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An Evaluation of a School District's Summer Library Program Designed to Prevent Summer Reading Loss

Crystal Cizmar

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements of

Doctor of Education

National Louis University

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An Evaluation of a School District's Summer Library Program Designed to Prevent Summer Reading Loss

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this evaluation was to study the impact a school district's summer library program had on summer reading loss. This study was conducted to analyze the design of the program and to determine what effect the program had on participants' reading assessment scores as compared from spring (pre) to fall (post). Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated the program was beneficial to students, parents, teachers, and school librarians. The findings show there is potential to use the summer library program to increase reading assessment scores; however, multiple doses of the program are necessary to achieve results. The findings also show school library programs must be intentionally integrated into the culture of a school district during the school year in order for a summer library program to succeed. A comprehensive change leadership plan for school library program advocacy and summer library program policy have been developed as a result of this study. Findings from this evaluation could also serve as a road map or lessons learned for school districts across the nation when implementing a summer library program.

PREFACE

As a former school librarian, I am an advocate for school library programs. I believe researching the effects of summer library programs will inform possible ways to meet community and district needs. Elementary literacy is common district-wide focus for school districts, and I believe school library programs have a positive impact on elementary literacy. I wanted to study whether school library programs were a critical component of elementary literacy, specifically during the summer months. I believe in the benefits certified library media specialists provide to student academic achievement. Specifically, I believe school library media specialists play a vital role in reading achievement and I advocate for hiring certified library media specialists to administer school library programs. My purpose for conducting this evaluation was also for school library program policy advocacy.

In June 2018, I was the coordinator for Library Media Services in the local public school district. I oversaw school library programs in the school district and was tasked with implementing a summer library program. I had a professional responsibility to study the possible relationship between students' participation in the summer library program and reading achievement and report findings to my district and the community. I hoped findings from this evaluation could also serve as a road map or lessons learned for school districts across the nation when implementing a district summer library program.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my husband, Andrew, your love, support, and encouragement remind me every day why I am the luckiest woman in the world. I love you and I thank you. To my children, Nicholas and Abigail, remember anything is possible and all of your dreams really can come true.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iv
PREFACE v
DEDICATION vi
LIST OF FIGURES x

CHAPTER ONE 1
Introduction 1
Purpose of the Program Evaluation 1
Rationale 3
Goals 4
Definition of Terms 5
Research Questions 7
Conclusion 7

CHAPTER TWO 9
Literature Review 9
Summer Reading Loss Research 10
Effective Summer Reading Program Practices and Activities 12
Free Voluntary Reading 12
Instruction and Booktalks 14
Technology Integration 17
Partnerships Supporting Student Reading Achievement 18
Parents as Partners 18
Public Library Collaboration 19
Partnering with Organizations and Businesses 20
Role of School Library Programs in Preventing Summer Reading Loss 21
Conclusion 22

CHAPTER THREE 24
Methodology 24
Research Design Overview 24
Participants 26
Data Gathering Techniques 27
Surveys 28
Interviews 28
Data Analysis Techniques 28
Ethical Considerations 30
Limitations 31
Conclusion 32

CHAPTER FOUR 33
Results 33
Findings 33
Contexts 50
Culture 52
Conditions 53
Competencies 54
Interpretation 55
Judgments 58
Recommendations 60
Conclusion 62

CHAPTER FIVE 64
To-Be Framework 64
Envisioning the Success To-Be 64
Future Contexts 65
Future Culture 66
Future Conditions 70
Future Competencies 71
Conclusion 73

CHAPTER SIX 74
Strategies and Actions 74
Strategy and Action 74
Create a Sense of Urgency 75
Build a Guiding Coalition 77
Form Strategic Vision and Initiatives 78
Enlist Volunteers 79
Remove Barriers 80
Generate Short-Term Wins 82
Sustain Acceleration 83
Institute Change 85
Conclusion 86

CHAPTER SEVEN 88
Implications and Policy Recommendations 88
Policy Statement 88
Analysis of Needs 90
Educational Analysis 90
Economic Analysis 91
Social Analysis 92
Political Analysis 94
Legal Analysis 95
Moral and Ethical Analysis 96
Implications for Staff and Community Relationships 97
Conclusion 98

CHAPTER EIGHT 99
Conclusion 99
Discussion 99
Leadership Lessons 103
Conclusion 104
References 105

Appendices 116
Appendix A: Summer Library Program Sign In Sheet 117
Appendix B: Survey Questions for Parents 118
Appendix C: Interview Questions for Library Media Specialists 119
Appendix D: Propensity Score Matching in R 120
Appendix E: As-Is Diagnostic Chart 123
Appendix F: To-Be Organizational Chart 124
Appendix G: Strategies and Action Chart 125

TABLES

Table 1. Final Treatment Group Spring to Fall 2018 i-Ready Scores Comparison with Demographics 33
Table 2. Final Control Group Spring to Fall 2018 i-Ready Scores Comparison with Demographics 35
Table 3. Independent Samples t-Test for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average Spring i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score 37
Table 4. Independent Samples t-Test for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score Points Gained or Lost 38
Table 5. Number of Students per Grade for the Treatment and Control Groups 39
Table 6. Independent Samples t-Tests for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score Points Gained or Lost by Grade 39
Table 7. Paired Samples t-Test for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores 40
Table 8. Paired Samples t-Tests for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores by Grade 41
Table 9. Paired Samples t-Tests for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores by Number of Visits 41
Table 10. Treatment Students' Demographics by Total Number of Visits 43
Table 11. Multiple Linear Regression of Grade and Number of Visits 44
Table 12. Descriptions and Examples of Selective Codes 45
Table 13. Descriptions and Examples of Categories 48

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The public school year in the southeast typically runs from August to May. Students have access to school library collections throughout the school year. Elementary students may self-select print reading material from school library collections for at-home reading practice. However, school library programs are traditionally closed during the summer months of June and July, when school is not in session. When schools close for the summer, library collections sit idle.

In 2018, a mid-sized public school district in the southeastern United States implemented an elementary summer library program during the months of June and July. The school district's summer library program was funded by a special tax referendum passed by the local community to support library media programs. Core to the district's mission is developing successful students every day. The district's need to have students successful in reading during the summer months was a key factor in the development of the summer library program. In this paper, I will evaluate the school district's summer library program designed to prevent summer reading loss.

Purpose of the Program Evaluation

The purpose of my study is to evaluate the impact a school district's elementary summer library program has on participating students' reading achievement and in preventing summer reading loss. The reading achievement gap grows at a faster rate during the summer months between students with the economic means to acquire and read books at home and those without such means (Allington et al., 2010). The ability to travel to a library or purchase books at stores are factors that play roles in a student's

summer access to reading materials. Further, evidence suggests limited access to books in the homes of low-income families is a major cause of summer reading loss (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015). Summer reading loss is the idea that during the summer months, students regress or lose ground in reading skills as measured by their end of year reading test scores and beginning of the new school year reading scores. In an attempt to combat summer reading loss and promote summer reading, the school district launched a summer library program in June 2018. The summer library program's effectiveness is the focus of my evaluation.

The aforementioned summer library program consisted of opening nine elementary school libraries across the school district for seven days during the summer to provide access to checking out books, story time facilitated by a certified library media specialist, and guided activities aligned to the story time selection. Sites were opened once a week in June and July. The school district hired certified library media specialists to run each summer library program. The school district also provided scripted programming, activities, and consumable supplies to all sites. Parents and students accessed library collections and participated in activities according to a published weekly schedule of events. Further, the school district advertised the weekly schedule of events though multiple local media channels.

I want to study the impact the summer library program has on the reading skills of participating students. Elementary students must read proficiently to succeed academically as reading is tied to all subjects and curriculums. Teachers, parents, students, and community members have vested interests in seeing the summer library program increase literacy skills for elementary students. I want to review the summer

library program to gain a deeper understanding of what occurred during the summer 2018 implementation and to assess the program's effectiveness. I want to learn from the evaluation so that I may use findings in future implementations of the program. I seek to determine whether the program is beneficial to students so that I may make recommendations to the school district regarding policies and procedures of the program. If my evaluation demonstrates that the program is beneficial to students, then I will use my findings to advocate for future funding to continue the program.

Rationale

As a former school librarian, I am an advocate for library programs. I believe researching the effects of summer library programs will inform possible ways to meet community and district needs. I believe school library programs have a positive impact on elementary literacy. Elementary literacy is a district-wide focus for my school district. I want to study whether school library programs are a critical component of elementary literacy, specifically during the summer months.

In June 2018, I was the coordinator for Library Media Services in the local public school district. I oversaw school library programs in the school district and was tasked with implementing the summer library program. I had a professional responsibility to study the possible relationship between students' participation in the summer library program and reading achievement and report findings to my district and the community. Findings from this evaluation could also serve as a road map or lessons learned for school districts across the nation when implementing a district summer library program.

I am also a parent of elementary aged children in the school district. As a parent, I try to find activities during the summer months in which my young children may

participate. I want to know if participation in a school-based summer library program could also impact my children's reading achievement. The results of this evaluation could affect my future decisions about summer activities for my children.

The local community voted for a special tax referendum to support literacy and school library programs. Passage of the referendum was affirmation of support for library programs, including summer library programs. Awareness of the program's impact on student achievement allows the community to make informed decisions regarding future continuation of the program and passage of future tax referendums. Additionally, the summer library program needs school board approval to continue in future years. The school board is more likely to support programs with community support and a research base.

Goals

Previous studies have shown access to books during the summer contributes to student reading achievement (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015; Petty, Smith, & Kern, 2017). Further, access to books is a significant predictor of student reading test performance (Krashen, Lee, & McQuillan, 2012). The main goal of my evaluation is to study the impact participation in the summer library program, independent of participation in another summer program such as the summer school reading camp, has on student reading achievement. My program evaluation begins with a review of the program for the purpose of informing future implementations. I want to evaluate the effectiveness of the district's attempt to provide books to elementary students over the summer months to increase reading skills with scripted activities. One intended goal of the program evaluation is to determine whether there is a relationship between summer

library program participation and individual reading gains. Another intended goal of the program evaluation is to study and raise awareness of school library programs and their relationship to student literacy achievement.

I also want to evaluate the return on investment (ROI) for the tax referendum funds used for the summer library program. Return on investment is the measure of a positive result minus what is spent to achieve it (Stouffer, 2015). ROI can be used as an advocacy tool by telling users about the value gained from services provided by the library which may influence attitudes toward the library (Kelly, Hamasu & Jones, 2012). I want to provide the community and the school board with information about the impact the funds allocated for summer libraries have on student reading achievement. I will share the results of the evaluation with all stakeholders, including school board members. My goal is to provide information to help others better understand the summer library program. Additional funding may be secured as a result of the program evaluation.

Definition of Terms

- *Booktalk* is an oral introduction or a sales pitch for a book or a group of books by a librarian (Whittingham & Rickman, 2015).
- *Circulation* is a library term used to describe checking out library materials to students, renewing the borrowed items, and checking in materials that are returned (Haider, 2015).
- *Destiny Library Manager* is a library management system which tracks library inventory and assets as well as allows the circulation of materials (Follett, 2019).
- *i-Ready* is an adaptive assessment for reading which pinpoints students' strengths and knowledge gaps at the sub-skill level for reading. Sublevels include

phonological awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, vocabulary, literature comprehension, and informational text comprehension (Curriculum Associates, 2019).

- *Library Media Specialist* is a term synonymous with *School Librarian* and is defined as a person who works with students and teachers to facilitate access to information in a wide variety of formats, instructs how to acquire, evaluate and use information and the technology needed in this process, and introduces children and young adults to literature and other resources to broaden their horizons (American Association of School Librarians, 2019).
- *Makerspace* is a term used to describe collaborative workspaces stocked with materials and tools for creating, building, designing, and learning. Makerspaces in the school library allow for connections between making and literacy. Students use children's literature as part of the design process, particularly in the problem-scoping stage (Blakemore, 2018).
- *Propensity score matching* is an analysis technique that can reduce selection bias and approximate a randomized sample and allows actual matching of the treated group to the non-treated groups in such a way that the students are equivalent on the observed covariates included in the propensity score (Belfi, Haelermans & De Fraine, 2016).
- *Read-aloud* is a library term which means "reading aloud" and is the act or strategy of a librarian or teacher reading a book or story to a group of students (Burkins, 2019).
- *Return on Investment* is measurement to establish credibility, accountability, and

evidence demonstrating a library's value; it is the measure of a positive result minus what is spent to achieve it (Stouffer, 2015; Kelly et al., 2012)

- *Summer Reading Loss* is the phenomenon of students losing literacy skills for a variety of reasons during the summer months (Petty et al., 2017).

Research Questions

My primary research questions are:

- To what extent do students who participate in the summer library program experience summer learning loss in reading achievement?
- Do students who participate in the summer library program have higher reading i-Ready assessment scores in the fall compared to classroom peers who do not participate?

My related research questions are:

- Does the level of participation in the summer library program predict higher levels of reading performance for students?
- What are the participants' attitudes toward the summer library program?

Conclusion

I am reviewing the summer library program to gain a deeper understanding of what occurred during a school district's implementation of a summer library program and to assess the program's effectiveness. I want to learn from the evaluation so I may inform next year's implementation. I will evaluate the return on investment for the special tax referendum funding the program. The rationale for library programming resources should be linked to a tangible return on investment (Stouffer, 2015). In my past experience with library funding in the school district, the school board was more likely to continue a

program when evidence supported a positive effect for students. If my evaluation demonstrates the program is beneficial to students, I will use my findings to advocate for future funding to continue the program.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Summer reading loss, also referred to as "summer slide" and "summer setback," is the reading achievement loss experienced by students during the summer months when school is not in session. While on summer vacation, some students, especially disadvantaged students, lose literacy skills for a variety of reasons (Petty et al., 2017). In a classic meta-analysis of 39 studies, Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, and Greathouse (1996) found reading achievement test scores declined over summer vacation and on average the summer loss created a 3-month gap between middle and low income students (p. 257). Alexander, Entwisle and Olson (2007) found disadvantaged elementary students are especially vulnerable to reading achievement loss during the summer months and they "essentially tread water: they gain a few points some summers and lose a few in others, a pattern called "summer slide." (p. 19). Allington et al. (2010) found "summer setback" occurs when "the reading achievement of economically disadvantaged students slides back a few months every summer" (p. 412) when compared to more advantaged counterparts. The reading achievement gap resulting from summer vacation widens over time and has long-term consequences (Alexander et al., 2007; Jesson, McNaughton, & Kolose, 2014).

School districts and public library systems offer summer reading programs in an effort to stem the effects of summer reading loss. I am examining the research surrounding summer reading loss, partnerships supporting summer reading achievement, characteristics of effective summer reading programs, and the role public school library programs play in reducing summer reading loss. I used the EBSCOhost research

platform, SAGE journal access, and ProQuest Dissertation and Theses databases to locate peer-reviewed academic journals and literature in the fields of education and library science available through the library database collection of National Louis University. I also used books written by researchers in the fields of education and library science.

Summer Reading Loss Research

Heyns (1978) compared school year and summer achievement gains in her classic 1978 *Summer Learning and the Effects of Schooling* study of middle school students in Atlanta, Georgia. Heyns (1978) concluded reading activity was consistently correlated to summer learning and summer achievement gains. Heyns (1978) also identified achievement gaps among students during the summer months and noted gaps were more evident when disaggregated based on race and socioeconomic status. The act of reading contributed to reducing summer reading loss and closing the achievement gap (Heyns, 1978, p. 161). Additionally, time spent reading for pleasure, the number of books read, and frequency of library use were factors contributing to higher test scores used to measure reading gains (Heyns, 1978).

Since Heyns' 1978 study, summer reading loss and the reading achievement gap it creates have been documented. Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson (1998) proposed the idea of the "faucet theory" to described the mechanism by which the reading achievement gap created by summer reading loss occurs which states:

> When school is in session, the faucet is turned on for all children, the resources children need are available to everyone, so all children gain. When school is not in session, children whose families are poor stop gaining because for them the faucet is turned off. The resources available to them in the summer are not

sufficient to promote their continued growth. (p. 37)

Alexander et al. (2007) studied the reading achievement gap between better-off and low socioeconomic students (SES) in Baltimore, Maryland for five consecutive school years and four consecutive summers. School year and summer achievement reading gains were compared for 790 students, a randomized sample of the school district, from the beginning of first grade to the end of elementary school. The researchers found an identifiable achievement gap between cumulative summer reading gains for low and better-off SES groups and attributed the gap to resource disparities, noting the first two summers had the largest gain differences (Alexander et al., 2007).

Allington and McGill-Franzen (2015) tested the effects access to summer books had on the phenomenon of summer reading setback. The researchers provided 12 to 15 free self-selected books for three consecutive summers to students and measured performance on the state reading assessment the subsequent fall as compared to the previous spring. The researchers found improvement in reading achievement for students receiving summer books. Students who reported more engagement with voluntary summer reading had higher levels of reading achievement. A key finding of the study revealed the reading gains of students from the most economically disadvantaged families were “twice as large as the average reading achievement gains for the summer book group as a whole” (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015, p. 51).

Roman and Fiore (2010) investigated whether public library summer reading programs closed the reading achievement gap for rising fourth grade students. The researchers looked at students in three states to study the effects of participation in a summer library reading program on summer learning loss and reading achievement

scores. They found students who participated in the summer library reading programs scored higher on reading achievement tests than non-participants at the beginning of fourth grade and did not experience summer reading loss as measured by the pre and post assessment results. Also, parents of students who participated in the program strongly agreed that their children were better prepared for the start of the new school year (Roman & Fiore, 2010, p. 30). Teachers reported students who participated in the program "were more motivated to read, appeared more confident in the classroom, and perceived reading as important" (Roman & Fiore, 2010, p. 30).

Petty et al. (2017) examined the effect a summer literacy experience program had on preventing summer slide. Fourth grade students were provided with six books to take home at the end of the school year, given supporting activities and materials to accompany the summer books, invited to a 2-day summer literacy experience camp, and given a summer newspaper subscription for attending camp. Over half of the students remained on the same reading level or increased a reading level after participating in the program (Petty et al., 2017, p. 52). The researchers concluded the summer literacy experience encouraged students to read over the summer and contributed to the reduction of summer slide.

