

**AVOIDING THE SUMMER SLIDE:  
THE IMPORTANCE OF SUMMER SCHOOL TO  
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS**

SECOND SESSION

ON

EXAMINING THE IMPORTANCE OF SUMMER SCHOOL TO STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, FOCUSING ON SUMMER SCHOOL  
CUTBACKS AND IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH POLICIES AND PRAC-  
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JUNE 21, 2002  
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# C O N T E N T S

## STATEMENTS

	Page
Dodd, Hon. Christopher J., a U.S. Senator from the State of Connecticut, opening statement .....	1
Sessions, Hon. Jeff, a U.S. Senator from the State of Alabama, opening statement .....	3
Clinton, Hon. Hillary Rodham, a U.S. Senator from the State of New York, opening statement .....	4
Feldman, Sandra, president, American Federation of Teachers, prepared statement .....	8
Cooper, Harris, Professor, Department of Psychological Sciences, University of Missouri, prepared statement .....	14
Ramoglou, Christina, executive director, Rogers School Community Center, Stamford, CT, prepared statement .....	24



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FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2002

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:13 a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher J. Dodd, presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd, Clinton, and Sessions.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD**

Senator DODD. The hearing will come to order. Good morning, all of you. We apologize being a few minutes late getting underway, but as I think all of you are aware, we had a vote a few minutes ago, and so we are delayed getting over.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here, and others who are in the audience, and I want to thank our colleagues, Senator Sessions of Alabama, and my colleague, Senator Clinton of New York, for joining us this morning for whatever time they have available. I know these are busy schedules. They close out the week here, and people are heading back to their States.

The title of today's hearing is Avoiding the Summer Slide: The Importance of Summer School to Student Achievement and Well-Being.

Let me just share a couple of moments of opening remarks, and I will turn to my colleagues for any thoughts they have, and then we will get to our witnesses.

We are here on the first day of summer, June 21st, to discuss the critical issue of how summer school helps the neediest of our children to reach their potential and the impact on those children of budget cuts that are apt to slash their summer school activities. Without summer activities to keep their reading and math skills sharp, students start school in the fall about a month behind where they finished in the spring. That is the summer slide that everyone, I think, is aware of.

The summer slide in math is about the same for low-income students as for others, but it is steeper in reading for low-income students because they do not have the same access to books and reading opportunities as students from better-off families.

As we will hear from one of our witnesses this morning, some researchers have concluded that if you combine the achievement gap

that exists when low-income children start kindergarten with the cumulative effect of summer slide over the years, you will account for virtually all of the achievement gap at the end of high school. Congress and the President spent virtually all of last year writing the bipartisan No Child Left Behind Act, which holds schools accountable for closing that gap and for all students performing at a high level.

Senator Craig and I, in particular, worked together to reauthorize the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, but more than schools need to be accountable. We—and the President, obviously—need to be accountable as well. Promising to leave no child behind means that we have to provide resources so that all children at all ages get the support they need to reach their potential—winter, spring, fall, as well as the summer.

Unfortunately, because of the economy, States and cities around the country are cutting billions of dollars from education, including summer school. In New York City, the estimate is 75,000 summer school slots. In Washington, our Nation's capital, they will be eliminating some 12,000 slots. Hillsborough County in Florida, which includes Tampa, has cut out summer school altogether, and Portland, Oregon, has eliminated summer school for elementary school students. These are just a few of the examples from around the country.

But only 1 month after signing the No Child Left Behind Act, the schools around the country in dire financial straits, the President proposed cutting funding for education reforms, including freezing funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which would mean that 30,000 fewer students would benefit from the program and fully serving only 40 percent of low-income students under Title I. That is not the kind of accountability that I believe that our children need and deserve.

The President said from the beginning that education is his top priority, and I believe him, and he has done an awful lot, I might add, from what we expected and saw only a few short years ago. Providing enough resources for education, however, should not be a choice. We do not, and should not, say that we would like to do more about the national security, but the times are tough. We do what we have to do to make the system work.

