

Communities In Schools of Aurora

Program Narrative

Aurora Summer Programs

2019



**Communities
In Schools**

Aurora

A nationally Accredited Affiliate



Introduction

Under the leadership of Mayor Richard Irvin and Aldermen, the City of Aurora has been a vital source of funding for summer programming. As a result, 1,287 Aurora youth were able to engage in summer learning and expanded learning opportunities in 2019 through various funding resources.

The following report provides information on the 2019 summer camps provided through funding in partnership with the City of Aurora, East Aurora School District, Fox Valley Park District, Indian Prairie School District, Oswego School District, West Aurora School District, and Communities In Schools of Aurora and community partners.

In particular, it examines program information related to participation, activities, and community partner services, specifically for the four summer camps funded by the City of Aurora. Additionally, it details the results of the surveys for the four summer camps and the drama camp, which were developed by Communities In Schools to track information on what the effects of participation in the summer camps had in increasing student achievement. Overall, the data collected indicates that students who participated in the summer programs made significant gains in all of the areas measured by surveys.

CIS values the quality of relationships and the impact summer programs have on youth by developing a meaningful, nurturing and positive relationship between the participants and adult and youth staff during the course of our programming.



Executive Summary

During summer vacation, many students lose knowledge and skills. By the end of summer, students perform, on average, one month behind where they left off in the spring. Of course, not all students experience “average” losses. Summer learning loss disproportionately affects low-income students. While all students lose some ground in mathematics over the summer, low-income students lose more ground in reading, while their higher-income peers may even gain. Most disturbing is that summer learning loss is cumulative; over time, the difference between the summer learning rates of low-income and higher-income students contributes substantially to the achievement gap. Because many students lose learning over the summer and some students need more time on task to master content, participation in summer learning programs should mitigate learning loss and could even produce achievement gains. Indeed, educators and policymakers are increasingly promoting summer learning as a key strategy to improving the achievement of low-performing students. In 2009, a Johns Hopkins University-based center for summer learning became an independent organization, the National Summer Learning Association, providing resources, guidance, and expertise to the summer learning community. In 2010, President Obama noted, “Students are losing a lot of what they learn during the school year during the summer.”¹ Earlier that year, First Lady Michelle Obama launched “United We Serve: Let’s Read, Let’s Move,” a program that encourages Americans to fight the summer reading gap, acknowledging that youth who do not read during the summer can lose months of academic progress (White House, 2010).²

¹ The remark was made during an interview on NBC’s Today Show, September 27, 2010.

² www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Making-Summer-Count-How-Summer-Programs-Can-Boost-Childrens-Learning.pdf

The primary goal of the summer camps is to provide youth in Aurora with a structured, supervised and stable environment during the summer.

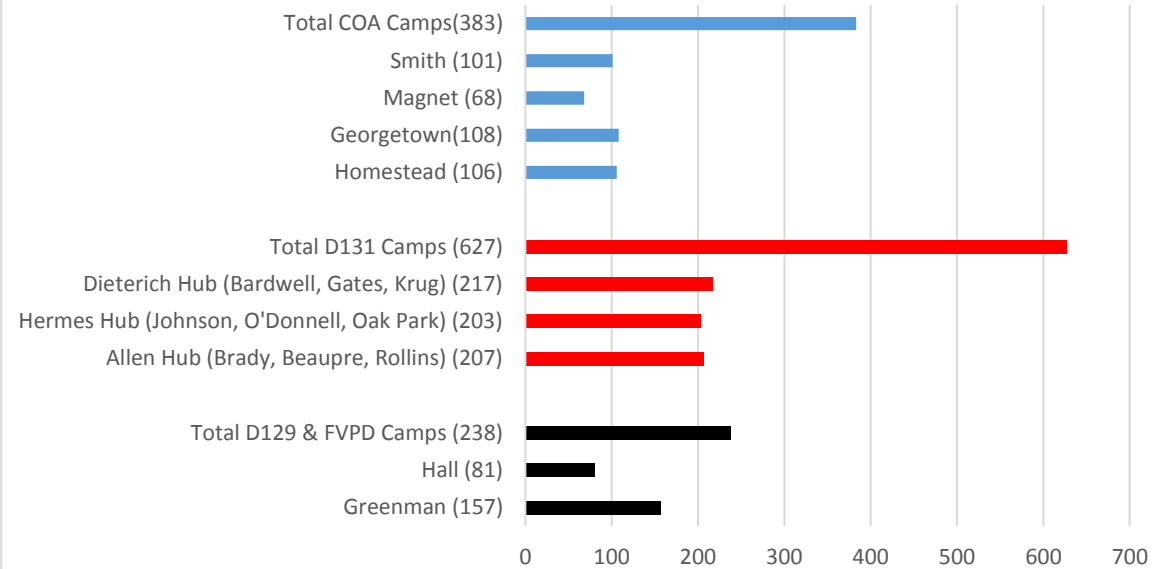


Children should look forward to coming each day to a camp environment where they can learn new skills, make new friends, experiment with ideas and grow in self-esteem. Children had the opportunity to build friendships, explore new interests with other children and with each staff member. The importance of cooperation, friendship, teamwork, decision making, responsibility, trust and distinguishing between right and wrong through their experience was emphasized continuously.