Effective Summer Reading Program Practices and Activities

Summer reading programs employ a variety of instructional practices and activities to engage and motivate children. Instructional practices such as free voluntary reading, direct instruction, and technology integration within the summer reading program context have been studied by researchers and shown to have positive effects (Krashen, 2018; Smith, 2017; White & Kim, 2008; Whittingham & Rickman, 2015;

Miller & Martin, 2016; Laverick, 2014). Additionally, interactive activities that relate to the books being read engage children and have a lasting impact upon children's learning outcomes and their attitudes toward reading (Copeland & Martin, 2016).

Free voluntary reading. Free voluntary reading is defined as "reading because you want to and what you want" (Krashen, 2016, p. 2). Evidence supports free voluntary reading as a means of stimulating literacy development (Krashen, 2007; Krashen, 2018). Free voluntary reading bridges conversational language and academic language as it makes more challenging texts start to be comprehensible, thanks to the contribution self-selected reading makes to literacy and knowledge (Krashen, 2016, p. 3). Further, voluntary reading keeps students mentally active and curious about the world (Brantley, 2015, p. 24). In a meta-analysis of several studies involving high school and university English as a foreign language (ELL) students and the effect reading for pleasure had on reading comprehension, Krashen (2007) found free reading had a positive effect size and students in the self-selected reading groups outperformed students who did not self-select reading material. Additionally, research shows students who do more self-selected reading acquire "far greater gains in nearly all aspects of literacy, including reading, comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling" (Krashen, 2018, p. 16).

Lin, Shin, and Krashen (2007) studied the effect free reading choice during the summer had on reading achievement. The researchers tracked the number and types of books read for three years, including three consecutive summers. While disaggregation of reading test scores over the 3-year period show negative performance during the school year, summer gains were so strong they were able to make up the academic year losses and more (Lin et al., 2007). The researchers noted free choice of engaging fiction series

was key to summer gains (Lin et al., 2007). The act of reading approximately 50 self-selected books each summer directly correlated to the reading gains (Lin et al., 2007). Students' self-reported reading interests are essential to reading engagement. Lu (2009) examined a summer reading program and found the element of free choice to select reading materials important in motivating students to read.

This finding is supported by an Australian study of summer reading, where students unanimously reported that their motivation for reading over the summer was "purely enjoyment" (Jesson et al., 2014, p. 52). Similarly, a Louisiana school district operated a summer library reading program at four schools and reported some students showed 43 relative points growth during the program compared to only 24 points relative growth during the school year (Smith, 2017). Time in the library to self-select books to take home was an important emphasis of the program (Smith, 2017). Free choice impacts student participation levels in a summer reading program because "free choice increases the likelihood that students will take advantage of the rich and diverse books school libraries offer" (Lu, 2009, p. 104). Further, summer reading programs benefit from considering students' interests when implementing a program. If book lists are a part of a summer program, books should reflect students' interests (Lu, 2009).

Instruction and booktalks. Scaffolding, or teacher instruction, as a part of a voluntary summer reading program, has a significant effect on reading achievement. Such supportive mechanisms are necessary to ensure students build fluency, comprehension, and basic decoding skills as a part of a summer reading program (White & Kim, 2008, p. 117). "Giving students books without any form of scaffolding does not produce positive effects" (p. 124) as cited by White and Kim (2008) in their

consideration of the effect teacher instruction, as a part of a voluntary summer reading program, on student summer reading achievement. In a study, where the control group received no books and no instruction, and three treatment groups, White and Kim (2008) concluded students with books and comprehension scaffolding significantly outperformed students in the control group. The three treatment groups included one group with eight books, one group with eight books and comprehension instruction, and one group with eight books, comprehension instruction, and fluency instruction. Additionally, the comprehension group gained 2.5 months of learning growth as measured by the reading assessment (White & Kim, 2008). Instructional strategies including predicting, rereading, asking questions, and summarizing help students gain more out of the books they read during the summer (White & Kim, 2008; McDaniel, S., McLeod, R., Carter, C., & Robinson, C., 2017).

The combination of matching student interests and providing continuous scaffolding, or instruction, is one of the most successful mechanisms for slowing summer reading loss (Whittingham & Rickman, 2015). Whittingham and Rickman (2015) found:

> one very useful tool to address student interest and provide scaffolding is the use of booktalks. Successful booktalking by school librarians can help provide the intrinsic motivation students need to read independently during the months they are out of school. (p. 20)

Small, Arnone, and Bennett (2017) found parents reported the act of librarians introducing their children to books increased their children's reading behaviors and stimulated their curiosity.

Activities and themes. Activities and environment are important to consider

when implementing a summer reading program. Creating a comfortable and welcoming environment contributes to motivating kids to read (Sanchez, 2014). The implementation of the Milwaukee Public Library (MLP) system's outreach program to support summer reading programs in the community through Reading Lounges created an environment conducive to reading for pleasure (Sanchez, 2014). Activities in the Reading Lounge included read-alouds based on student interest and Reader's Theatre. "One of the most popular and effective strategies used in the MLP reading lounges to build student confidence and fluency was Reader's Theatre" (Sanchez, 2014, p 17). Relevant activities, related to the joy of reading, should be used as rewards for summer reading programs (Small et al., 2017). Small et al. (2017) noted book signing parties with a local author and mystery events where students followed clues to discover new books as examples of relevant activities to include in summer reading programs.

Dare to Explore was a summer library program implemented across 55 libraries. Children received guidebooks with adventure themed-based challenges to complete at the 55 different libraries. Morgan (2012) found Dare to Explore improved children's ability to use the library. Central to the success of the program was programming designed for children to have fun, increase their love of books, maintain and improve their reading ability, and continue their relationship with the library (Morgan, 2012). Integrating reading and literacy into activities centered around youth passions allows students to better engage with the material and retain knowledge (Yoke, 2016). Additionally, the program was pitched and marketed as an adventure "to help children feel they were doing something exciting and a little surprising" (Morgan, 2012, p. 194). The summer library program contributed to parents and children voluntarily choosing to continue a

relationship with the library beyond the summer (Morgan, 2012, p. 193).

Camp Read-a-Rama was a summer reading program that used immersion strategies, such as reading and reading aloud combined with sing-alongs, performing arts, outdoor education, and interactive activities that related to the books being read, to engage children and ignite a passion for reading (Copeland & Martin, 2016). Fundamental to the summer programming was allowing children to "live books by connecting everything children did to books and every book with something the children did" (Copeland & Martin, 2016, p. 124). The researchers found improvement in participant's attitudes towards reading was a result of their participation in the summer reading camp (Copeland & Martin, 2016). "Positively impacting children's attitudes toward reading and their interactions with books is a critical step in literacy skill development and improvement" (Copeland & Martin, 2016, p. 112).

Technology integration. Technology is another means for motivating students to read. Today's students live in a world that has been transformed by technology; they are a generation often referred to as "digital natives" because their exposure to electronic resources begins at birth and they are comfortable with today's gadgets (Morgan, 2014, p. 20; Miller & Martin, 2016). Many elementary students are familiar with smartphones and the internet and are comfortable reading in electronic formats (Morgan, 2014, p. 20). "Classroom teachers, parents, and librarians everywhere are aware of the enthusiasm for electronic devices and continue to find ways to teach and inspire literacy with digital devices" (McVicker, 2017, p. 6). Technology-based instruction, as a part of a summer reading program, is effective in improving the proficiency of striving readers (Laverick, 2014). Laverick (2014) found "increased motivation and engagement were two often-

mentioned benefits for using technology" (p. 16) in a summer reading program.

McVicker (2017) examined children's preferences and reading behaviors towards traditional print books and e-books. The researcher surveyed fourth-grade digital native students about whether they viewed reading as academic, recreational, or a combination of both and analyzed the quantitative data results. Students participated in a three-phase experiment where they read a traditional print book for phase one, an e-book for phase two, and self-selected either a print or electronic book for phase three. The researcher found digital native students were more comfortable with reading electronic texts. Over 60% of students chose to read an e-book over a traditional print book when given the choice between formats (McVicker, 2017, p. 6).

Partnerships Supporting Student Reading Achievement

It is important to consider the role the community can play in supporting education (Purniton & Azcoitia, 2016). Partnering with parents and the local community to support student reading achievement can provide additional resources and benefits for school districts. Past partnerships have aided in funding summer reading projects, publicizing summer reading programs, summer book distributions, and providing read-alouds for children (Tucker, Moreillon, Richmond & Lynn (2015).

Parents as partners. Parents are situationally positioned educators during the summer months and can act as powerful agents of change by becoming partners in summer reading programs (Parker & Reid, 2017). Parents have the ability to be a partner to schools through summer reading programs and foster improvements in students' reading during summer vacation (Parker & Reid, 2017). More importantly, parents are instrumental in preventing summer reading loss when they work as agents for change

(Parker & Reid, 2017). Parker and Reid (2017) looked at how a school created a culture of parent engagement for academic achievement during the summer months and the ways parents were empowered as educational partners. The researchers found students who participated in the summer program maintained or increased their reading level during the summer months and attributed some of the successes to parental support. Parents reported the rubrics contained in the activity packets helped them articulate areas where they wanted help for their children (Parker & Reid, 2017, p. 316).

Compton-Lilly, Caloia, Quast, and McCann (2016) investigated what happed to books sent home during the summer as a part of a summer reading program. The researchers focused on how books were utilized and levels of family engagement around reading. The study consisted of visiting participants at home 3-4 times during the course of the summer to interact with parents and students. The researchers found reading and literary interactions "were social events that often involved multiple family members" (p. 61) and siblings of participants often used the books and were present when books were used by the parent and student as a part of the summer program (Compton et al., 2016). Further, parents displayed passion and interest in supporting their children's reading (Compton et al., 2016). Over the course of a summer, "families cultivated a culture of reading and integrated literacy into their daily lives" (Compton et al., 2016, p. 64).

In a study aimed at understanding the ways parents support the reading skills of third grade students at home, Capotosto et al. (2017) found parents employed a variety of strategies to become active participants in the process of developing their students' reading skills, motivations, and habits. Among the most frequently reported activities by parents were: explicitly communicating the value of reading, active listening, asking

questions, and incorporating reading practices into daily routines (Capotosto et al., 2017, p. 7). The researchers found 50% of parents reported joint book reading as an activity they were involved in with their children (Capotosto et al., 2017, p. 8). Additionally, 17% of parents reported relying on school resources for children's reading materials (Capotosto et al., 2017, p. 11), an example of partnerships between schools and parents.

Public library collaboration. When school districts and public library systems collaborate, participation in the summer reading programs increases (McClure, 2014). Conversations between school librarians and public librarians can spark ideas to increase summer reading (Couri, 2015). Public libraries can work with principals, literacy coaches, and teachers to plan summer programming curriculum and identify which students to recruit (Jacobson, 2016). There are measurable effects of partnerships between school and public libraries to provide access to books as Lance and Barney (2016) found in a study between the Nashville public library system and Metro Nashville Public Schools. Economically disadvantaged students reported the highest levels of increasing reading and improving reading skills as a result of the partnership (Lance & Barney, 2016). Additionally, data analysis found statistical positive relationships between program book usage and state test scores (Lance & Barney, 2016).

Partnering with organizations and businesses. Community partnerships add a layer of richness to summer reading programs (O'Malley & Apodaca, 2016). O'Malley and Apodaca (2016) found children who participated in an "offsite community experience" as a part the summer reading program in Maricopa County, showed an increase in reading test scores (p. 30). Offsite community experiences included local museums, science centers, and other civic organizations where students engaged in

hands-on educational activities and received codes which were redeemed for points as a part of the Maricopa County Reads summer reading program (O'Malley & Apodaca, 2016). In Lexington, Kentucky, local retail stores were partners in a summer reading program and served as stops on a reading scavenger hunt (Brewer, 2016). Local parks and recreations department were also another source of partnerships to deliver summer library programming (Witteveen, 2018). An Arkansas school district partnered with local childcare facilities for weekly read-alouds and with organizations such as Kiwanis Club and Daughters of the American Revolution to provide summer access to books (Calvert, 2019).

Role of School Library Programs in Preventing Summer Reading Loss

School library programs support student reading achievement and access to books is a significant predictor of student reading test performance (Krashen et al., 2012). Researchers used statistical analyses to examine the books per student in school libraries, per capita total circulation in public libraries, and fourth grade NAEP scores for 50 states. Access to books in the research question was defined as books per student in school libraries and per capita total circulation in public libraries. Krashen et al. (2012) found access to books contributed to reading achievement on the NAEP and was a strong predictor of a state's performance. Additionally, access to books was a significant predictor of the difference between NAEP reading scores after grade 4 (Krashen et al., 2012).

The quality of school library collections is another consideration for increasing reading achievement. Nielen and Bus (2015) tested the effect enriched school libraries, categorized by a large, modern book collections and more genres, affected reading skills.

The researchers compared grade 4 and grade 5 students at 14 schools with enriched school libraries with grade 4 and grade 5 students from 10 schools without enriched school libraries. Students from schools with enriched libraries scored on average half a standard deviation higher on reading assessments than students with non-enriched libraries (Nielen & Bus, 2015).

School librarians play an important role in increasing student reading achievement. School librarians are literacy leaders who "organize programs that promote and facilitate children's engagement with and motivation toward reading" (McGill-Franzen, Ward, & Cahill, 2016, p. 593). Loertscher (2017) found in a survey of over 2000 teachers:

> Teachers reported that when they taught a learning experience in the classroom alone, about half of the students met or exceeded their expectations. In those same schools, when coteaching happened between teachers and teacher librarians, 70% to 100% of the students met or exceeded both adult's expectations. (p. 44)

Lance and Kachel (2013) found administrators who rated their school librarians as providing excellent inquiry-based learning instruction saw their school's average reading scores exceed administrators who rated their librarian's instruction at lower level and cited the finding as evidence school librarians directly contribute to student reading achievement.

Conclusion

Summer reading programs can stem the effects of summer reading loss. Students who participate in a summer reading program are less likely to experience summer reading loss (Roman & Fiore, 2010). Parents, teachers, administrators, and librarians play

key roles in implementing effective summer reading programs. Summer library usage by students, especially checking out books, predicts summer reading achievement gains (Alexander et al., 2007, p. 26). Providing easy access to self-selected books for summer reading over successive years limits summer reading setback (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015).

Students who report more engagement with voluntary summer reading have higher levels of reading achievement (Allington et al., 2010; Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015). Students who participate in summer reading programs overwhelming report more confidence in their ability to read (Arnone, Small, & Shicheng, 2016). Additionally, parents of students who participate in a summer reading program strongly agree that their children are better prepared for the start of the new school year (Roman & Fiore, 2010). The case for summer reading programs is strong. Summer reading loss is an established phenomenon and "one powerful way schools can help [reading achievement] is to encourage free voluntary reading" (Krashen, 2016, p. 2). My program evaluation will look at how a summer reading program offered through the local school library affects summer reading loss.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This program evaluation considers the impact a school district's summer library program has on student achievement and preventing summer reading loss. I used a mixed-methods design and collected qualitative and quantitative data. In this section, I provide detailed descriptions of how I collected and analyzed my data.

Research Design Overview

Nine school library sites in the district were staffed with certified library media specialists and opened to the public once a week for six hours during June and July 2018. I used a summative evaluation in conjunction with an effectiveness focus and an implementation focus to study the summer library program. The summative evaluation allowed me to describe the overall merit of the program, the effectiveness focus allowed me to provide data to school board members aligned to program goals, and the implementation focus provided insight for future adaptations of the program (Patton, 2008).

I also implemented a mixed-methods design to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected. Mixed-method research is defined as using both quantitative and qualitative measures to compare diverse sources of data pertaining to a specific problem (James, Milenkiewicz, & Bucknam, 2008, p. 60). For my program evaluation, I used quantitative data in the form of sign in sheet information and test scores. My qualitative data included parent survey questions and school library media specialists' interviews. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data sets provided insight into the program's strengths and weaknesses.

An effectiveness focus answers to what extent a program is attaining its goals and how the program can become more effective (Patton, 2008, p. 301). In the summer library program evaluation, the effectiveness focus was important to my research because it provided an opportunity to correlate quantitative data with student achievement results in order to identify whether program goals were being met. I analyzed attendance data from sign in sheets along with student reading test data for my program evaluation. One major goal of the school district's summer library program was to prevent summer reading loss, and the information obtained from the evaluation allowed me to determine the extent the summer library program impacted summer reading loss for participants.

I used an implementation focus (Patton, 2008, p. 303) to determine to what extent the program was implemented as designed and to identify issues affecting the operation. The implementation focus allowed me to consider the role the daily schedule, scripted activities provided by the district, and themes played in the outcomes of the program. The summer library program has the potential to become a recurring program in the school district. My evaluation of the implementation, along with identifying factors to improve upon, is important for future summer iterations. My review of the fidelity with which library media specialists followed the prescribed design of the program provided additional insight into specific elements of the summer library program impacting student achievement.

Summative evaluations aim to answer whether a program should be continued, and if so, at what level (Patton, 2008, p. 305). The summative evaluation of the school district's summer library program allowed for a determination of value and worth to be assigned. Specifically, to school board members and senior district leaders, the

summative evaluation of the summer library provided the cost-effectiveness analysis needed to justify the continuation and growth of the program (Patton, 2008, p. 301). The school district's summer library program is funded by a special referendum tax and the ability to justify the value of the program to key stakeholders is essential for generating support for another tax referendum ballot initiative.

Participants

There were three stakeholder groups in this program evaluation: certified library media specialists, students, and parents. The school district opened a total of nine summer library locations throughout the district and all nine sites were included in this evaluation. The nine summer sites were chosen because each site was also the location of a separate summer school reading camp. The district opted to host the summer library program at sites already scheduled to have buildings occupied during the summer months to reduce operational costs. At each of the nine sites, certified library media specialists were hired to administer the program. One site hired two library media specialists to split the job for a total of 10 library media specialists across the district hired to administer the summer library program. All 10 certified library media specialists were included in this evaluation.

While the summer library program was open to students participating in the separate on-site summer school reading camps, the focus of this study was on students unaffiliated with a summer school reading camp and brought to the library by a parent specifically to use the summer library program. The goal of the evaluation was to study the impact of the summer library program, independent of participation in another summer program such as the summer school reading camp. The summer library program

serviced two populations. The students and teachers on-site for the summer school reading camp were one subgroup who checked out books and attended story time sessions. The second subgroup consisted of students brought to the library by an adult to check out books and participate in activities.