We must provide schools with resources they need to meet the goals that we set in last year's reforms, including improving the quality and accessibility of summer schools so that children could benefit from the education activities year round. We must do more to improve the quality and accessibility of early childhood education so that low-income children reach kindergarten more ready to learn than they are, and we must do more to improve family literacy and public libraries, so that low-income children's homes and neighborhoods become more conducive to learning.

Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island has done especially good work in the area of improving our libraries in the country. Finally, on top of everything else, summer school serves non-academic purposes. It gives children a safe, productive alternative to streets. A gang counselor said recently that this summer's cuts are going to make recruiting easier for gangs, because thousands of students will have no place to go when the school year ends. Summer school

cuts will cause trouble for low-income working parents. A Washington, DC., Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner said that, in part because of the cuts, many of her constituents who do not have adequate child care arrangements will risk losing their jobs, their ability to keep food on the table, and even their homes in some cases.

These may not be the primary purposes of summer school, but we if we do not make sure that students have summer opportunities, we are going to have to deal with the serious consequences, academic and otherwise.

So I think our witnesses this morning can add some valuable information to this debate and discussion. Before I turn to them, let me turn to my colleague from the State of Alabama, and I thank you, Senator Sessions, for being with us, and then to Senator Clinton for some opening comments, and we will get to our witnesses.

#### **OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS**

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you very much.

Summer school is an important aspect of education—of that, I have no doubt—and we do know that there is a slide in the summer if kids are not continuing to stay in connection with their learning process. It is an odd thing that we have such a long period and just drop educational process. I can remember my own feeling of coming back in the fall and knowing that we had to redo things we had on the front burner when we left.

We do know this, and one of the things I believe the Federal Government should do is to study these programs to identify what we know works, and make sure that millions of dollars that are, indeed, being spent right now are spent wisely and most effectively. It would be an unfortunate thing, indeed, to double spending on summer school, but spend much of that on programs that are not as effective as they could be. So I think the Federal Government has an important role in that.

Senator Ron Wyden and I introduced an amendment last year that passed the Senate to expend \$25 million for summer school programs, and I really wanted it to make sure that we had good research, good information, good standards, and so we were calling on the school systems that would receive that \$25 million to participate in a good research project.

I will be curious to hear your views of what really works in summer school, how we can spend the money that we are now spending better, and if we can demonstrate the kind of progress that may be possible in some schools, I believe that the American people will support expanded summer school programs. Of course, over 90 percent of funding and education is from our State and local governments, and that is where education is funded and run. We are going to need to sell them ultimately on the wisdom of this project, and I would like to participate in it.

Mr. Chairman, I think a study of summer school to analyze what it contributes and how we can make it better is a good hearing topic, and I thank you for doing it.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate your presence, as well, too, and your help on this.

Senator Clinton.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HILLARY RODHAM  
CLINTON**

Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I join with my colleague, Senator Sessions, in thanking you for highlighting the importance of this issue, and I especially thank our witnesses for coming on this first day of summer.

Sandra Feldman is always there when discussions about education and children take place, and I thank her for her leadership. And, Dr. Cooper, I thank you for focusing attention on an area that has not gotten enough, and I really appreciate your bringing this to a point where we can look at what many of us have believed for a long time and understand there is evidence to support that belief. And, also, Ms. Ramoglou, thank you for what you do and the program that you will be describing.

Summer school and an extended school year has long been a desired objective for those of us who have worked on school reform for a long time, particularly because of the impact it has on low-income children, on poorly achieving children, on children who face challenges and difficulties because of their environments.

It is such an important issue that even in a time of tremendous budget difficulties in New York City, our new mayor was persuaded to restore funding for summer school because the evidence is really overwhelming that we have made some important, albeit incremental, steps to raise achievement among our students in the New York City school system, and we know it will be wiped out if there is not some opportunity for continuing educational experiences.

People like us fill our children's summers with all kinds of activities. We enroll them in camps, and programs, and recreational opportunities. We make sure they sign up at the local library to read the books, and get credit for, you know, little stars and caterpillar segments. We take them on family vacations. We do the things that we know continues their education.

Since I have been in the Senate, I have tried to apply the Golden Rule to my public service, and that is if it is good enough for my child, it should be available for everyone's child, and there has got to be a way to drive that message home. Certainly, what the chairman is doing today with this important hearing is going to help us make the case, which many of us make in our own lives and which many of us know works for children in many difficult situations.