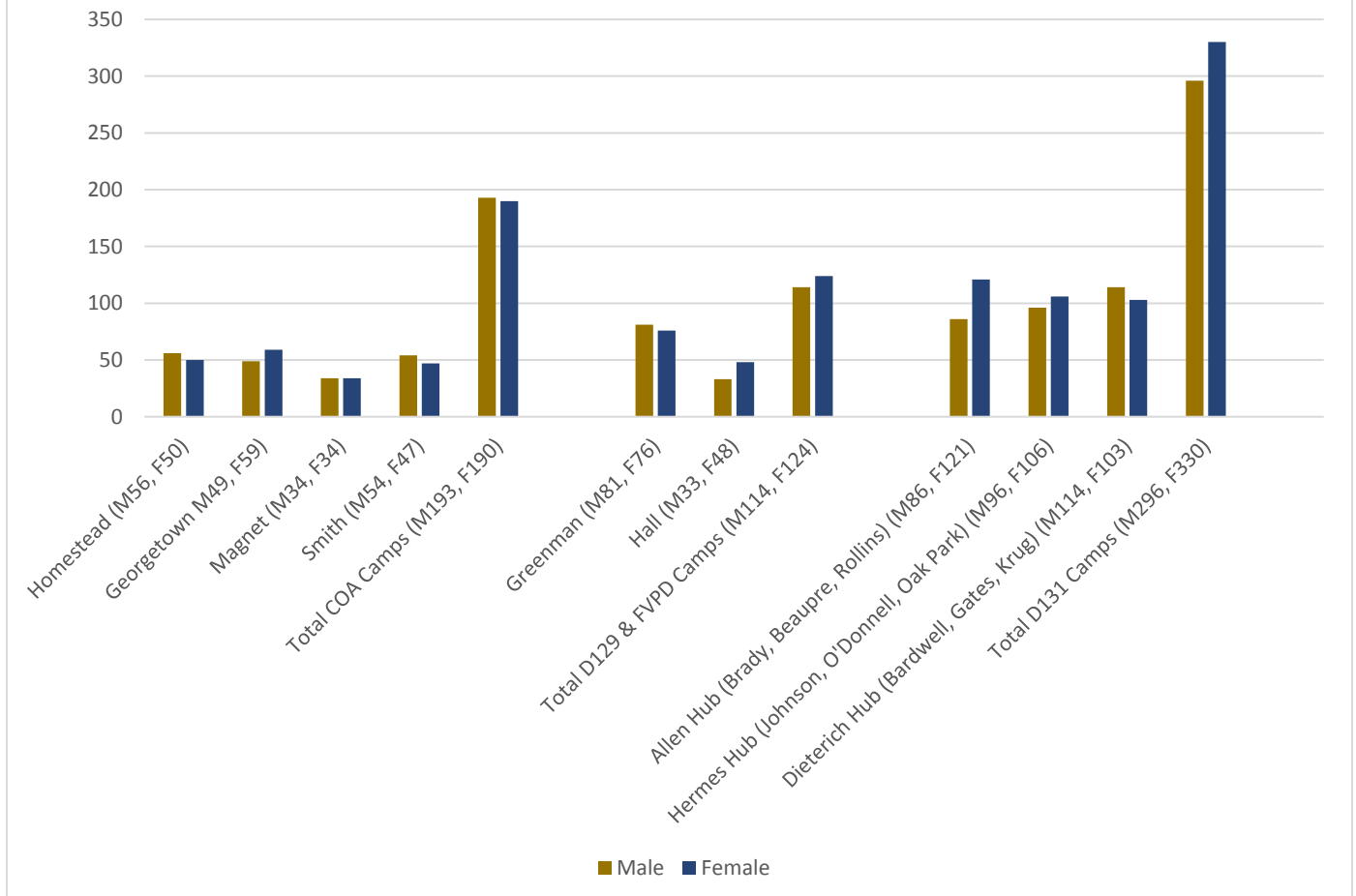


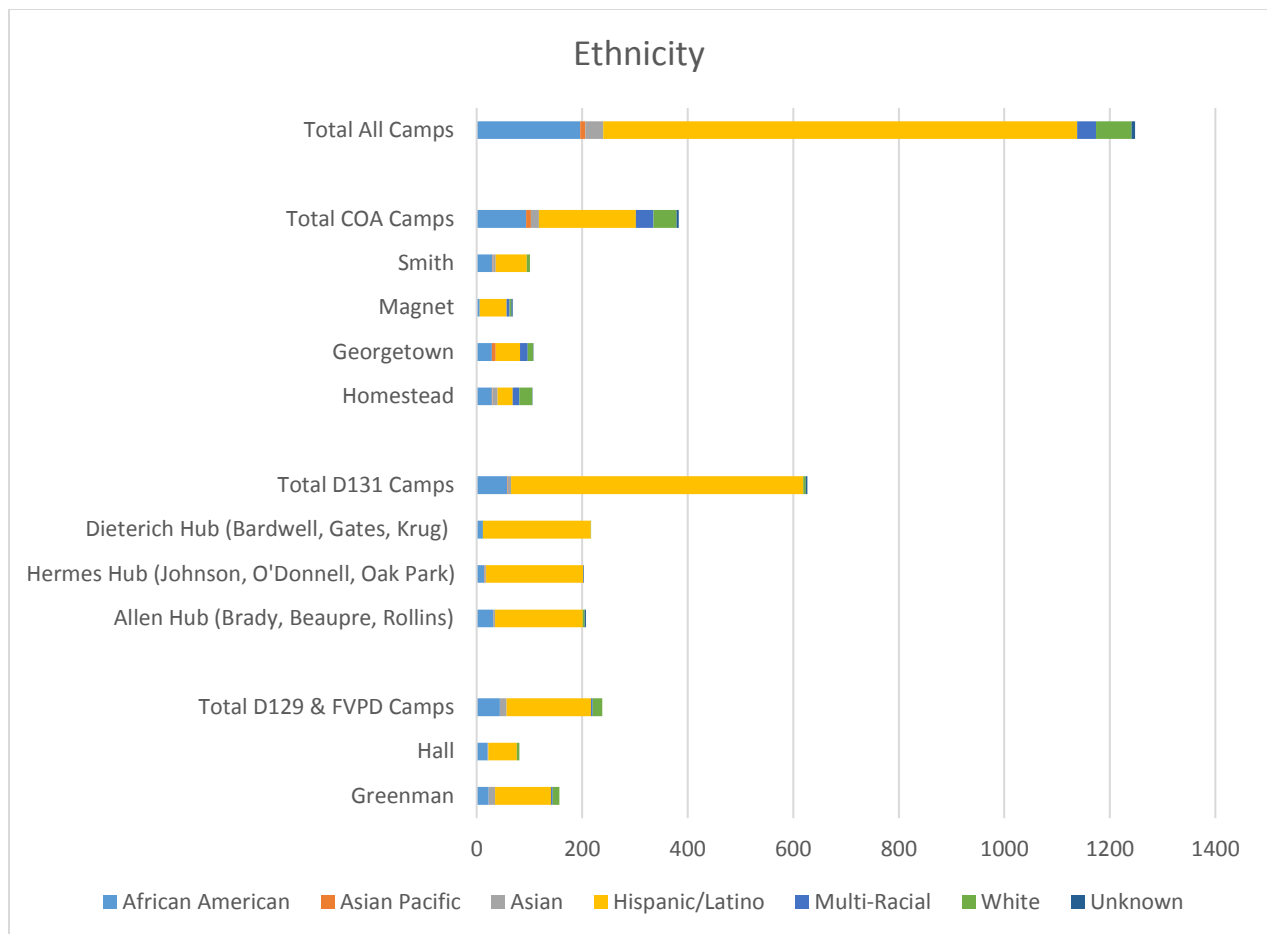
The programs also emphasized developing soft skills – strengthening peer relationships and ties with adults and developing persistence – that shape students’ motivation and self-confidence.

Summer 2019 enrollment numbers



Gender





	African American	Asian Pacific	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	White	Unknown
Homestead	29	1	10	28	13	24	1
Georgetown	29	7		46	15	10	1
Magnet	6			51	5	4	2
Smith	30	1	5	59		6	
Total COA Camps	94	9	15	184	33	44	4
Allen Hub (Brady, Beaupre, Rollins)	31	0	4	166	0	4	2
Hermes Hub (Johnson, O'Donnell, Oak Park)	15	1	2	184	0	0	1
Dieterich Hub (Bardwell, Gates, Krug)	12			204	0	1	
Total D131 Camps	58	1	6	554	0	5	3
Greenman	23		12	106	3	13	
Hall	21		1	54		5	
Total D129 & FVPD Camps	44		13	160	3	18	
Total All Camps	196	10	34	898	36	67	7



WHY IS SUMMER CAMP IMPORTANT?