A requirement for the second subgroup was for students to be accompanied by an adult and follow standard district sign in procedures to be on a school campus. The summer library program utilized a separate sign in sheet to specifically track the second subgroup of summer library program participants. All second subgroup participants of the summer library program, students and their parents, not affiliated with a summer school reading camp as reflected on the district sign in sheets, were chosen and included in this evaluation. There were 83 students and 54 parents of participants who participated in the summer library program exclusively and included in this program evaluation.

Data Gathering Techniques

Data sets were obtained from several different sources. As a representative of the school district, I developed a sign in sheet for use in each of the nine school district summer library sites. All participants not affiliated with an on-site summer reading camp were required to sign in on the official school district sign in sheet in order to participate in the program and utilize library services. The sign in sheet tracked participant name, classification (parent, student, other), student school identification number, and student base school site (for a copy of the sign in sheet, see Appendix A). The student school identification number from the sign in sheet was used to obtain spring 2018 and fall 2018 student reading test scores for participants and associated demographics such as grade, gender, and socioeconomic status (SES). Sign in sheet data and reading test scores

represent the extant data used in this evaluation, which I obtained permission to use from the school district.

Surveys. I developed a parent survey to collect information about how parents liked or disliked elements of the program. My goal was to gain insight into the effectiveness of the program from the parents' perspective. I also wanted to find out whether parents found value in the program and how the program affected their perceptions of their student's reading achievement. The survey consisted of eight Likert Scale questions and three open-ended questions for a total of eleven survey questions (for a copy of the survey, see Appendix B). All parents of students participating in the summer library program, as listed on the original sign in sheets were provided an opportunity to participate in the survey. A letter containing directions to the online survey was addressed to each parent and mailed to the address on file with the school district.

Interviews. I conducted interviews with library media specialists to gain in-depth knowledge about the program. The qualitative data provided insight into the various elements of the program from the program administrator's perspective. I invited all 10 library media specialists to participate in an interview. All 10 library media specialists invited to participate agreed to an interview. Interviews occurred face to face or over the telephone (for a copy of the interview questions, see Appendix C). I recorded and transcribed interviews for accuracy.

Data Analysis Techniques

I compared students' performance in reading on i-Ready assessments before and after the summer library program, and this allowed me to study the impact the summer library program had on individual student reading test scores. Specifically, I compared

and analyzed students' i-Ready reading performance assessment data from the spring 2018 and fall 2018 periods for all students who participated in the summer library program. I also created a control group of non-participants and compared their performance results for the same two time periods to the participant group using R statistical software, a language and environment for statistical computing and graphics (R Foundation, 2020), to perform propensity score matching.

Propensity score matching is an analysis technique that can reduce selection bias and approximate a randomized sample (Belfi, Haelermans & De Fraine, 2016). Further, propensity score matching allows actual matching of the treated group to the non-treated groups in such a way that the students are equivalent on the observed covariates included in the propensity score (Belfi et al., 2016). Propensity score methods are a version of regression that allows researchers to focus on the observed covariates that "matter most" and the advantage of using propensity score matching is that it aggregates a number of characteristics that individually would be difficult to match among those in the treatment and non-treatment groups (Schneider, Carnoy, Kilpatrick, Schmidt & Shavelson, 2007, p. 49).

In addition to analyzing the scores of summer library participants, I created a non-participant control group of students by using the analysis technique of propensity score matching. Each member of the non-participant control group matched the grade, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and base school of each student that participated in the summer library program. Additionally, each control group student was matched to have a similar spring i-Ready reading test score as the corresponding matched treatment student. I analyzed student i-Ready data for both groups of students, participants and the non-

participant control group, to determine whether students maintained, lost, or increased reading levels during the summer months. I also analyzed data pertaining to the amount of participation, measured by number of visits, to study the impact on results.

I summarized and examined survey data for themes to determine parents' perceptions of the program. I quantified and analyzed the Likert Scale questions and I evaluated and coded the open-ended survey questions according to themes. To evaluate the open-ended survey questions, I established initial codes for survey responses, and correlated codes that matched previous responses. Next, I assigned a new code to comments not matching an existing code. Finally, I categorized and grouped the data using a selective coding method (James et al., 2008, p. 89; Leavy, 2014).

I used interview data from certified library media specialists to understand the implementation of the summer library program and activities. I reviewed interview data to determine which aspects of the summer library program were successful and how interactions among students and parents occurred. I transcribed, checked for accuracy, and coded interviews using a selective coding process (James et al., 2008; Leavy, 2014). Several themes emerged from the extensive evaluation of interview data and are discussed in the results section.

Ethical Considerations

I included all participants of the summer library program, not associated with a summer school reading camp, in the program evaluation. As a representative of the school district, my job required I collect sign in sheet data for the summer library program. I obtained permission to use extant data consisting of sign in sheet data and student reading test score data, from the school district to conduct my program

evaluation. I maintained student anonymity throughout the evaluation process and excluded identifying student information in the reporting of results. I provided parents with an informed consent for the survey providing full disclosure of collection methods, data usage, and the right to abstain from the study. I provided library media specialists with the same informed consent, ensuring full transparency of the study, and I included all 10 library media specialists who administered a summer library program in my request for interviews.

Limitations

Limitations of the program evaluation included my biases about the value of school library media programs and certified library media specialists. I believe school library media specialists play a vital role in reading achievement and I advocate for hiring certified library media specialists to administer school library programs. My purpose for conducting this evaluation was for policy advocacy and continuance of the program.

Another limitation was the sample size. Limited funding allowed the district to open only nine of the 32 available elementary school sites across the district. Additionally, the district opened sites only one day a week due to limited funding which may have reduced participation and contributed to the small sample size. The geographic size of the district is over 1500 square miles. Consequently, the proximity to an open summer library site may have limited access for some children and their families. Because transportation to the summer library program was not provided by the district, some students were reliant on an adult's ability to take them to an open library site which could have further limited participation.

Conclusion

I collected both quantitative and qualitative data for my program evaluation. The various data sets will contribute to an overall understanding of the district's summer library program. The data analysis will provide information to guide future implementations of the district's summer library initiative and may influence policy and funding decisions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The findings from my program evaluation provide answers to my research questions about the school district's summer library program and the impact on student reading achievement. I analyzed and compared the treatment of participation in the school district's summer library program for a group of students to a non-participating control group. I studied both groups' average i-Ready reading performance assessment data from the spring 2018 and fall 2018 assessment periods.

Findings

All students whose name appeared at least one time on a summer library sign in sheet were included in the initial treatment group. Because kindergarten students do not have spring 2018 i-Ready scores in the school district, as they do not test until grade 1, all seven kindergarten students were removed from the treatment group. Kindergarten students were also excluded in the control group. The remaining 68 participant students in grades 1-8 comprised the final treatment group. Table 1 represents treatment group students and their corresponding spring and fall i-Ready scale scores for reading with associated demographics.

Table 1

Final Treatment Group Spring to Fall 2018 i-Ready Scores Comparison with Demographics

Treatment Students n = 68	Grade	Gender	SES (Free & Reduced)	Spring 2018 i-Ready	Fall 2018 i-Ready	Point Gain or Loss
T1	2	F	No	486	458	-28
T2	1	M	No	395	389	-6
T3	1	M	No	376	403	27
T4	1	M	Yes	427	413	-14
T5	4	M	Yes	552	491	-61
T6	3	M	Yes	529	526	-3
T7	5	F	Yes	508	497	-11

T8	5	F	Yes	514	557	43
T9	3	F	Yes	426	407	-19
T10	4	F	No	531	528	-3
T11	4	F	No	543	554	11
T12	5	M	Yes	558	585	27
T13	7	M	Yes	587	566	-21
T14	2	M	Yes	401	392	-9
T15	3	M	Yes	511	526	15
T16	3	M	Yes	550	570	20
T17	3	M	Yes	394	411	17
T18	1	M	Yes	372	370	-2
T19	1	M	Yes	418	414	-4
T20	1	F	Yes	400	410	10
T21	8	F	Yes	537	566	29
T22	4	M	Yes	517	484	-33
T23	3	F	Yes	598	591	-7
T24	4	M	No	502	521	19
T25	3	M	Yes	508	504	-4
T26	3	F	No	548	560	12
T27	3	M	Yes	534	545	11
T28	1	F	Yes	469	453	-16
T29	1	M	No	395	400	5
T30	3	M	No	449	462	13
T31	1	F	No	406	406	0
T32	6	F	Yes	622	621	-1
T33	5	M	Yes	499	487	-12
T34	5	F	No	607	612	5
T35	4	M	No	580	569	-11
T36	3	M	No	584	577	-7
T37	4	F	No	551	552	1
T38	4	F	No	577	582	5
T39	3	F	Yes	509	519	10
T40	3	M	No	500	512	12
T41	3	M	No	505	526	21
T42	4	F	No	533	496	-37
T43	6	M	Yes	600	628	28
T44	4	M	No	569	596	27
T45	2	F	No	530	515	-15
T46	1	M	No	405	428	23
T47	1	M	Yes	448	442	-6
T48	1	F	Yes	471	485	14
T49	1	M	No	382	384	2
T50	1	M	No	403	408	5
T51	1	F	No	397	403	6
T52	8	F	No	641	659	18
T53	6	M	No	589	559	-30
T54	6	M	No	579	570	-9
T55	6	M	Yes	611	595	-16
T56	4	F	Yes	500	496	-4
T57	5	F	Yes	610	616	6
T58	3	F	No	553	521	-32
T59	6	F	Yes	607	601	-6
T60	5	F	No	571	579	8
T61	2	F	Yes	478	483	5
T62	2	F	No	416	399	-17
T63	2	M	Yes	472	511	39
T64	2	F	Yes	481	480	-1
T65	4	M	No	500	498	-2
T66	1	F	Yes	518	490	-28

T67	4	F	Yes	626	632	6
T68	2	F	Yes	523	553	30

I used propensity score matching to create a control group with similar characteristics to the treatment group for a more complete analysis. Propensity score matching allows actual matching of the treated group to the non-treated group, so students are equivalent on defined characteristics which are calculated in the propensity score used to create the match (Belfi et al., 2016). A control group of 68 students was created using R statistical software (for control group parameters used in the R propensity score matching, see Appendix D). R is a language and environment for statistical computing and graphics (R Foundation, 2020).

Each member of the non-participant control group matched the grade, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and base school of each student that participated in the summer library program. Ethnicity was not included in match parameters because it resulted in several students with no matches. Further, each control group student was matched to have a similar spring i-Ready reading test score as the corresponding matched treatment student. Table 2 represents control group students and their corresponding spring and fall i-Ready scale scores for reading with associated demographics.

Table 2

Final Control Group Spring to Fall 2018 i-Ready Scores Comparison with Demographics

Control Students n = 68	**Grade**	**Gender**	**SES (Free & Reduced)**	**Spring 2018 i-Ready**	**Fall 2018 i-Ready**	**Point Gain or Loss**
C1	2	F	No	460	476	16
C2	1	M	No	404	414	10
C3	1	M	No	372	382	10
C4	1	M	Yes	419	355	-64
C5	4	M	Yes	552	559	7
C6	3	M	Yes	532	483	-49
C7	5	F	Yes	508	532	24
C8	5	F	Yes	515	491	-24

C9	3	F	Yes	432	408	-24
C10	4	F	No	520	534	14
C11	4	F	No	546	571	25
C12	5	M	Yes	557	602	45
C13	7	M	Yes	587	597	10
C14	2	M	Yes	401	451	50
C15	3	M	Yes	515	424	-91
C16	3	M	Yes	543	510	-33
C17	3	M	Yes	385	396	11
C18	1	M	Yes	373	406	33
C19	1	M	Yes	417	411	-6
C20	1	F	Yes	400	401	1
C21	8	F	Yes	537	566	29
C22	4	M	Yes	517	485	-32
C23	3	F	Yes	559	521	-38
C24	4	M	No	523	492	-31
C25	3	M	Yes	507	474	-33
C26	3	F	No	551	563	12
C27	3	M	Yes	533	561	28
C28	1	F	Yes	462	472	10
C29	1	M	No	397	397	0
C30	3	M	No	446	456	10
C31	1	F	No	409	408	-1
C32	6	F	Yes	623	628	5
C33	5	M	Yes	495	536	41
C34	5	F	No	606	635	29
C35	4	M	No	575	570	-5
C36	3	M	No	594	607	13
C37	4	F	No	551	535	-16
C38	4	F	No	580	590	10
C39	3	F	Yes	510	510	0
C40	3	M	No	505	526	21
C41	3	M	No	508	517	9
C42	4	F	No	536	549	13
C43	6	M	Yes	601	583	-18
C44	4	M	No	568	553	-15
C45	2	F	No	530	507	-23
C46	1	M	No	405	387	-18
C47	1	M	Yes	461	458	-3
C48	1	F	Yes	466	440	-26
C49	1	M	No	382	399	17
C50	1	M	No	403	407	4
C51	1	F	No	400	409	9
C52	8	F	No	631	555	-76
C53	6	M	No	581	598	17
C54	6	M	No	579	600	21
C55	6	M	Yes	609	621	12
C56	4	F	Yes	499	492	-7
C57	5	F	Yes	616	606	-10
C58	3	F	No	541	561	20
C59	6	F	Yes	609	645	36
C60	5	F	No	570	552	-18
C61	2	F	Yes	475	486	11
C62	2	F	No	417	433	16
C63	2	M	Yes	473	469	-4
C64	2	F	Yes	479	470	-9
C65	4	M	No	498	546	48
C66	1	F	Yes	495	489	-6
C67	4	F	Yes	609	570	-39

C68	2	F	Yes	516	526	10

I conducted an independent samples t-test to compare the groups on their spring 2018 i-Ready scores. I determined that the groups were not statistically significantly different, $t(134) = -0.133$, $p = 0.894$, making the groups ideal to compare with analysis on their fall i-Ready scores. Table 3 describes the average spring i-Ready reading assessment scale scores between the treatment and control groups.

Table 3

Independent Samples t-Test for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average Spring i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score

Treatment Group Summer Library n = 68		Control Group n = 68			
M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
507.18	73.433	505.51	72.395	-0.133(134)	0.894

My primary research questions were:

- To what extent do students who participate in the summer library program experience summer learning loss in reading achievement?
- Do students who participate in the summer library program have higher reading i-Ready assessment scores in the fall compared to classroom peers who do not participate?

I performed an independent samples t-test to determine the impact the summer library program had on students' reading achievement. When two means are being compared with each other, one statistic used is a t-test (Ravid, 2014). In Table 4, the mean of the differences between spring 2018 (pre) and fall 2018 (post) scale score points on the i-Ready reading assessment of the treatment group and control group are shown.

Table 4

Independent Samples t-Test for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score Points Gained or Lost

Treatment Group Summer Library n = 68		Control Group n = 68			
*M**	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
0.809	19.134	-0.177	27.534	-0.242(134)	0.809

*Note: Means are differences between spring (pre) and fall (post) scores.

Summer library participants, on average, gained 0.809 points when they took the assessment in the fall of 2018. In comparison, the mean of the difference in spring 2018 (pre) and fall 2018 (post) scale score points on the i-Ready reading assessment for the control group, showed the control group lost an average of 0.177 points on the fall assessment (see Table 4). While the treatment group showed an average gain and the control group an average loss, there was no statistical significance in the findings.

A closer look at average point gain or loss results by individual grade levels also showed no statistical significance between treatment and control. Table 5 describes the number of students in each grade level for both the treatment and control groups. I conducted independent samples t-tests for grades 1-6 to determine if there were differences that could be attributed to the grade level of participants. I omitted grade 7 (n = 1) and grade 8 (n = 2) due to very small sample sizes which were not large enough for a valid analysis. Table 6 describes the differences between treatment and control groups' average i-ready reading assessment scale score points gained or lost by individual grade level.

Table 5

Number of Students per Grade for the Treatment and Control Groups

Grade	Treatment Group Summer Library (*n* = 68)	Control Group (*n* = 68)	Both Groups
1	16	16	32
2	8	8	16
3	15	15	30
4	13	13	26
5	7	7	14
6	6	6	12
7	1	1	2
8	2	2	4

Table 6

Independent Samples t-Tests for Differences between Treatment and Control Groups' Average i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Score Points Gained or Lost by Grade

T=treatment C=control	Treatment Group Summer Library		Control Group			
	*M**	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
Grade 1 T n = 16 C n = 16	1.0	14.039	-1.875	21.444	0.449(30)	0.657
Grade 2 T n = 8 C n = 8	0.5	23.373	8.375	21.705	-0.698(14)	0.496
Grade 3 T n = 15 C n = 15	3.933	15.374	-9.6	33.528	1.421(28)	0.166
Grade 4 T n = 13 C n = 13	-6.308	24.298	-2.154	24.906	-0.430(24)	0.671
Grade 5 T n = 7 C n = 7	9.429	19.773	12.429	28.988	-0.226(12)	0.825
Grade 6 T n = 6 C n = 6	-5.667	19.315	12.167	18.060	-1.652(10)	0.130

In Table 7, the mean i-Ready scores for both the summer library treatment group and the non-participant control group were compared to determine the effect of participation in the summer library program using paired t-Tests. While the treatment

group showed an overall gain in scale score of 0.809, the gain was not statistically significant. The overall loss in scale score seen in the control group, -0.177 was also not statistically significant.

Table 7

Paired Samples t-Test for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores

	Spring 2018 (pre)		Fall 2018 (post)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
Treatment Summer Library n = 68	507.176	73.433	507.985	74.581	-0.349(67)	0.728
Control n = 68	505.510	72.395	505.340	74.480	0.053(67)	0.958

I continued my analysis by conducting paired samples t-tests for the summer library participant treatment group and the non-participant control group by individual grade level. I found no grade level was significantly different between their spring i-Ready (pre) and fall i-Ready (post) reading assessment scores. Table 8 describes the differences between pre and post-scores for both the treatment group and the control group. For my analysis, I only considered grades 1 to 6 due to the small sample sizes of grade 7 (n = 1) and grade 8 (n = 2).