So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much. That is good news about New York and about restoring those cuts. If any other community has a bulletin they would like to share with this committee, I have made note of other communities around the country that had cuts, but they are welcome to let us know right away.

Let me introduce our witnesses, if I can, and I am delighted you are all here.

Sandra Feldman, of course, is well-known to all of us here. She is president of the 1.2-million member American Federation of Teachers, and a terrific advocate for students, and parents, and good education in the country, truly recognized as one of the leading experts in the Nation on educational policy and a very dedicated public servant. Sandra, we are, once again, pleased to have



you here with us. Your background, of course, is tremendously valuable to us in discussing this subject matter.

Harris Cooper is a professor of the Department of Psychological Sciences at the University of Missouri, and this month completed a 3-year term as department chair. I would also note that he received a Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut, and as we often say, “come on home—all is forgiven,” whatever you did, Dr. Cooper—come back to the State.

[Laughter.]

You have extensive experience in research synthesis and the application of social psychology to educational policy, so we are very interested in hearing your thoughts as well.

Christina Ramoglou is the executive director of the Rogers School Community Center in Stamford, CT. Christina, we are very honored to have you here this morning. She has held that position since 1988. The center, which is known as ROSCCO, administers and offers school-based child and family support programs. Ms. Ramoglou is the former president, vice president and current member of the board of directors of the Connecticut School-Age Child Care Alliance. We have worked with each other on those issues for a long time as well. So I thank you for coming here this morning.

We will begin in the order I have introduced you. Sandra, welcome to the hearing. Once again, you have been here many times, and we are very interested in hearing what you have to say.

**STATEMENT OF SANDRA FELDMAN, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, WASHINGTON, DC.**

Ms. FELDMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I really appreciate you having this hearing. It is an extremely important subject. Of course, I feel a bit like I really ought to say “amen” and go, because I know I am talking to people who know an awful lot about this subject. But I want to emphasize some things and perhaps put it in a slightly different context.

First of all, I think it is important to acknowledge that the cuts that we are experiencing in summer school are really just the tip of the iceberg, unfortunately, because all across the States there are drastic cuts taking place in education, and we have to do something about that as well, because we are seeing achievement go up, we are seeing a lot of progress in schools, and we are in danger of taking a serious step backward with the cuts.

But summer school just cannot be considered a frill any longer when money is tight. There was a time when the budgets were tight, so you would cut summer school, you would cut after school and focus on the school day. Well, it is no longer true that summer school is a frill. It is certainly not a frill for poor children. We have overwhelming evidence now that being out of school during the summer has serious consequences for their learning, and unless we start devoting serious attention to the time that they spend out of school, we are never going to be able to close the achievement gap. So I want to talk about it from that perspective today, in terms of what we all have as a tremendous goal, such as closing the achievement gap.

I think it is worth repeating that we know that at the onset of school, poor children come behind. What most people do not know is that they learn as much during that school year as more advantaged children learn. The schools do a great job for our children when they are in school. In fact, school is so powerful that when they leave school, they begin to go backward, and the research on this is absolutely, I think, pretty convincing by now that the gap between poor children and more advantaged children continues to widen.

Some people were saying: Well, you see these schools are not doing their job. The kids are not achieving in terms of the gap being widened. But we are finding now that it is the time out of school, not the time in school that creates the widening of that gap.

Dr. Cooper I am sure has studied this, and we will talk about this, but there is a lot of research. I always like to quote Johns Hopkins university professors, Doris Entwisle and Karl Alexander, and here is what they say: "The children from poor and middle-class families make comparable gains during the school year, but while the middle-class children make gains when they are out of school during the summer, poor and disadvantaged children make few gains or even move backwards academically." It is exactly the kind of thing that Senator Clinton was talking about; that advantaged, middle-class families take their children to the library, make sure they go to the library, take the months-long family vacations in which children are constantly learning, provide them with access to museums and other cultural activities, even organized sports, which are tremendous learning experiences for children. Poor children, more often than not, are sitting in front of the television or being baby sat or watching videos or sort of just hanging out, and they are not getting the same kind of learning experiences as more advantaged children.