Summer camp is important because it offers a structured opportunity for children to grow. Kids go from home to school to extracurricular activities, with each environment contributing to their development. Summer camp, then, is another unique venue for growth, allowing kids to become independent and self-confident, while able to socialize and make new friends, and even learning new skills.

SUMMER CAMP BENEFITS!

1. Camp helps kids build a unique interest.
 - Kids are able to try and engage in new activities that they have not been exposed to.

2. Camp reinvents and eliminates categories.
 - *Students often attend school year after year with the same peers, which can lead to labeling and being 'stuck' with a particular perception.*
3. Camp allows for a deep dive into new skills.
 - *Kids are able to really get out of their comfort zone to take some new risks with their skills, without the looming fear of failure and resulting repercussions.*
4. Camp leads to a new type of friendship building.
 - *Students who interact with like-minded peers are able to easily build friendships (potential lifelong friendships) rooted in similar interest.*
5. Camp helps with mental stimulation and physical activity.
 - *Various activities were offered each day whether logic based learning or physical activities.*
6. Camp reinforces independence and empowerment.
 - *Kids were able to meet new friends; use and develop team building skills and have a choice in activities provided that gave them confidence and leadership opportunities.*
7. Camp allows confidence to be reinforced by success.
 - *Both the adults and youth workers provided positive feedback during activities and socialization time to reinforce the positive skills of the students, which in turn reinforced success.*
8. Camp leads to creativity, free of judgement.
 - *Creativity can't be stifled at camp because students don't have to worry about getting a failing grade.*
9. Camp builds all-around resilience
 - *This is a culmination of many of the above benefits. New friendships, confidence, independence, sense of belonging. All of these things contribute to the development of the child as they make strides from being a kid to a strong, considerate, competent adult.*
10. Camp instills appreciation and gratitude.
 - *Students had the opportunity to experience new surroundings, new friends, new activities and field tips which instills appreciation for learning and experiencing new things and also appreciate the surroundings and friendships they had already established.*
11. Camp is fun and entertaining.³

³ www.idtech.com/blog/benefits-of-summer-camp-infographic



Students making ice-cream in a baggie!

The summer camps continued to engage the city's adolescent and pre-adolescent students in positive activities beyond the school year in the areas of academics, fine arts, socialization, leadership, and recreation. In doing so, students had the opportunity to improve academic performance, artistic performance, physical performance and emotional performance while developing skills, attitudes, and behaviors that translated to both academic success and the development of life skills in a safe and supportive environment.

The success of these programs comes from the many organizations, which lend their support.

Communities In Schools was responsible for the fiscal and programmatic coordination as well as the overall administration of the summer programs funded by the City of Aurora. CIS has worked at establishing positive relationships with community organizations, which contributed to the realization and continued development of the program.



Bowling at Parkside Lane

Qualities of Community Youth Programs that Develop Community

- Increases support and belonging where one develops positive bonds, empathy, respect for others, and an increased ability to communicate and work with a diverse set of people, including those with cultural identities and experiences different than one's own
- Builds contributions by finding opportunities, exchanging ideas, and working together to create something for the community
- Gains recognition, appreciation and/or acknowledgement for an achievement, service or ability in the eyes of others/community

Research supports the idea that youth arts organizations can be effective resources for community development. Exploring and being trained in art forms can be a powerful vehicle for learning a broad range of knowledge and transferrable skills. Understanding the link culture and arts programs can have to specific knowledge and skill sets is directly tied to the expectations that teacher-artist have of their students. Researchers and youth development practitioners have found evidence that arts education can contribute significantly to young people's cognitive and social development as they:

- Provide young people with different ways to process cognitive information and express their own knowledge;
- Develop vocabulary, metaphorical language, observation and critical thinking skills;
- Spur the development of creativity;
- Develop skills important for future employment;
- Help youth in their struggle with issues of identity, independence, competence, body image and social roles;
- Teach the value of discipline and teamwork; and
- Bridge barriers among cultural, racial and ethnic groups.

