, we welcomed 400+ visitors from the neighborhood and all three Summer Learning Programs hosted by United Way Community Centers.

- **Student Behavior:** The South Franklin summer learning students are very well-behaved. They continually show kindness and respect to their peers and teachers. We are so grateful for their dedication and enthusiasm they bring to the program!



Happy faces before the STEM class


Students in a doughnut eating competition

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUMMER LEARNING 2027

- Parents and staff recommended we offer a longer recess (previously two breaks of 10 minutes) to give students the break they need.
- Because many students participate in the program for several years, they have had many repeat STEM activities. Several suggestions have been made about adjusting the STEM curriculum to be more diversified for different age groups and introducing new activities every year.
- Both parents and staff have suggested introducing more diverse classes such as art, music, theater, building, etc. This could be introduced during the time we now do STEM, either having different rotation options for students or having that class be a different subject each day of the week.
- The Kids Play International fieldtrip was a fun event, but was not the best fit for this program due to the number of students and the hot weather during this time of year.
- Some parents requested healthier food to be offered to the students for snack and lunch.
- Some parents suggested higher parent involvement including during field trips and other parent-engaged activities.



SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM 2026 CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks to our funders and partners for this year's summer learning program!

NU SKIN

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

RBM BUILDING SERVICES

SORENSON LEGACY FOUNDATION

LARRY H. & GAIL MILLER FAMILY FOUNDATION

UNITED WAY
Utah County

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