So for the advantaged children, their learning continues to accelerate, and poor children either stop or even go backwards. I think, Senator Dodd, as you said, that researchers have calculated that when you add the achievement gap that exists at the onset of kindergarten to the gaps that are created for poor children when schools are not in session, you have really accounted virtually for the entire achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children, which the schools have been basically blamed for all of these years.

I think it is important to talk about the No Child Left Behind Act. It was a strongly supported bipartisan measure. The AFT is committed to working hard to help make it work, and it is not going to take us where we need to go unless we act on this evidence. So I think it is particularly painful, given this evidence, and given the attention that is being paid to education, and given the way that people came together in this Act, to witness the decimation of summer school, especially in needy communities.

It is especially hurtful, I think, because we are beginning to see a restoration of summer school after many years, when summer school was totally neglected, when the cuts were made, and we are just beginning to get summer school back because of the standards-based reform that is going on in a lot of States. Instead of reeling from cutbacks, we had hoped to be working on expanding summer

school and improving the quality of summer school in the way that the research indicates. Instead, we are faced with these cuts.

In the face of higher standards, which we fully support and which we want to make work for kids, we have to make sure that the children who are not meeting those standards, who need the extra time and the extra help to meet them, get that extra time, and the evidence makes absolutely clear that the extra time that they need primarily is summertime.

I think that this hearing is particularly helpful because it is especially cruel that at a time we have this evidence, when we were beginning to get a restoration of summer school, when we are beginning to see achievement take hold, especially in poor communities for poor children, we are seeing these tremendous cuts, and you had some of them up on the board there.

We did a survey which we are happy to share with you, and I have a list in my testimony of some of the places, but you talk about Washington, DC., cutting almost two-thirds of its summer school—it is an absolute disaster—or Boston, MA, which is looking at a summer school cut possibly of 60 percent, Worcester is planning to cut summer school to help trim an \$18-million shortfall, and in Massachusetts, just as an example, next year is the first year that passing the State examinations is a condition of high school graduation. These are just a few examples, and you have all of those, and we are happy to share our survey with you.

I just want to say this, that the reason this is happening is not out of malice; it is happening because there is not enough money. It is not as if money is being badly spent or poorly spent either, because we have a lot of knowledge about what works in summer schools.

But losing summer school is really a betrayal of promises that have been made by the standards-based reform movement. I know that if school districts that are served, especially school districts serving poor children, if they had the resources, they would use the resources. You see it all over the country. They are extending the school day. They are providing Saturday mornings for kids, and they are providing summer school when they can afford it.

I also just want to say that we are experiencing a potentially distressing thing that is happening. The Department of Education put out some preliminary guidance on the use of supplemental services, which you know is an important part of the No Child Left Behind Act.

While it is preliminary, and we are hoping to get it changed, I wanted to make you aware of it that the guidance that they issued that is out there now allows providers who are providing supplementary services, and of course this is after school, summer school, can use unqualified personnel for remediation. They had some language that said they specifically cannot prohibit States from letting providers who provide these services use uncertified teachers. It makes absolutely no sense, none, to do remediation with people who are not qualified, when we are doing everything we can during the school year to try to get kids taught by qualified teachers.

Precious resources should not be devoted to supplemental service providers who do not have a record of success or do not employ certified or licensed individuals. If it is a speech therapist that is

needed, it ought to be a licensed speech therapist. If they are doing reading remediation, it ought to be a reading teacher who knows what she is doing, and we have the alternative of providing summer school in our much underappreciated public schools that are already doing a pretty good job for kids.

So I hope that you will take the lead—I know you will take the lead in securing additional Federal funding and looking at the whole package because we do not want to rob Peter to pay Paul, and we do not want to take money away from much-needed programs during the school year, from reducing class sizes, from doing the things that children need during the school year to pay for summer school.