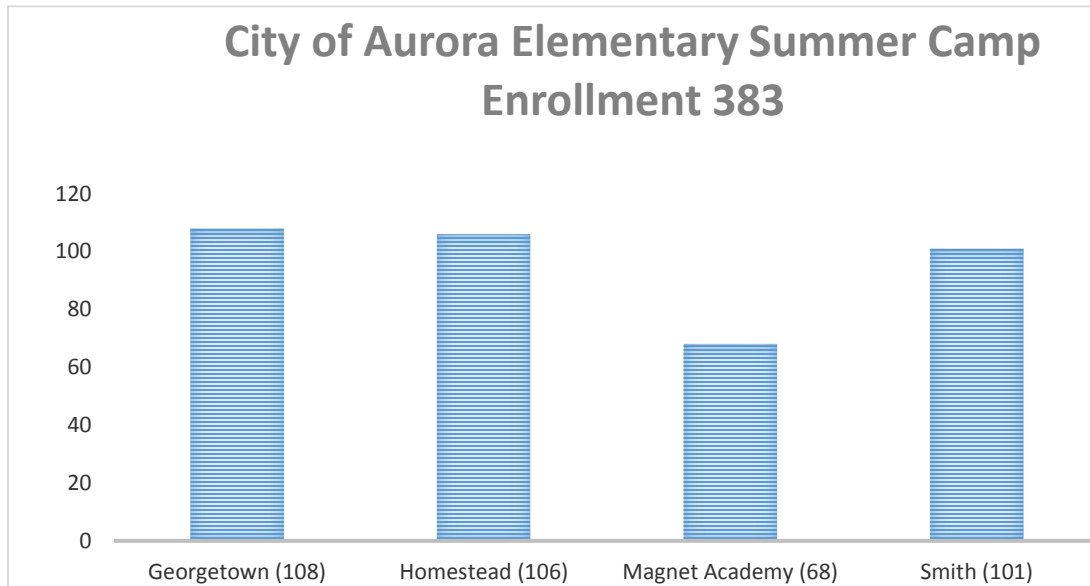
Communities In Schools in partnership with the City of Aurora, offered four-full day elementary enrichment summer camps funded by the City of Aurora:

- Smith Elementary School in West Aurora School District 129 for four weeks, (110 hours);
- Georgetown Elementary in Indian Prairie School District 204 for five weeks (104.5 hours);
- Homestead Elementary in Oswego School District 308 for five weeks (104.5 hours); and
- Fred Rodgers Magnet Academy in East Aurora District 131 for 5 weeks (93.5 hours).

The summer enrichment camps included math, literacy, STEM, fine and cultural arts, recreation, teambuilding and leadership.

Breakfast and lunch were provided each day for all students through Illinois Food Bank for students enrolled in the camp at Georgetown and Homestead and Sodexo for students enrolled in the camp at Smith and the Magnet Academy.

Total enrollment was 383 students from grades kindergarten-fifth grade enrolled in the City of Aurora Camps.



Demographically speaking, boys and girls were equally represented, females (190) and males (193). Students were from a wide variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. The most prolific backgrounds were Hispanic/Latino (184), African American (94), Caucasian (44) and Multi-Racial (33) which is reflective of the community's diversity.

High school and college students were employed to work as youth leaders in the City of Aurora summer camp programs.

Youth workers gained valuable hands-on experiences that build workforce and career skills. Youth workers benefitted through opportunities provided in their field of study as well as valuable, meaningful and trusting relationships with elementary school students as well as adults in the program.

Their main responsibility was to assist the site coordinator and adult staff in delivering quality programs to the students. CIS employed 63 summer staff: 21 adults, 19 college and 19 high school students.

CIS partnered with 16 community agencies and partners during the summer to provide hands-on engaging activities, supplemented activities or provided resources for the students enrolled in the City of Aurora summer enrichment camps.



Sci-tech Museum



Aurora Arts Initiative

2019 City of Aurora Summer Full Day Enrichment Camp Partner Descriptions

Organization	Involvement	Schools Served
East Aurora School District	Provided classrooms, gym, outdoor space and playgrounds, cafeteria and refrigeration, assistance in recruiting students in the summer camp and assistance in hiring staff. Access to school computers, technology and other school resources.	Magnet Academy
Indian Prairie School District 204	Provided classrooms, gym, outdoor space and playgrounds, cafeteria and refrigeration, assistance in recruiting students in the summer camp and assistance in hiring staff. Access to school computers, technology and other school resources.	Georgetown Elementary
Oswego School District 308	Provided classrooms, gym, outdoor space and playgrounds, cafeteria and refrigeration, assistance in recruiting students in the summer camp and assistance in hiring staff. Access to school computers, technology and other school resources.	Homestead Elementary
West Aurora School District 129	Provided classrooms, gym, outdoor space and playgrounds, cafeteria and refrigeration, assistance in recruiting students in the summer camp and assistance in hiring staff. Access to school computers, technology and other school resources.	Smith Elementary
Aurora Arts Initiative	Provided four or five weekly sessions to encourage students in the art of painting, writing and theatre.	Magnet Academy, Georgetown, Homestead and Smith
Aurora Fire Department	Provided an opportunity for students and families to touch a truck, learn about fire safety and roles of the fire department.	Smith Elementary
Aurora Public Library	Provided reading incentives and library books.	Magnet Academy, Smith, and Homestead
City of Aurora	Provided funding for staff, supplies, and community partner programming.	Magnet Academy, Georgetown, Homestead and Smith
	Provided funding for field trips, including transportation and admission.	All camps in Aurora
	Provided funding for staff, supplies, lighting, sound, and costumes.	Drama Camp
Fox Valley Park District	Field trip to - Historic Blackberry Farm celebrates the pioneer days of the 1800s, bringing yesteryear to life amid a beautiful setting of modern amenities and attractions. Students were able to enjoy a nice day with a variety of recreational and educational activities such as museums, train rides, playgrounds and carousels.	Magnet Academy, Georgetown, Homestead and Smith
Girls Scouts of Northern Illinois	Provided a four-week hour-long leadership development program for girls in first and second grades to develop future female leaders through informal and experiential education. Girls developed skills in areas including self-esteem and healthy relationships.	Smith Elementary