Table 8

Paired Samples t-Tests for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores by Grade

		Spring 2018 (pre)		Fall 2018 (post)			
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
Grade 1	Treatment n = 16	417.625	39.938	418.625	33.657	-0.285(15)	0.780
	Control n = 16	416.563	35.762	414.688	34.345	0.350(15)	0.731
Grade 2	Treatment n = 8	473.375	45.418	473.875	56.078	-0.061(7)	0.953
	Control n = 8	468.875	43.901	477.25	29.538	-1.091(7)	0.311
Grade 3	Treatment n = 15	513.2	55.589	517.133	54.337	-0.991(14)	0.339
	Control n = 15	510.733	53.493	501.133	61.181	1.109(14)	0.286
Grade 4	Treatment n = 13	544.692	37.077	538.385	46.716	0.936(12)	0.936
	Control n = 13	544.154	33.073	542	33.603	0.312(12)	0.761
Grade 5	Treatment n = 7	552.429	46.500	561.857	51.815	-1.262(6)	0.254
	Control n = 7	552.429	48.156	564.857	50.867	-1.134(6)	0.3
Grade 6	Treatment n = 6	601.333	15.526	595.667	27.274	0.719(5)	0.505
	Control n = 6	600.333	17.282	612.5	22.828	-1.650(5)	0.160

One related research question was: Does the level of participation in the summer library program predict higher levels of reading performance for students? The summer library program was operated once a week for 7 weeks. Students (n=68) signed in on sign in sheets at each site and the number of times each student signed in was tallied to determine the number of visits for each student. I defined participation as a visit to the summer library program. The number of total visits for summer library participants ranged from 1-7 days with no students attending exactly six times. In Table 9, the mean i-Ready reading assessment scale scores are shown for each group based upon the total number of visits to the summer library program by participants.

Table 9

Paired Samples t-Tests for Mean i-Ready Reading Assessment Scale Scores by Number of Visits

Total Students n = 68	Spring 2018 (pre)		Fall 2018 (post)		Difference in points from pre to post			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(df)	*P*
1 visit n = 33	506.182	69.156	509	70.403	2.818	18.918	-0.856(32)	0.399
2 visits n = 16	470.25	70.021	474.25	69.135	4.0	11.759	-1.361(15)	0.194
3 visits n = 10	548	68.710	534.4	73.373	-13.6	24.126	1.783(9)	0.108
4 visits n = 4	544.25	52.639	555.5	67.806	11.25	20.467	-1.099(3)	0.352
5 visits n = 3	484.667	109.546	469	109.343	-15.667	1.528	17.764(2)	0.003
7 visits n = 2	574.5	72.832	592.5	55.861	18	16.971	-1.5(1)	0.374

Students who visited one time gained an average of 2.818 points on the fall reading assessment. Students visiting two times saw an average 4 point gain. Students visiting four and seven times saw the most benefit with an average 11.25 and 18 point gain respectively. While gains were evident, so were losses. Students visiting three times experienced an average 13.6 point loss and students visiting five times saw an average 15.667 point loss. Both positive and negative results were produced. Students visiting 5 times had a significant result; however, the sample size of students (n = 3) may be too small to accurately determine a relationship.

Treatment students did not vary a great deal by demographics per visit. Table 10 describes the SES status and gender of participants by the total number of visits. The greatest variance was seen at 2 visits with regard to gender with 11 males and 5 females attending the program.

Table 10

Treatment Students' Demographics by Total Number of Visits

Total Students n = 68	SES (Free and Reduced Lunch)		Gender	
	Yes	No	M	F
1 visit n = 33	19	14	15	18
2 visits n = 16	9	7	11	5
3 visits n = 10	3	7	5	5
4 visits n = 4	2	2	2	2
5 visits n = 3	2	1	2	1
7 visits n = 2	2	0	0	2

To further study the impact of visits on test scores for different grade levels, I performed a multiple linear regression analysis. I ran a multiple regression to predict fall i-Ready scores from number of visits and grade (see Table 11). I found both variables, number of visits and grade, statistically significantly predicted fall i-Ready scores, $F(2, 65) = 54.74$, $p < .000$, $R^2 = .627$ where both variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$. Summer library participants' predicted fall i-Ready scores were equal to 387.16 + 31.43 (grade) + 8.63 (number of visits). Summer library participants' fall i-Ready scores increased 8.63 points for each grade level and 31.43 points for each visit. Table 11 describes the relationship between participants' grade and number of visits to the summer library program on fall i-Ready reading assessment scores. Both grade and visits were a significant predictor of fall i-Ready scores.

Table 11

Multiple Linear Regression of Grade and Number of Visits

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.792[a]	0.627	0.616	46.217

a. Predictors: (Constant), Grade, #Visits

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
1	Regression	233836.585	2	116918.262	54.736	.000[b]
	Residual	138842.400	65	2136.037	2136.037	
	Total	372678.985	67			

a. Dependent Variable: Fall i-Ready

b. Predictors: (Constant), Grade, #Visits

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	387.158	14.177		23.308	.000
	#Visits	8.630	3.967	.165	2.175	.033
	Grade	31.427	3.063	.777	10.260	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Fall i-Ready

To investigate my next research question, I analyzed qualitative data in the form of interview transcripts and surveys. My related research question was: What are the participants' attitudes toward the summer library program? The participants I focused on for this portion of my program evaluation were school librarians and parents.

First, I interviewed 10 school library media specialists for my evaluation. I performed a qualitative analysis of interviews by assigning codes to sections of transcripts in order to classify, pattern, and discover emergent categories for further

analysis (Leavy, 2014, p. 584). My selective codes were words and short phrases which symbolically assigned a summative attribute for a portion of language-based data (Leavy, 2014, p. 584). See Table 12 for a list of selective codes and examples. I also incorporated in vivo coding, coding based on the actual language used by the participant and denoted in quotation marks, to identify significant words and phrases in the data (Leavy, 2014, p. 590).

Table 12

Descriptions and Examples of Selective Codes

Code	Description	Examples
Scheduling Concern*	Librarian indicates a concern with the published schedule for the summer library program. *Note: Published schedule was created by school district leaders and lead librarians which advertised set time blocks from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. for checkout and library program activities, such as story time and hands on activities.	"95% of who came was our 3rd grade reading camp and the schedule really didn't fit for what we were using" "I find that the parents and the families really don't abide by the schedule" "Most of the parents who came they weren't even interested in the schedule they didn't even pay attention to it, they just wanted to find a book and checkout"
Schedule Modification	Librarian describes a modification made to the published schedule as a part of the summer library program	"I changed the time of my scheduling and actually did the same thing in all three of those [published] sections" "I made sure if they were there and it wasn't story time then I would jump in and say, 'Hey, do you guys want to hear a story?'"

Successful Activity	Librarian describes a summer library activity that was successful with students	"For example, the groovy buttons and they got to make their button and it helped them to remember the story and then we talked about the different buttons and they just loved it" "The read-aloud was a little bit of a break for them so they were able to sit on the floor and just have that nice story time.
Unsuccessful Activity	Librarian describes a summer library activity that was unsuccessful with students	"The 3rd grade preferred the more hands-on stuff… the coloring pages were like 'meh'" "The Splat the Cat activities might not have been great for older kids that came through"
Scripted Activity Modification**	Librarian discusses a modification made to a scripted activity **Note: Scripted activities and lesson plans were developed by lead librarians for each program day. Scripted activities aligned to a featured story book and theme for each program day.	"Some of the featured books were not particularly good read aloud books. So, I would change and go into MyOn [online book database]" "I substituted one of the books because it was not good for VPK (voluntary pre-kindergarten)"
Public Participation	Librarian describes interactions with public participants (parents and non-summer school students)	"It was families with a lot of kids, so I think this was convenient for them because they were able to bring in babies and all of the little brothers and sisters and they came in and got books" "I did have a lot of people who came back every week for the whole summer"
Summer School Participation	Librarian describes interactions with summer school students (3rd grade reading camp, voluntary pre-kindergarten, and summer school teachers)	"Teachers were more interested in doing what was related with any of their reading activities" "The two girls from the community they just happened to pass by our school after dropping off grandma, so grandpa would bring them in. They loved coming here every week, seeing me, and talking about the books"

Program Benefit	Librarian discusses a benefit of the summer library program	"For rural schools, having this library open is really great because they don't make it downtown to the big public library"
		"Just having the library open so that they could check out books for the students that were on campus"
		"Learning about the different authors and getting them into different series, that was good"
Program Obstacle	Librarian discusses an obstacle to the summer library program	"Need more definite time when the teachers have to send kids and don't feel so rushed and stressed"
		"One of the requirements is that a parent or adult had to be here to sign in and a lot of our kids are left unsupervised at home"
		"The kids don't have transportation. Our kids are from all over so that's the hardest thing"
Program Suggestion	Librarian provides a suggestion to future implementations of the summer library program	"If we had an option for them to come in, hear the story, and then do some makerspace activities they would love that"
		"Maybe we could have a raffle or a giveaway or some kind of cool treat the very first day"
		"I think, especially the night before, if there could be some kind of reminder for parents"

One qualitative data analysis strategy is to classify a list of codes and apply a category label to each grouping (Leavy, 2015, p. 587). I further categorized codes into groups using category labels for pattern construction. Four main categories emerged from the data. See Table 13 for a complete list of categories and examples.

Table 13

Descriptions and Examples of Categories

Category	Description	Examples
Summer School Connection	Description of need to connect the summer library program to summer school programs	• Curriculum Alignment • Schedule Alignment • Activity Alignment • Access
Flexible/Open Schedule	Descriptions of need to address scheduling concerns and modifications	• Continuous Checkout • Programming as Needed • Extended Hours
Activities	Descriptions of successful and unsuccessful activities and examples of modifications to scripted activities	• Read-aloud • Hands-on • Connection to Featured Book • Makerspace • Worksheets
Program Participation	Descriptions of program benefits, program obstacles, and suggestions related to overall program participation	• Public Awareness • Transportation • District Policies and Procedures • Site Location

Second, I surveyed parents for my evaluation to gain insight into the summer library program. Rating on a scale of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, 54 parents of student participants were invited to respond to an online survey. Of these, 5 parents responded and provided feedback about the summer library program. Most parents (80%) strongly agreed their child enjoyed the summer library program and also strongly agreed they would like to see the summer library program offered again. Additionally, 80% of parents indicated their child read the books checked out as a part of the summer library program and 75% agreed the summer library program contributed to their child reading books during the summer.

For the statement, *the summer library program activities were engaging and appropriate*, 80% of parents awarded a 3 or a 4 to indicate a positive response. Similarly,

80% of parents awarded a 3 or a 4 to the statement, *the hours of operation (Wednesdays from 8:00am to 2:00pm) for the summer library program were appropriate*, to indicate agreement. When asked to evaluate the statement*, the summer library program locations were convenient for me to access*, 80% of parents agreed. Parents were also asked to evaluate the statement, *I believe my child's reading ability was improved as a result of participating in the summer library program*, and 60% agreed.

Three open ended questions were included in the parent survey. Written comments showed the value of the summer library program as perceived by parents. Parents were asked, *Why did you want your child to participate in a summer library program?* Some parents commented as follows:

- To keep them interested in school and reading.
- To continue practice reading.
- Because reading is an important skill.
- It is a free thing to do over the summer.

One parent wrote, "I feel if I continue to encourage my kids' reading during the summer this may help them retain their reading strategies from the previous year." The most common reason reported by parents for wanting their child to participate was to maintain reading skills over the summer. The words *continue* and *practice* were expressed in multiple responses with regard to summer reading.

I asked parents what they liked and/or disliked about the summer library program. Parents expressed dissatisfaction with program advertising and a lack of public participation. Parents expressed satisfaction with regards to book selection, positive reading environment, and access. One parent wrote, "I liked that the program gave me the

entire day to bring my children to the library. I think having the library open all day made it possible for us to visit the library weekly." Another parent wrote, "The opportunity that the children see the school in other perspectives, it is not just regular school, it is a safe place to find books of interest any time they want." Of responses, most comments were positive to indicate a positive attitude towards the summer library program.

The final question on the survey gave parents the opportunity to provide additional comments about the summer library program. Verbatim responses included:

- There needs to be a better way of getting the word out.
- Continuation of the program.
- I want to see the program with a team of teachers with a group of students read stories each other, make the reading more fun in the summer.

Some parents declined to answer the final question and did not provide additional comments.

The existing problem upon which this program evaluation is predicated is the fact that reading loss occurs in the school district. The school district's mission of developing successful students every day includes the need to have students successful in reading during the summer months. The 4 C's, contexts, culture, conditions, and competencies, are a systematic approach to thinking about the challenges and goals of a school district (Wagner et al., 2006). As a result, I developed an AS-IS diagnostic analysis of the underling summer reading loss problem and used it to describe the existing problem situation for my evaluation in terms of the 4 C's (for a complete AS-IS diagnostic chart see Appendix E).

Contexts. Context is the overarching skillset needed to produce a desired change

and is dependent on societal, state, federal, and community expectations (Wagner et al., 2006). To articulate the context, a basic understanding of the environment is needed, and school leaders must understand contextual information to inform decisions surrounding change. The context of my evaluation is rooted in student reading achievement. My research question, To what extent do students who participate in the summer library program experience summer learning loss in reading achievement, is directed at the context of the district's problem of a lack of student reading achievement and poor test scores on the state reading assessment.

One achievement component measured by the state is English Language Arts (ELA) which includes reading. All school districts are measured by the percentage of full-year enrolled students who achieve a passing score on the state ELA assessment. For the 2017-18 school year, 46% of students in the district achieved a passing score on the state ELA assessment. I wanted to know if a summer library program would impact student reading achievement. With the lack of student reading achievement in the district, the summer library program was one possible method to increase reading scores and/or limit the impact of summer reading loss.

School district leaders operate a summer school program for at-risk and lower performing third grade students. Each year, students who did not pass the summative state reading assessment during the current year and students who are identified as struggling readers are invited to attend. The summer library program was designed to capitalize on the existing summer school building sites already in use for the third-grade summer school program in order to reduce operational costs associated with building maintenance. The rationale was to host the summer library program at sites already being

utilized for summer school and have the program serve as a resource for both summer school students and the general public.

The context also included a community expectation that elementary students can read proficiently and score proficiently on the state reading assessment. As reading is tied to all subjects and curriculums, teachers, parents, students, and community members have vested interests in an evaluation of the summer library program and its potential to increase literacy skills for elementary students. Additionally, the context of the local tax referendum, passed to support school library programs, played a role in my program evaluation. I will provide the community and school board members with information about the impact the funds allocated for summer libraries have on student reading achievement and determine whether there is a relationship between summer library program participation and individual reading gains with my program evaluation.

Culture. Culture is the overall mindset of stakeholders in the district, the prevailing way of work accepted as the norm, and encompasses the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors of the district that set the tone for the level of engagement of the district by teachers, administrators, and staff (Wagner et al., 2006). Culture also plays a role in the quality and sincerity of relationships among all stakeholders (Wagner et al., 2006). One of my research questions, Do students who participate in the summer library program have higher reading i-Ready assessment scores in the fall compared to classroom peers who do not participate, is partially dependent on the culture of the school district because participation in the summer library program is dependent upon perceived value among all stakeholders. To determine if summer library participation increased student reading achievement, students, parents, and community

members must first be fully aware of the program's offerings, see a perceived value, and access availability.

The current culture of the school district is one where school library programs have little perceived value. Often, school library programs and school library media specialists are not considered a resource to raise student achievement. In 2012 the school district cut half of all elementary library media specialist positions and all assistant positions to reduce costs because they were viewed as the least impactful certified positions for student achievement to cut. The tax referendum was passed by a grassroots effort to restore elementary library media specialists, but library assistants remained cut. Additionally, to date, the district does not allocate district funds to support individual school library collections. Through my program evaluation, I want to raise awareness of school library programs and their relationship to student literacy achievement in order to articulate value.

Conditions. Conditions are the tangible external parameters affecting organizations such as time, space, and resources and can also include explicit expectations such as assessments, contracts, laws, and policies (Wagner et al., 2006). My research question, Does the level of participation in the summer library program predict higher levels of reading performance for students, is affected by conditions of the school district. The level of participation is directly affected by current school district policies and procedures. For example, the school district requires students are accompanied by an adult at all times when visiting a school site unless they are enrolled in a school program. The summer library program was subject to this stipulation because participation did not involve formal enrollment and the program was offered on a

voluntary basis. All public summer library participants were required to have an adult sign in as a visitor to the school according to policies and procedures in order to access the summer library program. Subsequently, unaccompanied students were not permitted to participate.

Traditionally, school libraries are not open during the summer. The district's summer library program was a new concept for the community and made possible by a request to access referendum dollars by the library department coordinator. The referendum committee granted the request; however, the summer library program was funded to operate only once a week. The limited funding supported nine librarians to work six hours a day, once a week, at 9 site locations from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Additionally, there were no funds to provide transportation to the summer library program so all participants were required to find private transportation to a summer library program site.

Competencies. Competencies are the skills and knowledge educators possess to influence student learning (Wagner et al., 2006). Through my research question, What are the participants' attitudes toward the summer library program, I explored library media specialists' competencies and how they impacted implementation and perceived value of the summer library program. School library media specialists in the district focus on building student information literacy skills and promoting reading as a part of their formal job description. They have a stand-alone evaluation rubric which differs from a traditional teacher. The district's librarian evaluation rubric includes an element of engaging students in enjoying literature. Throughout the school year, school library media specialists attend professional development training sessions to strengthen their

craft. While the librarian group is well-versed in their rubric and core job skills, many administrators in the district are not. The disconnect often leads to a lack of general awareness of school library programs and competencies of school library media specialists.

Administrators do not receive professional development or training on school library programs from the school district and the subject is not traditionally explored as a part of educator or administrator university programs. The perceived value of school library programs differs greatly across the district and is often influenced by an administrator's individual experiences and preferences. Because the school district follows a site-based management style and individual administrators have much autonomy over their school sites, support and advocacy for the school library program, including the summer library program, are subject to the ideologies of individual administrators. Administrators influence how library programs are promoted and how school library media specialists are aided in their promotion efforts. The summer library program had limited public participation and the levels of participation were partially affected by school library media specialists' ability to promote the summer library program.