We have to look at this overall, and the Federal Government has a long way to go before it, I think, really does what needs to be done for our kids, especially our poor kids. I know that you want to do it, and I fervently hope that you will succeed.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Feldman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SANDRA FELDMAN, PRESIDENT,  
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

On behalf of the 1.2 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I appreciate this opportunity to speak to you about the importance of summer school and the serious consequences of the dramatic cuts we are experiencing in this program as a result of the economic downturn. While I will confine my remarks to the summer school issue, I think you are hearing from your constituents just what I am hearing: summer school is just the tip of the iceberg of education cuts our students face.

First, let me commend the Members of this Committee for your decision to hold a hearing on this issue. Many people still think of summer school as a frill, as something that is “nice” to offer but non-essential and therefore dispensable when money is tight. By holding this hearing, Committee members are giving the public an opportunity to re-examine this perception, and the timing could not be more ripe. For the evidence is by now overwhelming that what happens to children during the summer months is almost as consequential to their academic achievement as the time they spend in school. And in the case of our needy children, those consequences are dire. In fact, until we start devoting as much attention to what happens to poor children during the 68 percent of their waking hours when they are out of school as we do, and correctly so, to the time they are in school, our hopes for making greater progress in overcoming the achievement gap will continue to be dashed.

**Summer Learning Loss**

It is ironic that during a time when the education watchword of the day is “scientifically or research-based,” some of the most solid and significant research findings about the achievement gap are being ignored. (References to the evidence used in this section can be found at the end of this testimony.) First, the gap is present at the onset of kindergarten, before formal schooling begins, and gets substantially narrower during the kindergarten year. Second, and contrary to myth, poor children do not lose ground during the school year. In fact, the research on this subject unanimously finds that, on average, poor children make as much, and often more, progress while in school as their more advantaged peers. The chief cause of the widening achievement gap as children progress through school is what happens to poor children, relative to non-poor children, when they are *not* in school, that is, during the summer months.

As Johns Hopkins University professors Doris Entwisle and Karl Alexander put it: “. . . children from poor and middle-class families make comparable gains during the school year, but while the middle-class children make gains when they are out of school during the summer, poor and disadvantaged children make few gains, or even move backwards academically . . . The increasing gap in test scores between children from families of high and low socioeconomic status over the elementary-school period thus accrued entirely from the differential gains they made when school was closed . . . [P]oor families could not make up for the resources the school had been providing and so their children’s achievement plateaued. Middle-

class families could make up for the school's resources to a considerable extent and so their children's growth continued, though at a slower pace than during the school year."

In other words, on average, our schools are so effective in compensating for the effects of poverty that we cannot afford to have them closed. According to New York University professor Barbara Heyns, who pioneered the work on summer learning losses, "Approximately 80 percent of the achievement gap between economic privileged and less advantaged students occurs in the summer months, in the absence of schooling. The general pattern is similar when black and white students are compared, but family economic status seems to play a more important role than race." Indeed, researchers have calculated that when you add the achievement gap that exists at the onset of kindergarten to the gaps that are created when school is not in session, you have accounted for virtually the entire achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students at the end of high school.

Congress recently passed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA), a bipartisan measure that the AFT will try hard to make work. It is in this spirit that I say that the weight and solidity of the evidence about poor children's need for quality early childhood education and rich summer learning experiences tell us that NCLBA will not take us as far as we can go in closing the achievement gap. We must act on it, for the sake of the stated goals of NCLBA and, above all, for our youngsters.

Moreover, since NCLBA launches a whole new round of testing and accountability, there is a fresh opportunity to do it accurately, usefully, and fairly and not, as the experts have repeatedly demonstrated, in a way that obscures the root causes of the achievement gap and the actual academic outcomes produced by our public schools. As Entwisle and Alexander tell us, "Standardized tests administered once a year, the testing schedule followed in most schools, cannot distinguish between children's progress in winter and summer. When gains are calculated from one spring to the next, the seasonal differences in growth rates are ignored. Therefore, yearly scores convey the distinct but wrong impression that middle-class children learn more over the entire year than poorer children . . . Rather, [schools] are so effective that nothing else matters when they are open. They enable poor children to overcome resource deficits in their families and neighborhoods and progress at a rate equal to or faster than that of better-off children."