Illinois Food Bank	Provided breakfast and lunch to students through Illinois State Board of Education Summer Food Service Program.	Georgetown and Homestead
Parkside Lanes Bowling	Students were able to bowl two games at Parkside along with learning the rules, scoring and etiquette of bowling.	Georgetown and Smith
Phillips Park and Zoo	Field trip – This outdoor nature center provided hands on learning about native Illinois animals, their habitats, food sources, etc.	Magnet Academy and Homestead
Scitech Hands on Museum	Provided four weekly hands-on presentations which included: Chemistry, Electricity and Magnets, Weather and Flight	Magnet Academy, Georgetown, Homestead and Smith
	Provide hands-on field trip to museum for District 131 students.	All District 131 schools
Sodexo	Provided breakfast and lunch to students through Illinois State Board of Education Summer Food Service Program.	Magnet Academy and Smith
Illinois University Extension	Provided a four week Jr. Chef cooking program where students in 4 th & 5 th grade learned how to read and prepare recipes. They learned to use knives safely, crack an egg, measure and mix ingredients and grate and peel foods.	Smith Elementary



Evaluation Results

Evaluations play an important role in program development for summer camp programs. They were utilized to assess the impact of services as well as ways to improve service delivery mechanisms.

City of Aurora Elementary Enrichment Full Day Camps at Smith, Georgetown, Homestead and Magnet Academy

The evaluation questions were formatted to assess summer camp programmatic goals, and the results of 259 student surveys were tabulated and analyzed by the staff at Communities In Schools. Full survey results are available upon request for the following surveys; parent, adult staff, youth staff, and students 2nd -5th grade. Surveys of students, parents and staff provided positive results.

One of the programmatic goals of the summer education camp was to help the elementary school students improve their academic experiences and performance. In relation to school and summer camp, successful gains are noted. One of the stronger positive responses in the entire evaluation was to the statement, *"I have fun at summer camp,"* with 95% (245) agreed responses out of 259.

Other positive responses were linked to developing skills, attitudes, and behaviors that transfer to school success. These were evident in responses to statements such as, *"I learned something new at camp this summer,"* with 87% (225) agreed responses.

Youth workers completed an evaluation of the program. Of those 21 high school and college workers that responded, 100% responded favorably to working in the program. The youth workers felt the program facilitated positive behavior among the elementary students with a 100% positive response rate. In response to *"I would like to work in the camp again next year,"* 100% responded positively.

Adult workers also completed an evaluation of the program. Of those 28 adults that responded, they stated they enjoyed working in the summer camp program with a 100% response rate. Additional questions with a 100% response rate were, *"I feel the program has staff that are positive role models of positive relationships,"* and *"The program facilitates positive behavior among the elementary students to make responsible choices and encourages positive outcomes,"* and *"The program builds relationships with arts, cultural and other community agencies to expand and enhance program offerings."*

A separate survey was given to the parents of children in the programs with 139 surveys returned. Out of the 105 responses there was a 99% positive response rate to the statement *"My child seems happier since participating in the summer camp program,"* and an additional 100% of respondents (108 out of 108) agreed that *"I feel welcome at my child's summer camp."* In addition, 100% of survey participants said that they would enroll their children again next year, and 100% agreed that they would recommend the program to other parents.

"We feel blessed that our children had the opportunity to go to camp. We would not be able to afford this for them otherwise. They come back so excited and happy to tell us about their days." - Parent from Smith Elementary School

"Summer camp program is awesome to us! It really benefits my kid during the summer. You are doing a great job" – Parent from Georgetown Elementary School.

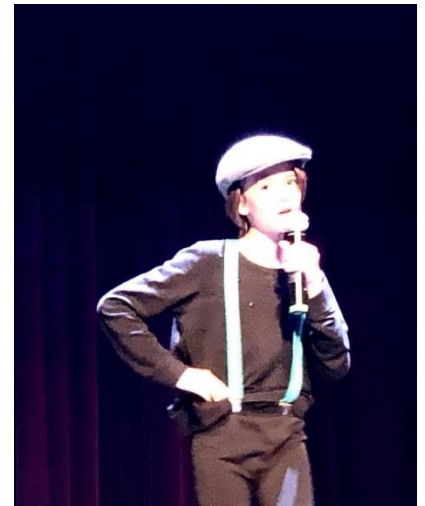
"My son comes home every day with positive things to say and is excited for HOURS!" – Parent from Magnet Academy

"It was my son's first time at camp and he had a great time. We hope to be back next year." – Parent from Homestead Elementary School.