Interpretation

I investigated the effectiveness of the summer library program in terms of impact on participants' reading achievement and sought to learn about the program through the perspective of school library media specialists and parents. The summer library program did not have a statistically significant impact on student reading achievement average points gained from spring to fall; however, the program did provide a benefit to

participants and produced a return on investment to stakeholders. Summer library participants' fall i-Ready scores increased 8.63 points for each grade level and 31.43 points for each visit. Both grade and visits were a significant predictor of fall i-Ready scores. Of treatment group participants, 51.47% of students showed positive gains or remained the same in scale score between the spring and fall assessment periods. The treatment group showed an average overall gain in scale score of 0.809 as compared to the control group with an average loss of 0.177. Reducing reading loss was the overall goal of the program and findings indicate the treatment group performed better than the control group and on average did not experience reading loss.

I believe there are several factors to consider when interpreting the results. The length of the program was a total of seven days due to funding. The duration of the treatment may not have been long enough to produce significant results. Public participation was limited and consequently a small sample size of 68 was obtained compared to over 25,000 elementary and middle school students in the district eligible to participate in the program but who chose not to attend. Policies and procedures requiring an adult accompany participants and a lack of district-provided transportation may have further limited public participation. Additionally, I considered public participants exclusively in my evaluation and did not examine the impact to summer school students, although summer school students participated in summer library programs and activities in greater numbers.

An analysis of the interview data and parent survey revealed several key findings which can serve as a road map for improvement of the summer library program in future implementations:

1. The summer library program should have more of a connection to summer school. Rather than operating as a stand-alone program, library activities and schedule should accommodate teachers and students of summer school while also being open to the public. Some summer library activities should align to the summer school curriculum and/or free reading and story time should be added to the summer school curriculum, so teachers and administrators view the summer library program as a resource and have explicit permission to utilize.
2. The summer library program should operate on a flexible and open schedule. The primary need and want from stakeholders is continuous checkout throughout the day. There is also a desire for extended hours of the program and increasing the frequency of the program to more than once a week.
3. Summer library program activities should include hands-on activities, possibly incorporating makerspaces. Read-alouds are very popular and are well liked by all stakeholders. There is value when activities are directly tied to the book or story featured in the read-aloud.
4. Increasing program participation should be a primary focus of the district. A variety of methods were suggested including revising district sign in policies to allow older siblings to serve as an adult, frequent marketing and district call out reminders, subsidizing/providing transportation to program sites, rewards and incentives, and hosting a kick-off rally event.

A clear path forward is one form of a return on investment for tax referendum stakeholders. My analysis of interview and survey data revealed an overwhelming desire to continue the summer library program. The referendum committee can use the support

to justify and approve future funding. The referendum committee can also use the information to modify the funding allocation and possibly provide funding for additional days, sites, and librarians to operate the summer library program.

Judgments

My primary research questions were:

- To what extent do students who participate in the summer library program experience summer learning loss in reading achievement?
- Do students who participate in the summer library program have higher reading i-Ready assessment scores in the fall compared to classroom peers who do not participate?

My related research questions were:

- Does the level of participation in the summer library program predict higher levels of reading performance for students?
- What are the participants' attitudes toward the summer library program?

My quantitative data analysis found students who participated in the summer library program on average did not experience summer reading loss. When participants are compared to non-participants, participants have a higher average reading point gain between their spring and fall assessment periods. The results are not significantly significant; therefore, I cannot assert the summer library program increased reading scores. However, my data show the summer library participant group's average point gain on the reading assessment, while minimal, nonetheless establishes a pattern of no reading loss. For this reason, I suggest the results are promising and show potential for a summer library program to have a positive impact on students. School district leaders

may use my program evaluation as a baseline and road map to build upon.

I analyzed participation levels of students and found mixed results. The majority of participants (81%) increased their point gain on the reading assessment and the average point gain increased with each additional day of participation. Students who visited one day (n=33) gained an average of 2.818 points on the fall reading assessment. Students visiting two days (n=16) saw an average 4 point gain. Students visiting four days (n=4) and seven days (n=3) saw the most benefit with an average 11.25 and 18 point gain respectively. My data analysis also revealed point losses for 19% of students. Students visiting three days (n=10) experienced an average 13.6 point loss and students visiting five days (n=3) saw an average 15.667 point loss.

I found both grade and visits were a significant predictor of fall i-Ready scores. Summer library participants' fall i-Ready scores increased 8.63 points for each grade level and 31.43 points for each visit. My findings show there is potential to use the summer library program to increase fall i-Ready scores; however, multiple doses of the program are necessary to achieve results.

I believe smaller sample sizes for participants who visited 3-7 days ($n < 11$) may not be large enough to accurately describe a relationship between participation levels and reading assessment performance. The largest participation levels were seen at one day and two days. Both groups had more than 15 participants each and combined represented 72% of all participants. When I only consider the larger sample size groups, I find it encouraging to see a positive trend of point gain for 72% of participants.

My qualitative data analysis found school librarians and parents overwhelmingly supported the summer library program and advocated for future continuation. Most

librarians expressed a perceived value and benefit of the program for students. Most parents expressed a perceived value and benefit of the summer library program for their child. Opportunities and suggestions were identified by both groups for improving the summer library program. The number one suggestion was more publicity and advertisement to increase participation.

Recommendations

I believe the school district has an opportunity to incorporate findings from this evaluation to improve participation in next year's summer library program. Higher levels of participation in the summer library provide a higher return on investment for the referendum committee and taxpayers as more of the public utilizes a tax funded program. Return on investment can also be used as an advocacy tool by publicizing the value gained from services provided by the library which may influence attitudes toward the library (Kelly et al., 2012). I identified benefits of the summer library program beyond reading score gains in my data analysis. While reducing summer reading loss and increasing summer reading gains should remain a goal of the program, another aim can be advocacy and awareness of school library programs for the school district administrators and the community at large.

I found an overwhelming interest in seeing the summer library program continued and funded in future years. With modifications, I believe future iterations can correct policies, curriculum alignment, and participation to create a summer library program that does make a statistically significant impact to summer reading loss. Going back to the classic work of Heyns (1978), frequency of library use is one clear factor contributing to higher test scores used to measure reading gains. My main recommendation for

organizational change is to increase library use across the district, including summer usage. Additionally, an increase in perceived value of school library programs across all stakeholders is needed and the summer library program is one avenue to begin a culture transformation.

The tax referendum committee can begin the culture shift by voting to fund the summer library program at higher levels so the program may be offered more than once a week. The support of school library media specialists and parents for the summer library program found in my evaluation should be noted by committee members and acted upon. District leaders and referendum committee leaders should work to extend hours and increase the number of days per week the summer library program operates in order to increase participation. The school district should also request additional funds to conduct professional development for administrators on robust school library programs and their impact on student literacy. Lance and Kachel (2013) found an administrator's increased level of support and positive perception of the school library program directly contributes to student reading achievement. I believe administrative support can also lead to an increase in summer library participation.

My evaluation indicated a perception among some that the summer library program was not an approved activity for summer school students and consequently some teachers were hesitant to bring their classes for programs and activities. The elementary curriculum department has an opportunity to increase library usage and participation in the summer library program by incorporating dedicated time into the summer school schedule for teachers to access the program. If the library program is explicitly noted in the daily summer school schedule and curriculum, implicit permission to access the

program is granted by the district.

I recommend the elementary curriculum department leverage the summer library program to include dedicated time in the library for free voluntary reading and participating in the featured book activities as a part of the summer school curriculum. Copeland and Martin (2016) found interactive activities related to books being read engage children and have a lasting impact upon children's learning outcomes and their attitudes toward reading. Additionally, free voluntary reading stimulates literacy development (Krashen, 2007; Krashen, 2018). Further, aligning the summer library program activities to the summer school curriculum provides an opportunity for teachers to use the summer library program as a resource. Kim and White (2008) found teacher instruction, as a part of a voluntary summer reading program, builds fluency, comprehension, and basic decoding skills and has a significant effect on reading achievement. Teachers can incorporate instruction complementary to the school library media specialists' instruction in their daily routine and impact student reading achievement.

Conclusion

My evaluation of the school district's summer library program provided answers to my research questions about the impact of the program on student reading achievement and participants' perceptions. My findings suggest the summer library program has the potential to increase student reading achievement and school library program advocacy across the district. Educational policies that increase access to books, through increased library services, stand to have an important impact on student achievement (Alexander et al., 2007). District stakeholders have an opportunity to consider data from my evaluation

to inform future implementations of the summer library program and revise district policies and procedures related to the program.

CHAPTER FIVE

To-Be Framework

Through my program evaluation of the school district's summer library program, I discovered several issues impacting access and participation. I believe addressing the issues could lead to a significant increase in future program participation. My change leadership plan aims to increase student participation in order to capitalize on the contribution self-selected reading makes to literacy and knowledge (Krashen, 2016, p. 3) and the impact voluntary reading has on keeping students mentally active and curious about the world (Brantley, 2015, p. 24).

I found students who participated in the summer library program benefited from additional reading practice and experienced reading engagement. Librarians and parents identified value in the summer library program and expressed a clear desire to see it continued. I discovered a disconnect between the summer library program and the elementary summer school program. I also discovered a lack of administrative perceived value of library programs in general through my study. I propose a change leadership plan focused on an intentional alignment between the summer library program and elementary summer school, addressing school board policies affecting access, such as transportation and sign in procedures, and creating a culture shift which includes school library programs as an essential element of the district's educational pedagogy.

Envisioning the Success To-Be

My vision of the To-Be for the school district's summer library program includes ideal contexts, culture, conditions, and competencies (for a complete TO-BE organizational chart see Appendix F). In my To-Be organizational analysis, school

district leaders would realize new aspects of the summer library program, most notably an increase in student participation. Additionally, the community at large, including the tax referendum committee, would understand, support, and advocate fully utilizing school library programs as an instructional resource across the district.

Future Contexts. Historically, school library programs are closed during the summer months, when school is not in session. This was the case in the school district where my program evaluation took place. When schools close for the summer, library collections often sit idle. School district leaders established a summer library program to combat summer reading loss and provide access to books to students during summer vacation.

Previous studies have shown access to books during the summer contributes to student reading achievement (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015; Petty et al., 2017). During the 2017-18 school year, 46% of students in the district achieved a passing score on the state ELA assessment. An ideal future context would include a 1% overall increase in the percentage of students receiving a passing score per year for every year the summer library program is continued, beginning with the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, the summer library program, in conjunction with a focus on strategic library use during the school year by teachers and students will contribute to increased reading achievement across the district.

Social factors in the school district affecting reading achievement included limited parental involvement and engagement with reading at home for enjoyment. Some of the limited involvement was due in part to limited parental interactions with school libraries and school librarians. In an ideal future context for the school district, parents and school

librarians will form genuine relationships and work together to promote free voluntary reading during the summer and throughout the school year. During the summer library program, school librarians will model various strategies parents can implement at home with their children. School librarians will also invite parents to visit the school library throughout the school year to foster ongoing partnerships. Parents will internalize positive experiences with the school library program and subsequently create a positive home reading environment where family reading is promoted. I believe increased reading opportunities, both through the school library program and at home, will increase students' cognitive abilities thus producing the social benefit of more educated students who will become more educated members of society.

An ideal context also includes increased support in funding by the tax referendum committee. The referendum committee will modify the funding allocation and provide funding for additional days, sites, and librarians to operate the summer library program. The tax referendum committee will also commit to funding the summer library program for the next five years so long term planning may begin. Since reading gains and losses are cumulative and accrue incrementally (McGill-Franzen et al., 2016); multiple iterations of the summer library program are needed to measure a return on investment (ROI). School district leaders will begin to track the ROI of the summer library program over the next five years and provide an annual summary to be posted on the district's website for the community to view.

Future Culture. Participation in the summer library program will increase as perceived value of school library programs increases among all stakeholders. Students, parents, and community members will become aware of the summer library program's

offerings and access its available resources. School district leaders will recognize and acknowledge the value of school library programs and include the library in long-term strategic plans. School district leaders will restore library staffing levels to one certified school library media specialist and one full time library assistant for each school site. Additionally, district leaders will allocate district funds to build and maintain school library collections providing each school site with a minimum of five dollars per student to purchase materials.

The American Library Association (2011) notes school libraries that are integrated into the learning fabric of the school and which contribute to student learning outcomes have a common set of characteristics:

- a state-certified, full time, library media specialist in the building
- the availability of para-professional staff who undertake routine administrative tasks and free the library media specialist to undertake instructional initiatives and reading literacy initiatives
- a library program that is based on flexible scheduling so that library media specialists and classroom teachers can engage in collaborative planning and delivery of information literacy instruction
- an active instructional program of information literacy integrated into curriculum content, and targeted towards learning curriculum content and skills
- a school library that meets resource recommendations of 15-20 books per child
- the provision of professional development on information literacy and technology literacies to the teaching faculty

- a budget allocation of $12-$15 per student per year to ensure currency and vitality of the information base
- a strong networked information technology infrastructure that facilitates access to and use of information resources in an and out of school

In my vision for the future, school district leaders will follow the recommendations of the American Library Association and work to build district's school library programs accordingly.

Additionally, school district leaders will include school library programs as an explicit component of the district's literacy plan and focus. School district leaders will begin to consider the school librarian a literary leader. McGill-Franzen et al. (2016) note the librarian's role in organizing programs that promote and facilitate students' engagement with and motivation towards reading is one primary way librarians provide literacy leadership.

District leaders will also strengthen cultural competency by articulating a clear and simple plan for including school libraries and school library media specialists in the overall strategic vision for district schools. The library is often assumed to be a part of the strategic plan but rarely is explicitly written into the plan. I believe the school district needs to make the school library's role explicit so that a culture shift occurs and, in an ideal culture, teachers, school library media specialists, and administrators see in writing exactly how the school library program integrates into the daily curriculum. District leaders will create and disseminate a simple one-page school library plan to all stakeholders. One-page plans that are clearly focused and simple allow all participants in the process to understand roles and execute the plan (Reeves, 2013).

For the summer school program, the elementary curriculum department will leverage the summer library program to include dedicated time in the library for free voluntary reading and participation in the featured book activities as a part of the summer school curriculum. District leaders will also create a special section in the summer school curriculum map related to the summer library program. The special section will inform teachers how they can use library resources and participate in a summer library activity during the summer session. District leaders will advocate for the summer library program and provide teachers with direct permission to utilize the program for summer school with the simple inclusion of such a section.

District leaders will also incorporate culturally relevant activities and read-aloud books in the summer library program to increase participation and connect with all populations of the community. District leaders will provide funding for school librarians to purchase culturally relevant materials for the summer library program and also make them available for use during the school year. The Cultural Proficiency Continuum is a useful tool for describing the range of practices, values, and behaviors associated with responding to diverse environments (Lindsey, Terrell, & Robins, 2009). District leaders will use the continuum to guide and inform their curriculum and practices as they relate to issues of diversity in the summer library program. The continuum provides district leaders with a tangible way to measure progress and to identify where along the journey summer school library resources, activities, and practices are. By knowing where they fall on the continuum based upon their actions and beliefs, they can work towards moving further along the continuum until cultural proficiency is realized (Lindsey et al., 2009).

Future Conditions. External parameters affecting the school library program include time, resources and school board policies. Until this point in time, the level of participation was directly affected by current school district policies and procedures as all public summer library participants were required to have an adult sign in as a visitor to the school in order to access the summer library program. In future conditions for the school district, the school board will pass new policies for the summer library program to accommodate older students, above the age of 13, to act as chaperones for younger elementary students and sign in at a school site to access the summer library program. With a valid district-issued school identification card, a middle school or high school student will be able to sign in a younger student for the summer library program.

In my program evaluation, I found the primary request from stakeholders was a need for continuous checkout throughout the day. I believe a dedicated library assistant is the solution. In future conditions, school district leaders will staff the summer library program with a library assistant for the purpose of dedicated circulation desk duties and supervision of students. I also found a desire for extended hours of the program and increasing the frequency of the program to more than once a week. In future conditions, district leaders will request additional tax referendum funding to hire library assistants as well as library media specialists for three days a week and the request will be granted by the tax referendum committee.

With a dedicated library assistant to provide circulation desk coverage, the school library media specialist will be available to deliver content and programming to parents and students and to collaborate with summer school teachers. On site at each summer location for three days a week instead of one, there will be more opportunities to work

with teachers and serve as a resource for the summer school curriculum. When classroom teachers and school librarians collaborate or coteach, the learning experience is enhanced (Loertscher, 2014). Additionally, there will be more days per week for parents to access the summer library program and bring in their children.

Another future condition includes district leaders providing transportation to the summer library program. The summer library program was designed to capitalize on the existing summer school building sites already in use for the third grade summer school program in order to reduce operational costs associated with building maintenance. The rationale was to host the summer library program at sites already being utilized for summer school and have the program serve as a resource for both summer school students and the general public. District leaders will expand sharing operational costs by allowing parents to request transportation to the summer library program on summer school route busses, space permitting. If a summer school bus route has available seats, a parent can request seats for his or her household at no cost. If more requests are made than available seats for transportation to the summer library program, district leaders will seek additional funding from the tax referendum committee for transportation assistance.

Future Competencies. While the librarian group is well-versed in their core job skills of information literacy, many administrators in the district are not and the disconnect often leads to a lack of general awareness of school library programs and competencies of school library media specialists. Future competencies of the school district include providing administrators with professional development training on school library programs. As a result of the targeted training, the perceived value of school library programs will increase greatly across the district as administrators understand and

appreciate school librarian competencies. Specifically, administrators will start to recognize school librarians as literacy experts versed in the core competencies as defined by the American Library Association (2019):

- School librarians are familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for information, reading for pleasure, and reading for lifelong learning.
- School librarians use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment of reading in order to promote habits of creative expression and lifelong reading.
- School librarians demonstrate the ability to develop a collection of reading and information materials in print and digital formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of K-12 students and their communities.
- School librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to reinforce a wide variety of reading instructional strategies to ensure K-12 students are able to create meaning from text.

Administrators will value school library media specialists as instructional resources and encourage them to collaborate with teachers on lessons. Todd, Gordon, and Lu (2011) highlight the benefit of principals who create a school culture in which the school library is an important dynamic in the central role of the school. Teachers are cognizant of whether the principal is committed to the school library and the ways in which the principal supports it (Todd et al., 2011). The principal is in a unique position to engage teachers in a new culture and advocate for the library program which directly

contributes to the most effective operation of the school library. Administrators will support library media specialists' efforts by providing library assistants for circulation desk support, so they are better utilized as a resource and available for collaborative meetings and lessons. Administrators will actively promote the summer library program to parents. District leaders will also promote the summer library program and institute district call out reminders and host a kick-off rally event at the beginning of the summer to publicize the summer library program.