### **Summer School Cutbacks**

In light of all this evidence about the negative impact on poor children of being out of school—and I have offered up only a small sample—it is particularly painful to witness, once again, the decimation of summer school, especially in needy communities. After many years of budget-driven neglect, summer school was just beginning to get its legs again, thanks to the standards movement. Instead of reeling from cutbacks, we had hoped to be working on expanding summer school and improving its quality in the way the research indicates.

But it looks like *deja vu* all over again. Summer school is usually the first thing to go in a downturn, and, like the canary in the mine, is also usually a harbinger of other cuts to come, which typically fall disproportionately on the backs of poor children. But in the yo-yo world of education funding, there is never any slack in the responsibilities that our schools are expected to meet.

Today, those responsibilities are greater than ever, and the standards that have been set for our students and schools higher than ever. Though there are some who would like to believe that achievement can increase and the gap narrow according to a rigid lockstep schedule, anyone who has been around children knows that learning, much like physical growth, does not take place that way, and that some children, particularly those who are already struggling, need extra help and time.

As the evidence I've presented makes so abundantly clear, for needy children that time is the summer. For not only is that the most sustained time available for remediation, it is also the main time when poor children, unlike advantaged ones, fail to make academic gains. Significantly, it is also when the considerable gains they make during the school year get eroded, putting them further and further behind, despite their best efforts and those of their schools.

I believe that what ultimately drove and united individuals and groups from across the political spectrum to put aside their differences and secure passage of the No Child Left Behind Act was a shared commitment to overcoming America's shameful achievement gap. That commitment means we must finally come to grips with the fact that what happens outside of schools is as important, if not more so, than what happens in them; the two go hand in hand.

Unlike many occasions when the scales fall from our eyes, recognizing this fact is an occasion of hope because there is something we can do about it—and must do if we are fully serious about leaving no child behind or at least about ensuring

that the law that proclaims this in capital letters is workable, fair, and optimally effective. The solution to the debilitating effect on needy children of not being in school is more, and even more effective, schooling. And that is very good news indeed, because not only does public education seem to be the only institution that never turns its back on children, but our schools also would welcome being enabled to do even more for their students.

How particularly cruel, then, that just when the combination of scientific evidence about the achievement gap and the passage of NCLBA dictate that we should be expanding and improving summer school offerings, just the opposite is occurring. The evidence is not yet all in, but here's a first look at an AFT survey of the effect that the \$11 billion—and counting—that State legislatures have cut from education budgets in the last year is having on summer school.

- Washington, DC.—A two-thirds reduction in the summer school budget.
- Florida—A scene of particular devastation, with Broward County cutting summer school in half this year and eliminating it altogether the next; Leon County cutting \$1.2 million in a summer school program that, last year, kept 77 percent of its students from being retained in grade; Pasco County sharply curtailing a program that last year had employed more than 1,400 teachers and support personnel; Dade County sure that it will have to cut summer school but not yet certain about the extent; Columbia County looking at anywhere from a 33–66 percent cut in the summer school budget; Pinellas County needing to eliminate summer school next year; and Hillsborough County eliminating it already.
- Oregon—The elimination of \$35.4 million in State grants for full-day kindergarten, summer school and gifted programs.
- Colorado—A one-quarter reduction in the budget for the Summer Scholars program for children who are behind in reading skills.
- Indiana—Which had provided 80 percent of the funding for summer school, will now only be able to cover 60 percent of the costs, and the expectation is that the figure will be less.
- Michigan—Will be cutting summer school for low-performing students in 2003 as a result of a \$500 million budget gap.
- North Carolina—As a result of a \$695 million budget gap for the fiscal year starting July 1, schools will face a sharp curtailment of summer programs next year. Wake County has already had \$15 million in budget cuts, which has affected summer school and high school tutoring programs.
- Kansas City, Kansas—Faces the total elimination of its summer school.
- Boston, Massachusetts—May have its summer school budget for next fiscal year cut by 60 percent, while Worcester is planning to cut summer school to help trim an \$18 million shortfall. Next year is the first year that passing the State exams is a condition of high school graduation.
- Los Angeles, California—Expects budget cuts that will imperil summer school, as does Birmingham, Alabama.
- Enid, Oklahoma—Is canceling its summer school because it lacks State and local dollars to match Federal funding.