Drama Camp

Under the direction Ann Marie Decker, the Drama Camp offered students the opportunity to participate and perform for a live audience a "Salute to Broadway", with various eras of Broadway hits performed. Student's experienced acting, dance, and voice where everyone was given a chance to shine on stage.

The half day, four-week camp was held at East Aurora High School for 3rd – 10th grade students. At the Drama Camp (39) students attended. Elementary students (14), Middle School students (22), and High School students (3).



District 129 Elementary Enrichment Full Day Summer Camp Enrollment Numbers

- **238 Total students enrolled**
- FVPD at Hall Elementary School (81)
- D129 at Greenman Elementary School (157)

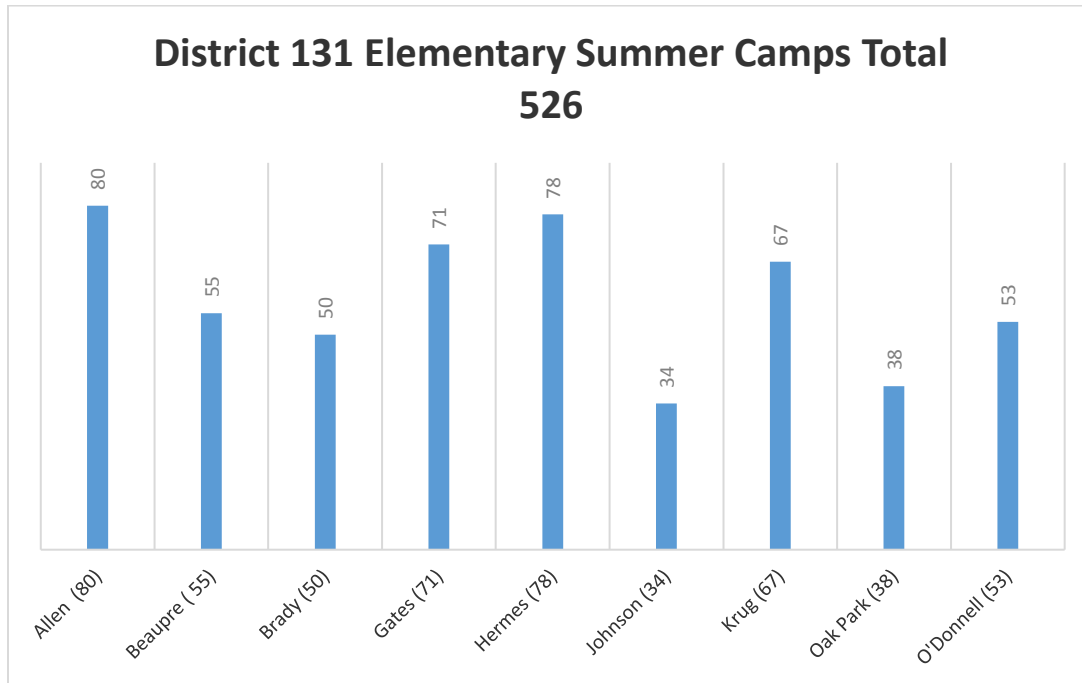
Fox Valley Park District offered a full day, four-week camp five days a week at Hall and West Aurora School District 129 offered a full day, five-week camp five days a week at Greenman Elementary School in partnership with Communities In Schools through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants.

The City of Aurora provided the funding for two field trips for each camp to attend Fox Valley Park District's Blackberry Farm and the City of Aurora Drama Camp Performance, *"A Salute To Broadway"*. These two camps included academics (math, reading, and STEM), the fine and cultural arts, recreation, team building, and leadership.