Conclusion

I discovered several issues impacting access and participation levels of the school district's summer library program. My change leadership plan aims to increase student participation by addressing issues of perceived value, program alignment, and school board policies. I propose a change leadership plan focused on alignment to elementary summer school, addressing school board policies affecting access, transportation, and sign in procedures, and creating a culture shift which includes school library programs as a major component of a strategic literacy plan.

CHAPTER SIX

Strategies and Actions

My vision for the school district's summer library program includes ideal contexts, culture, conditions, and competencies that can be accomplished through a series of strategies and actions. School district leaders will realize new aspects of the summer library program, most notably an increase in student participation by incorporating a systematic process to include building a sense of urgency around district school library programs (Kotter, 2018). Additionally, the community at large, including the tax referendum committee, will understand, support, and advocate fully utilizing school library programs as an instructional resource across the district. My change leadership plan focuses on an intentional alignment between the summer library program and elementary summer school curriculum, addressing school board policies affecting access, such as transportation and sign in procedures, and creating a culture shift which recognizes school library programs as an essential element of the district's educational pedagogy (for a complete list of strategies and actions see Appendix G).

Strategies and Action

Kotter (2018) defines an 8-step process to guide organizations through a change initiative which includes:

1. Create a Sense of Urgency
2. Build a Guiding Coalition
3. Form Strategic Vision and Initiatives
4. Enlist Volunteers
5. Remove Barriers

6. Generate Short-Term Wins
7. Sustain Acceleration
8. Institute Change

I recommend school district leaders follow Kotter's 8-step model to initiate change. District leaders have an opportunity to apply specific strategies and actions to transform the summer library program and to strengthen school library programs overall.

Create a Sense of Urgency. A sense of urgency exists with regards to reading performance in the school district as evidenced by the fact that during the 2017-18 school year, 46% of students in the district achieved a passing score on the state English Language Arts (ELA) assessment. An ideal future context includes a 1% overall increase in the percentage of students receiving a passing score per year for every year the summer library program is continued, beginning with the 2018-19 school year. To achieve this goal, school district leaders will articulate the sense of urgency for the need to raise reading achievement to all stakeholders by introducing the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign. This campaign will focus on educating the community about the need to support reading and the positive contributions school library programs and school librarians provide in raising student reading achievement. Building urgency is about concentrating on a window of opportunity that is open today but may close tomorrow (Kotter, 2018, p. 10). Such an opportunity brings people together, aligning them around a commonality, and clarifying where energy should be directed. (Kotter, 2018, p. 10). In my professional experience, campaigns to support the local public library have been successful in the community, and I believe the same success will translate to a campaign specific to school libraries.

One focus of the campaign will be to showcase the programs and activities of the summer library program. The window of opportunity as noted by Kotter (2018), includes highlighting the positive press about the summer library program while the program is in progress. Pictures of students and articles about experiences written by school librarians will be posted on the district's library website. The district library administrator will also partner with the director of children's services from the local public library system to request an article feature about the summer library program in the quarterly public library newsletter distributed to all county residents. District leaders will contact the local newspaper and request a feature story about the summer library program and the new Leverage Our School Libraries campaign.

District leaders will also conduct an email marketing campaign for the summer library program to further promote the cause and create a sense of urgency. Gustafson and Short (2017) found email to be the most preferred method of communication for library event notifications. Since people tend to prefer to be notified of a library event within one week of the event (Gustafson & Short, 2017), district leaders will send a district wide email about upcoming summer library program activities one week prior to the scheduled summer library program event. District leaders will include a quick snapshot of related district reading achievement data with each email to highlight the need for higher reading achievement and promote the summer library program as a resource to support reading achievement growth.

School district leaders will commit to implementing the summer library program until the summer of 2025. School district leaders will formally request from school board members and tax referendum committee members permission to continue the program for

the specified time period. Formal approval of the summer library program will allow district leaders to make long-term plans and commitments to the program. The Leverage Our School Libraries campaign will be a strategic part of the funding plan as it will also be used in conjunction with promoting the next tax referendum which will be up for reauthorization by ballot in 2025. School district leaders will have an opportunity to build community support for school library programs while providing a valuable resource in the summer library program.

Build a Guiding Coalition. Kotter (2018) noted a guiding coalition must consist of members from multiple layers of the hierarchy, represent many functions, receive information about the organization at all levels and ranks, and synthesize that information into new ways of working (p. 13). School district leaders will build a guiding coalition to lead the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign and to advocate for the 2025 tax referendum. School district leaders will create a district literacy professional learning community (PLC) to include teachers, school librarians, and curriculum coaches. System-wide change needs entire system collaboration and networking which can be achieved with a PLC when participants broker the skills and knowledge they have learned (Prenger, Poortman, & Handelzalts, 2019). The district literacy PLC will serve as the district's guiding coalition to implement and lead the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign and share their expertise with the broader community. The district school library administrator and the coordinator for curriculum and instruction will also be a part of the PLC.

In addition to the district literacy PLC, district leaders will create the position of lead librarian and add the position to the framework of area curriculum coaches. The lead

librarian will serve as a curriculum coach with a focus on supporting library curriculum at school sites. Finally, the superintendent will appoint a school librarian representative to the tax referendum committee and the district literacy team.

Form Strategic Vision and Initiatives. Strategic initiatives are targeted and coordinated activities that, if designed and executed fast enough and well enough, will make the vision a reality (Kotter, 2018, p. 16). When the initiatives are crafted by a diverse set of employees and validated by senior leaders, they will advance the opportunities for success (Kotter, 2018, p. 16). Members of the district literacy PLC will set the goals for Leveraging Our School Libraries campaign with regards to raising student reading achievement and create a prioritized list of activities to implement during the school year. Examples of strategic initiatives include:

- Revamping the student book reading competition, known as Book Bowl, to include classroom teachers and librarians co-sponsoring teams
- Establishing a Collaboration Fair to showcase to parents and school administrators the projects teachers and school librarians have done together during the school year
- Aligning the summer school curriculum to summer library program activities
- Creating a special section on the district's summer school curriculum maps focused on summer library curriculum integration
- Conducting workshops for teachers and administrators at various school and community venues to advocate for school library programs and raising literacy achievement

District literacy PLC members will write a one-page plan to articulate the vision

for school library programs across the school district which will capture the stated goals. One-page plans allow all participants in the process to easily understand roles and execute the plan (Reeves, 2013). The plan will tie directly to the sense of urgency of raising student reading achievement and will clarify how the future will be different from the past, and how the future will become a reality (Kotter, 2018, p. 18). School district leaders will disseminate the plan to all stakeholders and post it on the district website. Summer school student participation in the featured book activities that are a part of the summer school curriculum and access to dedicated time in the library for free voluntary reading will be explicitly mentioned in the plan. School district leaders will also announce a special section in the summer school curriculum map related to the summer library program in the plan.

Enlist Volunteers. Large-scale change can only occur when very significant numbers of employees amass under a common opportunity and drive in the same direction (Kotter, 2018, p.19). A primary objective of district literacy PLC members will be to advocate for school libraries and sustain the summer library program. To accomplish this goal, district leaders and district literacy PLC members will solicit volunteers and build relationships with key stakeholders and the community at large. District literacy PLC members will work to communicate the vision articulated in the one-page plan, so all volunteers connect with the movement. Kotter (2018) noted giving people a reason and motivation to join a movement goes a long way. Additionally, district literacy PLC members will solicit volunteers for signature marquee events such as Book Bowl and work to encourage parents to volunteer in school libraries. PLC members will also remember to recognize the efforts of existing volunteers in order to keep them

engaged and to recruit more. (Kotter, 2018, p. 21).

Partnerships will play a key role in advancing the work of the district literacy PLC. District leaders and district literacy PLC members will work to establish a formal partnership with the local public library. Students can benefit from true collaboration when public libraries and school districts partner and play to their respective strengths to better serve students (Lance & Barney, 2016). Through the partnership, school librarians and public librarians will hold quarterly joint professional development sessions to share ideas and strengthen skills. District literacy PLC members will be invited to speak at the beginning of each session to provide updates about the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign. School board members and tax referendum committee members will also be invited to attend the training sessions for informational purposes and to witness first-hand the partnership in action.

District leaders and district literacy PLC members will work to establish partnerships with parents to form genuine relationships and work together to promote free voluntary reading during the summer and throughout the school year. During the summer library program, school librarians will model various strategies parents can implement at home with their children. Parker and Reid (2017) found when educators served as mediators, by providing clear guidelines about the type of assistance parents could provide at home, a more distinctive partnership was created. District literacy PLC members will also invite parents to visit the school library throughout the school year to foster ongoing partnerships.

Remove Barriers. By removing barriers, leaders provide the freedom necessary for employees to work across boundaries and create real impact (Kotter, 2018, p. 22). I

identified several barriers in my program evaluation district leaders and district literacy PLC members will work to remedy. School district leaders will recognize and acknowledge the value of school library programs and include the library in long-term strategic plans by following the recommendations of the American Library Association (ALA). School district leaders will also work to build district school library programs according to ALA recommendations to include restoring library staffing levels to one certified school library media specialist and one full time library assistant for each school site. District leaders will explicitly write into the long-term strategic plan that all school library programs will operate on an open and flexible schedule, as recommended by the American Library Association (2019):

> An open schedule is responsive to the learning community's needs and provides equitable and flexible access to the school library's learning resources and spaces. The practice of scheduling classes in the school library on a set schedule to provide educator release or preparation time inhibits best practice by limiting collaboration and co-teaching opportunities between the school librarian and classroom educator. Learners and educators must be able to visit the school library in person or virtually when needed to collaborate with the school librarian and other learners and educators, use information sources and learning tools, and read for pleasure. (p. 1)

District leaders will also allocate district funds to build and maintain school library collections providing each school site with a minimum of five dollars per student to purchase materials. District leaders will encourage and promote building culturally relevant library collections in order to connect with all populations of the community.

Books purchased will be featured and used as a part of the summer library program and also made available to teachers and students throughout the school year. District leaders will use the Cultural Proficiency Continuum, a tool for describing the range of practices, values, and behaviors associated with responding to diverse environments (Lindsey et al., 2009), to guide and inform decisions as they relate to issues of diversity in the summer library program.

District leaders will alleviate the transportation barrier by providing transportation to the summer library program. District leaders will allow parents to request transportation to the summer library program on summer school route busses, space permitting. If a summer school bus route has available seats, a parent will be able to request seats for his or her household at no cost. If more requests are made than available seats for transportation to the summer library program, district leaders will seek additional funding from the tax referendum committee for transportation assistance.

In an attempt to make access to the summer library program easier, school district leaders will propose a new school board policy. The policy will be specific to the summer library program exclusively and will provide a special accommodation for older students, above the age of 13, to act as chaperones for younger elementary students and sign in at a school site to access the summer library program. With a valid district-issued school identification card, a middle school or high school student will be able to sign in a younger student for the summer library program.

Generate Short-Term Wins. Kotter (2018) noted a win is anything, big or small, that helps you move toward your goal and may take the shape of actions taken, lessons learned, processes improved, new behaviors demonstrated (p.25). District leaders will

generate and celebrate short-term wins in order to keep all stakeholders apprised of progress. District leaders will post an annual summary of the summer library program on the district website. Additionally, school district leaders will calculate the return on investment (ROI) of the summer library program and posted the calculation for the community to view.

The district literacy PLC and school librarians will partner to host an annual kickoff rally for the summer library program and a concluding celebration for all participants. School board members and tax referendum committee members will be formally invited to both events with official invitations. School district leaders will contact the local newspaper and television station to cover the events in order to maximize publicity. The district literacy PLC will establish an annual award for one elementary and one secondary district principal to recognize outstanding administrators who support school library programs. The award will be publicly awarded at a televised school board meeting to maximize publicity and raise public awareness. In my professional experience, positive public recognition among influential peers is welcomed and valued by school administrators.

Sustain Acceleration. Another critical step to improving systems, structures, and policies is sustaining acceleration (Kotter, 2018, p. 27). Kotter (2018) noted the need to continue the momentum after initial success in order to increase credibility and fully reach the vision. To maintain momentum for school libraries, district leaders will increase funding to provide services and support the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign. District leaders will increase the summer library funding request to the tax referendum committee in order to hire library assistants and library media specialists for three days a

week rather than one day a week for the summer library program. Referendum committee members will modify the funding allocation and provide funding for additional days, sites, and librarians to operate the summer library program. The tax referendum committee will also commit to funding the summer library program for the next five years so long term planning may begin.

In addition to tax referendum funding, district leaders will explore federal funding sources for school library programs. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows schools to utilize Title I and Title IVA funds for "developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2018, sec 1112 (13)(B) p. 54). School district leaders will also look to partner with local community organizations and the local education foundation for additional funding opportunities. In my professional experience, the local education foundation frequently supports the funding of reading initiatives.

To further sustain the acceleration (Kotter, 2018), school district leaders will provide regular updates to school board members and tax referendum committee members. In my professional experience, frequent updates and short newsletters are well received by school board members and tax referendum committee members. District literacy PLC members will create quarterly newsletters for the general public to include infographics and pictures as well as parent engagement opportunities. School district leaders will present the quarterly newsletter to school board members at a school board work session in advance of the public release. School district leaders will present the quarterly newsletter to tax referendum committee members at their public meetings.

Institute Change. Kotter (2018) found strong management and leadership was a critical need as organizations embedded new ways of working change principles into the fabric of the organization (p. 31). Strong management was needed to handle the day-to-day operations, and strong leadership was needed to capitalize on unpredictable opportunities (Kotter, 2018, p. 31). School district leaders will request a permanent allocation for a school library administrator position to handle day-to-day operations and unpredictable opportunities. A dedicated school library administrator, at the appropriate administrative level of authority in the school district, will be able to lead and/or contribute to the majority of change initiatives for the school district.

A school district library administrator will lead efforts to provide administrators with professional development training on school library programs and serve as an advocate for school library programs. As a result of the targeted training and advocacy, the perceived value of school library programs will increase greatly across the district as administrators understand and appreciate school librarian competencies and the contribution school library programs make to reading achievement. Additionally, administrators will value school library media specialists as instructional resources and encourage them to collaborate with teachers on lessons. The instructional role of the school librarian is paramount for the intellectual development and cultural growth of students as they grow up in a complex and diverse information world (Todd et al., 2011).

The school library administrator will play a critical role as a member of the district literacy PLC and as the administrative face of the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign. The school library administrator will work to build the instructional capacity of all school librarians so that value is perceived across the district by all stakeholders

and a new culture of supporting school library programs becomes a natural part of the school district's culture. The school library administrator will also work also work to build the leadership capacities of school librarians so they may become an integral part of their school's leadership team and work with the administrator to strengthen literacy across the district.

School district leaders will assess the effectiveness of the Leverage Our School Libraries campaign. One specific responsibility of the school library district administrator will be to develop an annual online district survey for all district staff and parents. The survey will consist of Likert scale questions to quantify the satisfaction levels of stakeholders with school library programs. The survey will also include open ended questions to allow stakeholders to express attitudes towards specific summer library program activities and to make additional comments.

School district leaders will send the survey electronically to the all parents and staff. Each school librarian will promote the survey at their school site and make available a print version of the survey should a parent request a print copy. The school library administrator will use data from the survey to inform school library program policies, assess the level of satisfaction with school library services, and to calculate a ROI. The ROI calculated will be shared with district leaders to be used and incorporated into formal presentations, reports, and newsletters for school board members, tax referendum committee members, and the general public.

Conclusion

My change leadership plan focuses on creating an intentional culture shift across the school district which includes school library programs as an essential element of the

district's educational pedagogy. School district leaders will leverage school library programs and school librarians to support literacy. Additionally, school district leaders will leverage the summer library program, in conjunction with a focus on strategic library use during the school year by teachers and students to support reading achievement across the district.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Implications and Policy Recommendations

School district leaders will propose a new school board policy to make access to the summer library program easier. School district leaders will work to remove the barrier of requiring an adult to accompany a student to the summer library program. The new accommodation will increase summer library participation by broadening the eligibility of chaperones and benefit the school district by increasing summer library participation rates thus providing more students with access to summer library programming and services.

Policy Statement

The new policy will be specific to the summer library program exclusively and will provide a special accommodation for older students, above the age of 13, to act as chaperones for younger elementary students and sign in at a school site to access the summer library program. With a valid district-issued school identification card, a middle school or high school student will be able to sign in a younger student for the summer library program. Parents of summer library participants will provide written permission for their student to attend the summer library program with an older student on a summer library program permission form. Forms will remain on file at the school site and will be used as part of the sign in process for the summer library program. Parents will identify older students by name, age, and current school site who may serve as a chaperone for the sole purpose of participating in the summer library program directly on the form. All eligible students named must have a valid district-issued identification card and present the card at the time of sign in. Additionally, district personnel will verify the eligibility of

each student named by parents to serve as chaperones to ensure they are above the age of 13 and are active students in the school district.

I recommend this specific policy because I found in my program evaluation a need to increase student participation in the summer library program. I found in my data the barrier of adult chaperone requirements directly affected student participation. School district leaders required students to be accompanied by an adult at all times when visiting a school site unless they were enrolled in a summer school program. All public summer library participants were required to have an adult sign in as a visitor to the school according to normal visitor policies and procedures in order to access the summer library program. Some students were affected by the adult sign in requirement and consequently could not access the summer library program due to a lack of adult chaperone availability. Students who could otherwise walk to the school site to access the program, were not permitted to do so without an adult. The current policy directly affected the ability for some students to participate and should be revised.

I believe the policy will effectively address the problem of low student participation by allowing more students to attend without a traditional parent or adult. Students who cannot attend with an adult may instead attend with an eligible older student. Increasing access to the summer library program and exposing participants to summer reading activities contributes to student reading achievement and can reduce summer reading loss. Summer reading loss is the idea that during the summer months, students regress or lose ground in reading skills as measured by their end of year reading test scores and beginning of the new school year reading scores. Petty et al. (2017) found summer literacy experiences encouraged students to read over the summer and

contributed to the reduction of summer reading loss. I found in my program evaluation students who attended the summer reading program, on average, experienced no summer reading loss. I also found students who participated in the summer library program benefited from additional reading practice and experienced reading engagement.