The list above is only a sample of what we have found so far, and we doubt that the information still to come in will alleviate this bleak picture. Moreover, since some districts will preserve all or some of their summer school programs by charging fees, the full extent of budget-induced cuts will likely be masked.

One thing we can predict with some certainty, however, is that there will be few, if any, poor children in summer school programs that must charge fees. And we cannot soothe ourselves about this by thinking that these children will instead be in summer camps or in enrichment programs run by museums and the like, because their parents cannot afford the fees for these, either. Nor will we likely find our older students in supervised summer jobs programs because budget cuts will affect these, as well. In fact, they are likely not even to find employment at a fast-food restaurant—hardly an academically enriching experience—because during this overall economic downturn, they will be competing with a lot of unemployed adults.

So instead of having their school lessons reinforced by their summer experiences, which is the “natural” order of things for more-advantaged children, our most vulnerable children will likely be learning the lessons of the street. And when they return to school in the fall, all too many of them will be academically behind where they were when they left school the previous spring—a summer learning loss for which our schools will be erroneously blamed.

### Solutions

Clearly, the only way to end this vicious cycle is with money—not only the money to make summer school available to every needy child, but a sufficient amount to make sure that such programs mimic as closely as possible the kind of enriching

experiences that advantaged children get by virtue of having advantaged parents and living in resource-rich communities. Because the reason that States and school districts are eliminating or cutting back summer school or, in some cases, running poor programs, is not malice; it is money. And the reason that school officials are doing so is not their stupidity; they know that the combination of higher academic standards and summer school cutbacks means that more students will be retained in grade, which also dramatically increases the chance of their dropping out. They also know that each, let alone both, of these consequences costs schools and society more, financially and otherwise, than an investment in stemming summer learning losses.

Rather, the reason we are losing summer school, and the reason we are facing more such betrayals of the promises made by the standards movement to students and schools, which continue to uphold their end of the bargain, is the failure of political leaders to secure dependable education funding and treat budget surpluses like seed corn for the future instead of an opportunity for reckless tax breaks.

I also find it distressing that, while summer schools employing fully certified teachers and other qualified personnel—the people who make a demonstrable difference to students during the school year—are being slashed, the U.S. Department of Education has just issued preliminary guidance on supplemental services in Title I of NCLBA that allows providers to use unqualified personnel for remediating our most vulnerable youngsters. In light of the evidence that poor children gain as much, if not more, than other children while they are in our public schools, precious resources should not be devoted to supplemental service providers that do not have a comparable record of success and that do not employ qualified and appropriately certified or licensed individuals, especially when there is a clear alternative: summer school or after-school programs in our under appreciated public schools.

I therefore urge the members of this Committee to join with the AFT and others to urge the Department to reconsider and instead require supplemental service providers to employ only certified teachers and other fully qualified staff.

I also urge this Committee to take the lead in securing additional Federal funding, either through a new or existing program, such as the 21st Century Schools program, to our distressed States for the express purpose of providing high-quality summer school and/or extended-day programs in our public schools, targeted especially on the youngsters who need such programs to keep them on track academically. Regrettably, the failure to provide emergency grants for this summer means that it is too late to help the youngsters denied summer school this year. But my proposal is not just intended as a stopgap measure during these hard economic times; I am also proposing it as a permanent part of the national education strategy for increasing academic performance and closing achievement gaps. So, Congress can still make it up to the youngsters who will get left behind this summer and also do right by all needy children, and I fervently hope you will.

The strong support of the public for the No Child Left Behind Act was not for political reasons. It was, and is, simply and purely because, out of decency and pride, Americans want all our children's academic performance to improve and the achievement gap to be overcome, and they were persuaded that this legislation had the power to do so. In many respects, the fate of any legislation is unpredictable. What we can now say, however, and with considerable scientific assurance, is that any education strategy whose goal is ensuring that all children succeed must reckon as much with what happens to children when they are not in school as it does with what happens when they are in school if it is to be maximally effective.