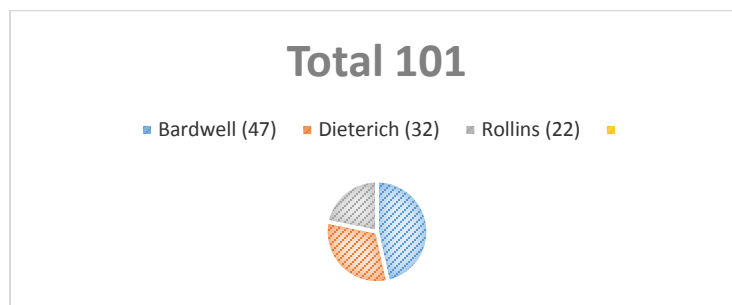
School District 131 Elementary Enrichment Half Day Summer Camps Enrollment Numbers

- **Total students enrolled 627**
- Students enrolled with District 131 (526)
- Students enrolled with Family Focus from three elementary schools in District 131 (101)

East Aurora School District 131 in partnership through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants with Family Focus and Communities In Schools, offered ten half-day summer camps for elementary school students to attend at three hub sites including: Allen, Hermes and Dieterich as hub sites. (**Allen**, Beaupre, Brady Rollins), (**Hermes**, Johnson, O'Donnell, Oak Park), and (**Dieterich**, Bardwell, Gates, Krug), with an enrollment number of (627).



Family Focus in partnership with 21st CCLC and District 131 provided three half-day camps for students from Bardwell, Dieterich, and Rollins with an enrollment number of (101) students also at the hub sites.



The half-day camps included lunch, which was provided by Sodexo, recreation, crafts, board games, field trips, STEM, cooking, teambuilding and socialization. The City of Aurora provided various field trip experiences including transportation and admission for the D131 Elementary sites to attend Scitech Hands on Museum and the City of Aurora Drama Camp Performance, “A Salute To Broadway”.

Aurora Summer Elementary Camp sites 2019

Summer Elementary Camp Objective: To provide youth in Aurora a structured, supervised and stable environment during the summer. Children should look forward to coming each day where they can learn new skills, make new friends, experiment with ideas and grow in self-esteem. Children will have the opportunity to build friendships, explore new interests with other children and with each staff member. The importance of cooperation, friendship, teamwork, decision making, responsibility, trust and distinguishing between right and wrong through their experience will be emphasized continuously.			
Inputs	Strategies	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes
Locations: West Aurora SD East Aurora SD Indian Prairie SD Oswego SD Staffing COA Enrichment camps 21 Adult Staff 19 College students 19 High School Students Drama Camp 2 Adult Staff 4 College student Community Partners School Districts Field trips Supplies	Group tutoring with math, reading and writing skills Mentoring from adults to youth workers and from adults to students Mentoring from youth workers to students Academic enrichment activities included math, literacy, science, computer skills, nutrition, health and safety Fine arts included arts and crafts, drama, plays and music Recreation included fitness programs including fitness programs, obstacle courses, playgrounds, hula hoops, soccer, basketball, dodge ball, kick ball, board games and much more Social Emotional activities were built into each day with staff and the community partners as well as promoting positive behavior throughout the day with all students	383 students K-5 th participated in the full day summer education camps provided by City of Aurora 238 students K-5 th participated in the full day summer education camps provided by D129 & FVPD 526 students K-5 th participated in the half day camps provided by D131 101 students K-5 th participated in the half day camps provided by Family Focus COA - Full Day Camps were 5.5 hours per day, 4 days a week for 4 or 5 weeks. D129 & FVPD Full day camp was 5.5 hours per day, 5 days a week for 4 or 5 weeks. D131 Half Day Camps were 3.5 hours per day, 4 days a week for 5 weeks. Family Focus Half Day Camps were 3.5 hours per day, 4 days a week for 5 weeks Locations: City of Aurora=383 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D204 Georgetown=108 D308 Homestead=106 D131 Magnet Academy=68 D129 Smith=101 	Hours youth are in a safe environment during out-of school-time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator: Of the 244 responses from 2nd – 5th graders: <i>"I feel safer during the day at the summer camp program."</i> 229 students (94%) agreed. Youth increase knowledge about academic subjects they are studying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator: Of the 252 responses from 2nd – 5th graders: <i>"My math improved during the summer camp."</i> 207 students agreed. <i>"My reading improved during the summer camp."</i> 211 students agreed. Youth increase knowledge of sports, physical fitness and health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator: Of the 156 responses from 2nd – 5th graders: <i>"Activities and Sports keep me active."</i> 145 (93%) students agree. Youth develop positive peer relationships with others in the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator: Of the 156 responses from 2nd – 5th graders: <i>"I made new friends who make me feel better about myself."</i>

		<p>FVPD & D129=238</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenman=157 • Hall=81 <p>D131=526</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allen 50 • Beaupre 55 • Brady 50 • Gates 71 • Hermes 78 • Johnson 34 • Krug 67 • Oak Park 38 • O'Donnell 53 <p>Family Focus=101</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bardwell=47 • Dieterich=32 • Rollins=22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 144 students (92%) agreed and of 257 asked <i>"I would ask a friend to join me at camp because I like it."</i> 225 students agreed. • Of the 259 responses from 2nd – 5th graders; <i>"I have fun at camp."</i> 245 responses (95%) agreed.
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Completed by: Karen Harkness, Director of Programs, August 8, 2019