Analysis of Needs

In the proceeding subsections, I will analyze my policy recommendation through six distinct disciplinary areas in order to provide a deeper understanding of how my policy proposal will impact all stakeholders. I will look at my policy recommendation through educational, economic, social, political, legal, and ethical lenses. My objective is to provide stakeholders with a broad understanding of how my policy recommendation will increase participation in the summer library program by creating equitable access to support student reading achievement across the school district.

Educational analysis. Student participation was low for the school district's summer library program. Increasing participation in the summer library program, by breaking down barriers to the adult chaperone requirement, has the potential to raise student reading achievement across the school district. Instructional practices such as free voluntary reading, direct instruction, and technology integration within the summer reading program context have been studied by researchers and have shown to have positive effects (Krashen, 2018; Smith, 2017; White & Kim, 2008; Whittingham & Rickman, 2015; Miller & Martin, 2016; Laverick, 2014). School district leaders designed the summer library program curriculum to incorporate elements of free voluntary reading, direct instruction, and technology integration. I believe students who are exposed to the summer library curriculum benefit from such instructional practices delivered by the

school librarian during the summer library program.

Previous studies have shown access to books during the summer contributes to student reading achievement (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2015; Petty, Smith, & Kern, 2017). Further, access to books is a significant predictor of student reading test performance (Krashen, Lee, & McQuillan, 2012). A policy to increase student participation in the summer library program increases the number of students exposed to summer library books, programming, and activities. Students who participate in the summer library program also have increased exposure to a school librarian. School librarians use authentic and engaging instructional strategies that reinforce classroom reading instruction in support of lifelong learning and to build an appreciation for literature (American Association of School Librarians, 2019). The combination of matching student interests and providing continuous scaffolding, or instruction, is one of the most successful mechanisms for slowing summer reading loss (Whittingham & Rickman, 2015).

Economic analysis. The economic impact of a policy proposal to increase student participation has many layers and ultimately benefits the school district and society at large. The school district will incur a minimal financial cost to implement a policy to remove the adult chaperone requirement. Summer school library assistants and school receptionists could absorb the responsibility of using the permission form to verify student chaperones at the time of sign in for the summer library program. School district leaders could create the form as a part of normal duties. Additionally, school district leaders could make print and digital copies available to the public at a reduced cost utilizing the school district's copy services contract.

The larger economic impact of a policy to remove a barrier that ultimately increases student participation in the summer library program may be realized through increased student reading achievement which can be a predictor for high school graduation and economic success. For example, researchers found grade 8 students who met or exceeded proficiency on the grade 8 reading assessment, had an on-time graduation rate of 86.3% compared to 69.3% for students who did not meet proficiency on the grade 8 reading assessment (Norbury et al., 2012). Further, there is also a positive relationship between educational attainment, including having a high school diploma, and the hourly earnings of workers (Myeong, López, & Yongseung, 2019, p. 174). Researchers found years of schooling had a statistically and economically significant positive effect on earnings (Myeong et al., 2019, p. 179). For example, in October 2019, by educational attainment, full-time workers without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of $606, compared with $749 for high school graduates without college (U.S. Department of Labor Department, 2019). The ultimate goal of the school district is to award high school diplomas to students, and the summer reading program is one way to provide students with an opportunity to strengthen reading skills during the summer months so they may become proficient readers who can pass the state graduation assessment, which includes a reading assessment.

Social analysis. Social impacts of a policy proposal to increase student participation in the summer library program include strengthening relationships among stakeholders, promoting positive experiences with libraries, developing life-long readers who read for pleasure, and creating information literate students who contribute to a global society. During the summer library program, school librarians will model various

strategies parents can use at home with their children to foster a positive reading environment at home. A positive home reading environment is a social benefit that can support reading achievement. Pan et al. (2017) found parental reports of children's early language skills and familial reading performance and habits were significant indicators of children's subsequent reading achievements. Additionally, families help children's literacy skills grow by reading at home, everyday conversations, and sharing books (Lopez, Caspe, McWilliams, Harvard Family Research Project, & Public Library Association, 2016).

School librarians will also invite parents to visit the school library throughout the school year to foster ongoing partnerships and promote library usage. Bauserman and Knaebel (2016) found in a study looking at an after-school reading tutoring program located in the local public library, the added benefit of parents of student participants signing up for library cards, an increased use in library materials, and an increased repeat use of the library. I believe such benefit would occur with regards to a summer library program with parents, chaperones, and students using the available school library materials, and engaging in repeat use of the school library. In addition, the researchers found student participants of the library-based program became more competent readers, library users, and members of the community (Bauserman & Knaebel, 2016).

Positive interactions with libraries, including the summer library program, may foster positive reading and enjoyment attitudes among participants. Students who have a positive experience with the summer library program may associate free voluntary reading with a positive emotional response. There is a link between mental wellbeing and reading enjoyment with reading attitude in children being one component strongly

associated with mental wellbeing (Clark, Teravainen-Goff, & National Literacy Trust, 2018). School librarians use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment of reading in order to promote habits of creative expression and lifelong reading (American Association of School Librarians, 2019).

A policy to increase participation in the summer library program can also increase general intelligence. Ritchie, Bates, and Plomin (2015) studied identical twins raised in separate environments and found twins with better earlier reading ability compared to their identical cotwin tended to also have better reading scores and higher scores on general intelligence tests when measured at multiple ages throughout the study. I believe increased intelligence is a social benefit of the summer library program which creates a more educated student who becomes a more educated member of society who has the cognitive ability to interact with a global world.

Political analysis. School district leaders rely primarily on tax referendum funding to operate the summer library program. The local community voted for a special tax referendum to support literacy and school library programs. Passage of the referendum was affirmation of support for library programs, including summer library programs. The political impact of a policy proposal to increase student participation may include increased support for future tax referendums.

As a school librarian, I personally campaigned for the original library tax referendum in the community. At community meetings, I participated in discussions about the importance of school library programs and the need for increased funding. I found community members were receptive to messages that included examples of successful literacy programs and activities in the school library. I believe the ability to

demonstrate increased participation in the summer library program will be a positive example of focusing on literacy which will resonate with community members to garner their support.

Additionally, parents of students who have the ability to participate due to the new policy may be more likely to vote and advocate for future school library tax referendums. Parents of students who participate may also directly experience benefits to their children's reading achievement leading to increased parental support for school library programs. Furthermore, the summer library program requires school board approval to continue in future years, and in my professional experience with requesting funding for programs in the school district, school board members are more likely to support programs with higher levels of parental and community support.

Legal analysis. School district leaders must consider legal implications for a policy which allows minors to supervise other minors. According to a state statute, students are under the jurisdiction of the school while participating in an authorized school-sponsored event such as the summer library program (citation of state statute withheld to maintain the anonymity of the state and district) and as such, students are to be under the supervision of a designated staff member (citation of state statute withheld to maintain the anonymity of the state and district). The library assistant and the school librarian will serve as designated staff members. In their official capacity as supervisors and according to state statute, they will have the ability to expel a student from the program at any time should inappropriate behavior occur (citation of state statute withheld to maintain the anonymity of the state and district). District leaders must create a permission form which includes explicit parameters for participation and clearly states

the expectations of parents, students, and identified student chaperones. The district should follow the basic template for a field trip form to include relevant emergency contact information and medical information, and also include new fields to accommodate the nature of the summer library program. District leaders should also include a clear stipulation that unacceptable behavior from either a student participant or a student chaperone will limit program access or constitute removal from the program.

Moral and ethical analysis. The barrier of an adult chaperone requirement may disproportionately affect families with lower socioeconomic status (SES) levels. Parents who work full time may be less likely to personally serve as a chaperone for their child to attend the summer library program. The new policy will benefit such low SES students by allowing them to participate with an older student chaperone instead of a parent who is at work during library hours. I believe school district leaders have an opportunity to provide access equity through the policy and facilitate participation regardless of income level or employment status.

Researchers found low-wage workers often lacked workplace supports to be able to participate in school activities with their children (Haley-Lock & Posey-Maddox, 2016). Additionally, researchers found when low-wage workers requested time off for school activities it was not always approved and created tension between mothers' school and home roles when the time off request pulled from the same bank needed for sick children and vacation (Haley-Lock & Posey-Maddox, 2016). In a study looking at the barriers to parent-school involvement, researchers found students with two parents working full time had 68% of their parents report the inability to get time off from work as the main barrier to their ability to participate in a school activity and 78% of single

parents employed full time reported the same limitation (Redford, Huo, McQuiggan, American Institutes for Research, & National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

Implications for Staff and Community Relationships

I believe the policy to allow older students to serve as chaperones for the summer library program will strengthen relationships among students, parents, and school personnel. Libraries are not just about the building and book collection; instead, libraries are about the building people (Lopez et al., 2016). Consequently, school libraries are about school personnel including school librarians, library assistants, teachers, and school staff who are present during the school day. From this perspective, family engagement means librarians and school personnel are creating trusting relationships with families to make them feel comfortable coming to libraries with questions and ideas (Lopez et al., 2016).

More student participation in the summer library program also increases exposure to libraries and their offerings for participating students' parents, chaperones, and family members. Positive experiences with the summer library program may increase library usage and visitation in general by students and their family members. Libraries help families connect with each other and find other community resources and organizations (Lopez et al., 2016). Libraries bring families together in a welcoming and supportive environment to create social bonds and networks that benefit children and families (Lopez et al., 2016).

In my professional experience, older students enjoy reading to young elementary students, and teachers welcome having older students serve as reading role models for younger students. As a former school librarian, I coordinated opportunities for high

school students to become reading mentors to elementary students and witnessed positive interactions between mentors and mentees. I believe older student chaperones will benefit from interactions with younger elementary students in the summer library program. The new policy may have an added benefit of allowing older students who serve as chaperones to receive volunteer credit hours for the time they work with students. Some students, such as students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) in the school district, must earn volunteer hours to qualify for certain scholarships and college admissions. IB and AICE students who serve as chaperones for summer library students will have an opportunity to be involved with helping shelve books or reading to students during their time at the summer library program, which can qualify for volunteer hours the school librarian can verify.

Conclusion

The barrier of requiring an adult to accompany a student to the summer library program can be removed by school district leaders with a new policy. The new policy will increase summer library participation by broadening the eligibility of chaperones for the program. School district leaders, parents, students, and the community at large have an opportunity to realize the educational, economic, and social benefits of a new policy which creates equitable access to school library programming and services to support student reading achievement across the school district.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

I evaluated a school district's summer library program designed to prevent summer reading loss. My program evaluation informs my future vision for the school district's summer library program and school library programs in general. I hope school district leaders realize new aspects of the summer library program, most notably an increase in student participation, by incorporating my change leadership plan and other findings from my program evaluation.

Discussion

The purpose of my study was to evaluate the impact a school district's elementary summer library program had on participating students' reading achievement and in preventing summer reading loss. Summer reading loss is the idea that during the summer months, students regress or lose ground in reading skills as measured by their end of year reading test scores and beginning of the new school year reading scores. In an attempt to combat summer reading loss and promote summer reading, the school district launched a summer library program. The summer library program's effectiveness was the focus of my evaluation.

I evaluated a school district's summer library program and its impact on student achievement in reading. I analyzed and compared the treatment of participation in the school district's summer library program for a group of students to a non-participating control group. I studied both groups' average i-Ready reading performance assessment data from the spring 2018 and fall 2018 assessment periods and analyzed interviews and surveys from parents and school librarians.

I found school librarians and parents overwhelmingly supported the summer library program and advocated for future continuation. Most librarians expressed a perceived value and benefit of the program for students. Most parents expressed a perceived value and benefit of the summer library program for their child. I found students who participated in the summer library program on average did not experience summer reading loss.

Summer library participants' fall i-Ready scores increased 8.63 points for each grade level and 31.43 points for each visit where both grade and visits were a significant predictor of fall i-Ready scores. Of treatment group participants, 51.47% of students showed positive gains or remained the same in scale score between the spring and fall assessment periods. The treatment group showed an average overall gain in scale score of 0.809 as compared to the control group with an average loss of 0.177. While the average point gain results were not statistically significant, my data showed the summer library participant group’s average point gain on the reading assessment, while minimal, nonetheless established a pattern of no reading loss when compared to the non-participant group. For these reasons, I suggest the results are promising and show potential for a summer library program to have a positive impact on students. School district leaders may use my program evaluation as a baseline and road map to build upon.

I evaluated the summer library program and gained a deeper understanding of what occurred during the school district’s implementation of a summer library program. My evaluation demonstrated the program was beneficial to students, parents, teachers, and librarians, and I will use my findings to advocate for future funding to continue the program. I found several key findings which can serve as a road map for improvement of

the summer library program in future implementations:

- The summer library program should have more of a connection to summer school.
- The summer library program should operate on a flexible and open schedule.
- Summer library program activities should include hands-on activities.
- Increasing program participation should be a primary focus of the district.

One goal of my program evaluation was to study and raise awareness of school library programs and their relationship to student literacy achievement. I also sought to evaluate the return on investment (ROI) for the tax referendum funds used for the summer library program and provide the community and the school board with information about the impact the funds allocated for summer libraries had on student reading achievement. My analysis of interview and survey data revealed an overwhelming desire among stakeholders to continue the summer library program. I believe a clear path forward is one form of a return on investment for tax referendum stakeholders. Referendum committee members can use the support I found in my data to justify and approve future funding. Referendum committee members can also use the information to modify the funding allocation and possibly provide funding for additional days, sites, and librarians to operate the summer library program.

I discovered several issues impacting access and participation levels of the school district's summer library program. My change leadership plan aimed to increase student participation by addressing issues of perceived value, program alignment, and school board policies. I proposed a change leadership plan focused on summer library program alignment to elementary summer school, addressing school board policies affecting access, transportation, and sign in procedures, and creating a culture shift which includes

school library programs as a major component of a strategic literacy plan.

A key component of my change leadership plan focused on creating an intentional culture shift across the school district which includes school library programs as an essential element of the district's educational pedagogy. School district leaders will leverage school library programs and school librarians to support literacy. Additionally, school district leaders will leverage the summer library program, in conjunction with a focus on strategic library use during the school year by teachers and students to support reading achievement across the district.

I advocate school district leaders propose a new school board policy to make access to the summer library program easier. The new policy will provide a special accommodation for older students, above the age of 13, to act as chaperones for younger elementary students and sign in at a school site to access the summer library program. Parents of summer library participants will provide written permission for their student to attend the summer library program with an older student on a summer library program permission form.

I recommend this specific policy because I found in my program evaluation a need to increase student participation in the summer library program. I also found in my data the barrier of adult chaperone requirements directly affected student participation. I believe the policy will effectively address the problem of low student participation by allowing more students to attend without a traditional parent or adult. Students who cannot attend with an adult may instead attend with an eligible older student. Increasing access to the summer library program and exposing participants to summer reading activities contributes to student reading achievement and can reduce summer reading

loss.

Leadership Lessons

One leadership lesson I learned is how to justify funding for new programs through demonstrating a benefit or return on investment (ROI). My data analysis taught me how to articulate results from qualitative data such as transcripts and interviews and to code data accordingly for patterns and trends. I was able to identify a ROI benefit for the summer library program that I hope to use in my professional career in education. Another leadership lesson I learned is how to systematically use the steps of a change leadership process to implement an initiative. The model I used for my program evaluation was Kotter's 8-step process, and I have a greater appreciation for how to approach a plan to initiate change through his steps.

I have grown as a leader in my ability to use scholarly research to investigate a problem. I have also grown as a leader in my ability to communicate my ideas in writing as a result of my program evaluation dissertation. I have strengthened my ability to recognize bias when reading academic journals and analyzing data as a result of my program evaluation journey.

I learned about the power district leaders have as they set the tone for policies and programs for the school district. I found in my program evaluation a perception among some that the summer library program was not an approved activity for summer school students and consequently some teachers were hesitant to bring their classes to participate in programs and activities. Going forward as a leader, I will be mindful of the need to clearly communicate the intentions for specific programs and policies. As in the case of the summer library program, I am now cognizant there may be a need to also be explicit

and direct to all stakeholders when activities are approved for use. I want to be sure teachers are not afraid to use a particular service or a program.

I am now well versed in the literature of summer reading loss and the contributions school library programs can make to student achievement in reading. I hope to use my knowledge for advocacy at the district level and work to secure funding for school library programs. I found in my evaluation students who participated in the summer library program benefited from additional reading practice and experienced reading engagement, yet I also discovered a lack of perceived value of library programs by administrators in general through my study. One of my goals is to educate fellow administrators on the value school library programs provide to literacy achievement.

Conclusion

School library programs have an important role to play in supporting student reading achievement. A successful and strong summer library program requires and starts with a strong school library program throughout the entire school year. School district leaders must leverage school libraries and school librarians in school district programs and policies to raise student literacy achievement. As former U.S. commissioner of education, Harold Howe once commented, “What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it feels about education” (Howe, *School Library Journal*, 1967).

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Appendices

Appendix A. Summer Library Program Sign In Sheet

Appendix B. Survey Questions for Parents

Appendix C. Interview Questions for Library Media Specialists

Appendix D. Propensity Score Matching in R

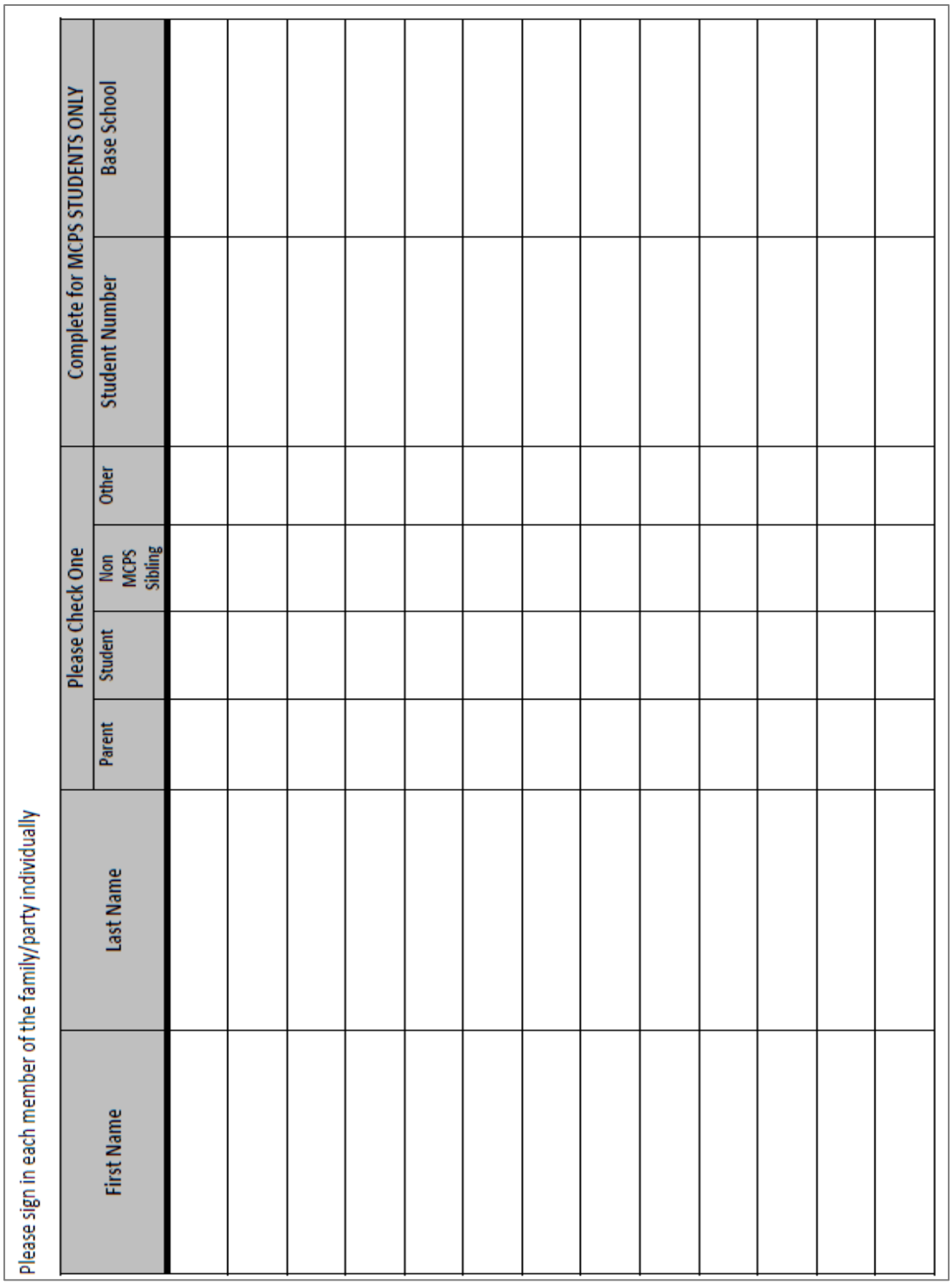
Appendix E. As-Is Diagnosis Analysis for Summer Library Program

Appendix F. To-Be Organizational Chart

Appendix G. Strategies and Action Chart

Appendix A

Summer Library Program Sign In Sheet



Please sign in each member of the family/party individually

First Name	Last Name	Please Check One				Complete for MCPS STUDENTS ONLY	
		Parent	Student	Non MCPS Sibling	Other	Student Number	Base School

Appendix B

Survey Questions for Parents

On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree, please provide feedback regarding how you felt about the summer library program for questions 1-8.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

1. My child enjoyed the summer library program.
2. The summer library program activities were engaging and appropriate.
3. The hours of operation for the summer library program were appropriate.
4. The summer library program contributed to my child reading books over the summer.
5. My child read the books he/she checked out during the summer library program.
6. I would like to see the summer library program offered again.
7. The summer library program locations were convenient for me to access.
8. I believe my child's reading ability was improved as a result of participating in the summer library program.

Please provide written responses to questions 9 - 11.

9. Why did you want your child to participate in a summer library program?

10. What did you like and/or dislike about the summer library program?

11. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the summer library program?

Appendix C

Interview Questions for Library Media Specialists

1. Do you believe the structure of the summer library program such as schedule, and types of activities, were appropriate? Please explain.
2. What activities do you feel were the most impactful to students during the program?
3. What activities do you feel were the least impactful to students during the program?
4. Did you modify the district provided activities for the program or introduce activities of your own? If so, please provide details.
5. What suggestions do you have for future activities, themes, and schedule of the program?
6. How can the summer library program be improved?
7. Do you believe the summer library program had a positive effect on participants? If so, in what ways?
8. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the summer library program?

Appendix D

Propensity Score Matching in R

R Notebook

Read in the data

The Excel spreadsheet was broken into two separate .csv files. As long as these files are in the same folder as this code, this will read properly.

```
treatment <- read.csv("treatment.csv")
all <- read.csv("all.csv")
```

These are the first few rows of just the treatment data.

```
head(treatment)
```

ABCDEFGHIJ0123456789

	Student..ID <int>	Base.School <fctr>	Grade <int>	Gender <fctr>	Ethnicity <fctr>	SES..Free...Reduced. <fctr>
1	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	2	F	Caucasian	No
2	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	M	Caucasian	No
3	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	M	Caucasian	No
4	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	M	Caucasian	Yes
5	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	4	M	Caucasian	Yes
6	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	3	M	Caucasian	Yes

6 rows | 1-7 of 9 columns

These are the first few rows of all the data.

```
head(all)
```

ABCDEFGHIJ0123456789

	Student.ID <int>	Base.School <fctr>	Grade <fctr>	Gender <fctr>	Ethnicity <fctr>	SES..Free...Reduced.Lunch. <fctr>
1	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	African American	Yes
2	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	Hispanic	Yes
3	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	Caucasian	No
4	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	Caucasian	No
5	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	Caucasian	Yes
6	XXXX	A ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	F	Caucasian	No

6 rows | 1-7 of 9 columns

Manipulate data

Here we generate a list with a separate data set for each individual in the treatment group. The data set has all of the individuals who match the target individual on school, grade, gender, and SES. Ethnicity was not included because it resulted in several individuals with no matches.

```
# Initialize output data
test <- list(rep(NA, nrow(treatment)))
test.length <- rep(NA, nrow(treatment))

# For each treatment individual
for(i in 1:nrow(treatment)){
  # Find all matches...
  test[[i]] <- merge(treatment[i,],
    all,
    # based on these variables
    by.x = c("Base.School", "Grade", "Gender", "SES..Free...Reduced."),
    by.y = c("Base.School", "Grade", "Gender",
"SES..Free...Reduced.Lunch.")
  )
  # Create a binary variable that is 1 for treatment
  test[[i]]$Group <- rep(0, nrow(test[[i]]))
  test[[i]][test[[i]]$Student.ID == test[[i]]$Student..ID, "Group"] <-
1
  # Subset of variables of interest.Change this if you change the
matching variables above.
  test[[i]] <- test[[i]][, c(9, 11:13)]
  # Sort so the treatment individual is the first row, which helps
later on
  test[[i]] <- test[[i]][order(test[[i]]$Group, decreasing = TRUE),]
  test.length[i] <- nrow(test[[i]])
}
```

This condition tests that every treatment individual has at least one possible match.

```
sum(test.length < 2)
## [1] 0
```

Find matches

Given all exact matches for the school, grade, gender, and SES variables, this then finds the individual with the smallest Euclidean distance for the two test scores to the treatment individual.

```
# Initialize output data
ids <- data.frame(treatment = rep(NA, length(test)), control = rep(NA,
length(test)))

for(i in 1:length(test)){
  # Calculate Euclidean distance between all points
  dist.mat <- dist(test[[i]],
    method = "euclidean",
    diag = FALSE,
    upper = TRUE
    )
  # Convert to matrix for subsetting
  my.column <- as.matrix(dist.mat)[-1, 1]
  # Find smallest distance
  sm.dist <- min(my.column)
  # Get treatment ID
  ids$treatment[i] <- test[[i]]$Student.ID[1]
  # Get control ID by finding individual with smallest distance to
treatment ind
  ids$control[i] <- test[[i]]$Student.ID[which(sm.dist ==
as.matrix(dist.mat)[, 1])]
}
```

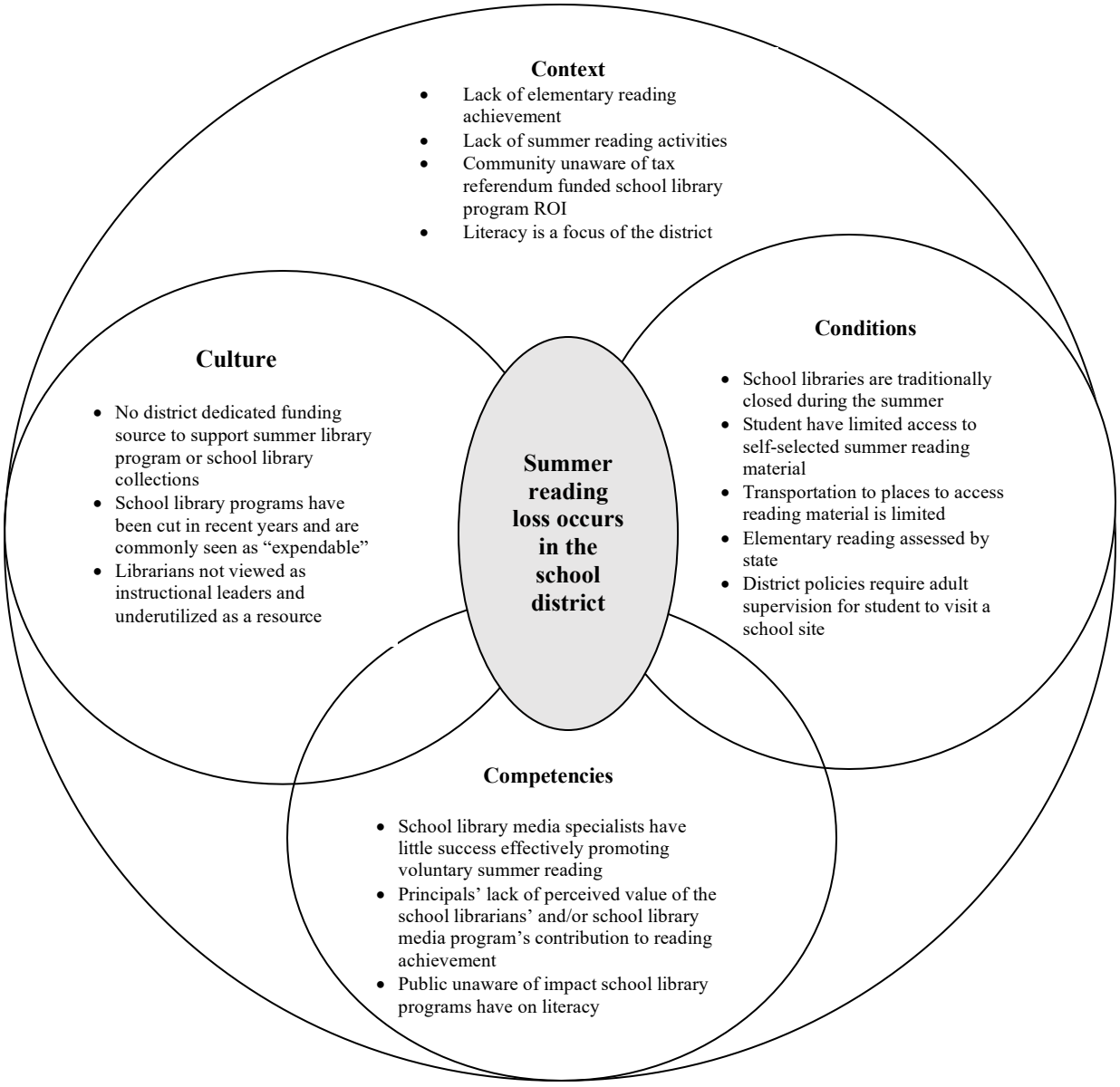
Save data

Writes to a .csv file in the same folder as this code.

```
write.csv(ids, "ids.csv", row.names = FALSE)
```

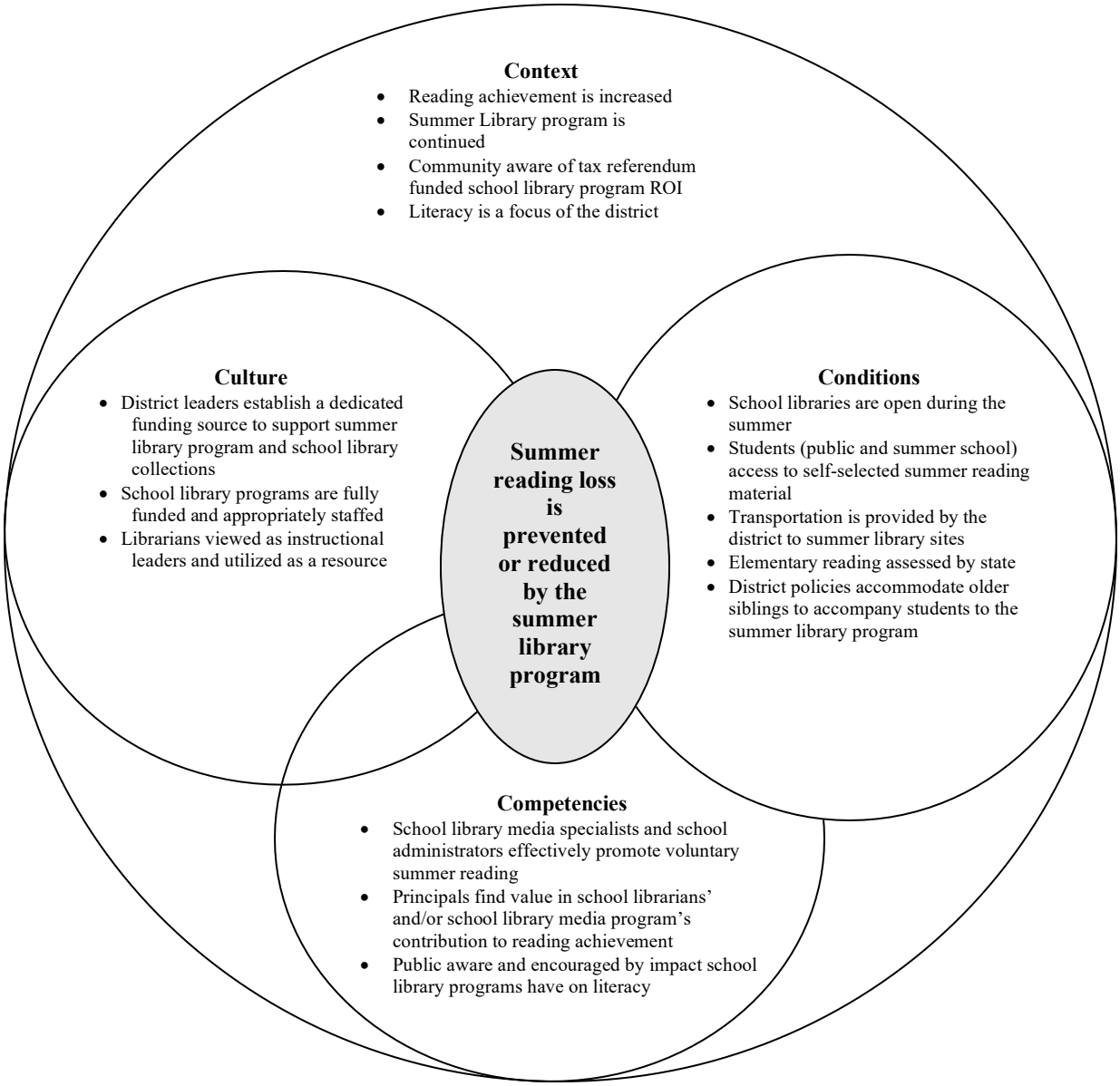
Appendix E

As-Is Diagnosis Analysis for Summer Library Program



Appendix F

To-Be Organizational Chart



Appendix G

Strategies and Action Chart

Strategies	Actions
Create a sense of urgency about school library programs and increasing reading achievement	• Articulate the need to close the summer reading gap and develop a plan to use school libraries to achieve a 1% increase each year, for the next 5 years in the district's reading assessment score. • Calculate a return on investment (ROI) for the summer library program for use in reports to the referendum committee, school board, and community. • Create the Leverage our School Libraries campaign and use the campaign to highlight the big opportunity to achieve a 1% yearly increase in district reading assessment scores for every year the summer library program is operational.
Build a guiding coalition to support new initiatives	• Appoint a librarian representative to the tax referendum committee. • Create a district literacy professional learning community (PLC). • Hire a district library program administrator at the appropriate administrative level. • Add a lead librarian to the framework of area curriculum coaches.
Form a strategic vision and initiatives for leveraging school library programs	• Leverage school libraries by increasing library usage overall in the district both in the summer months and throughout the regular school year. • Revamp Book Bowl to include classroom teachers and librarians co-sponsoring teams • Establish a Collaboration Fair to showcase to parents and school administrators the projects teachers and school librarians have done together during the school year • Align the summer school curriculum to summer library program activities • Create a special section on the district's summer school curriculum maps focused on summer library curriculum integration • Conduct workshops for teachers and administrators at various school and community venues to advocate for school library programs and raising literacy achievement.
Enlist a volunteer army to advocate for school library programs	• Partner with the local public library • Invite Tax Referendum committee members and School Board members to all events and trainings. • Conduct workshops for parents at various school and community venues to advocate for school library programs and teach reading literacy skills. • Partner with parents for signature marquee school library program events.

Enable actions by removing barriers to school library program policies and procedures	• Establish flexible scheduling for all school library programs. • Staff school libraries according to ALA guidelines. • Provide transportation to the summer library program. • Incorporate culturally relevant materials into the summer library program activities and school library collections.
Generate short-term wins for the summer library program and school library programs	• Post yearly summary of summer library data on website to include calculated ROI. • Host summer library program kickoff celebration. • Host end of summer library program thank you event. • Establish new principal award at school board meeting and present televised award for maximum public recognition.
Sustain acceleration to fund and support school library programs	• Increase funding to provide robust library services • Campaign for passage of future tax referendum to support school library programs. • Explore federal Title funding for school library programs. • Provide regular updates to tax referendum committee members and school board members. • Create quarterly newsletter to post on website to highlight library services, calculated ROI, and parent engagement opportunities.
Institute Change	• Hire a district library program administrator at the appropriate administrative level. • Provide targeted administrator professional development on school library program competencies. • Develop and annual online district library survey for all district staff and parents. • Use data from the survey to assess effectiveness of summer library program, inform school library program policies, assess the level of satisfaction with school library services, and to calculate a ROI.