If this is to be the Congress that is credited with making the most substantial difference in our educational history in improving academic performance and eliminating the achievement gap, it will make just such a reckoning. And a good beginning would be to stanch the academic setbacks that occur when children are out of school and maximize the effectiveness of children's in-school experiences by increasing the reach and quality of summer school programs.

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Senator CLINTON. [presiding]. Thank you very much for reminding us that this is part of a larger problem.

Professor Cooper.

**STATEMENT OF HARRIS COOPER, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI,  
COLUMBIA, MO**

Mr. COOPER. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about summer learning loss and the effectiveness of summer school. I have studied this topic for a decade now, and I have provided you with a written testimony that includes a policy brief. It presents in greater detail many of the points that I will make here today.

The first thing to note is that the current school calendar was crafted at a time when about 85 percent of Americans lived according to an agriculture cycle. Prior to standardization, it was up to local communities to set the school calendar. In urban areas, such as Philadelphia and Baltimore, school might be in session for 11 months. In rural areas, students might be out of school in May and June for crop seeding, go back to school in July and August, and then have break again in September and October to help with the harvest.

The 3-month hiatus in the current school calendar raises the question about what impact the long summer break might have on students. To find out, my colleagues and I undertook a synthesis of research on summer learning loss, or more specifically, whether students' standardized test scores declined over summer.

We found 39 studies examining the effects of summer vacation. Thirteen provided enough information for us to use in a statistical analysis. The combination of these results, which is called a meta-analysis, indicated that summer learning loss equaled at least 1 month of instruction. On average, children's achievement test scores were 1 month lower when they returned to school in fall than when the students left in the spring.

The meta-analysis also suggested that summer loss was more pronounced in math than reading. We speculated that children's



home environments provide more opportunities to practice reading than math. Further, all students, regardless of their resources in their home, lost roughly equal amounts of math skill over summer. However, substantial economic differences were found in reading. For reading comprehension scores, all income groups declined, but far more so for disadvantaged students.

On other reading measures, middle-class students showed gains in achievement over summer, but disadvantaged children showed losses. Again, the income difference may be related to differences in opportunities to practice and learn reading skills over summer. More books and reading opportunities likely are available for middle-class children.

Next, my colleagues and I examined the effectiveness of summer school. We looked at effectiveness not only for preventing summer learning loss, but also for providing remedial instruction for students falling behind during the regular school year and for accelerated or enrichment instruction for students wishing to spend their summer in academic pursuits.

We found that summer school serves multiple purposes for students, families and communities. For example, parents and communities hope that, in addition to the academic instruction, summer school will provide positive environments for students and thereby diminish juvenile crime. The current need for summer programs is driven by changes in American families, as well as by calls for an educational system that embodies highest academic standards.

We examined and integrated the results of 93 evaluations of summer school. The synthesis revealed that summer programs have a clear, positive impact on the knowledge and skills of participants. The average student who goes to summer school jumps over about 5 percent to 10 percent of similar students who do not attend as measured by achievement test scores. Although all students benefit from summer school, students from middle-class homes showed larger positive effects than students from disadvantaged homes. We suspect this is because disadvantaged children often have multiple impediments to learning. Even with these impediments, however, summer school proved effective for children from poor families.

Students at all grade levels benefited from remedial summer school, but students in the earliest grades and in high school benefited most. Consistent with our summer learning loss findings, remedial programs may have more positive effects on math than on reading because kids would lose more if they did not have math instruction, though, again, the effect on reading was clearly positive as well.

Based on these results and others, we recommended that summer programs be provided with a stable source of funds and that funds be set aside to foster participation, especially among disadvantaged youth. We also made numerous recommendations for summer school implementers meant to ensure that programs were delivered in the most effective manner possible. The benefits of summer school for achievement are clear, and its positive effect may extend beyond the schoolyard gates.

Again, thank you for inviting me, and I look forward to answering questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cooper follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HARRIS COOPER, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about summer learning loss and the effectiveness of summer school. I have studied this topic for a decade now and have provided you with a written policy brief that presents in greater detail many of the points I will make here today.

The first thing to note is that the current school calendar was crafted at a time when about 85 percent of Americans lived according to the agricultural cycle. Prior to standardization, it was up to local communities to set the school calendar. In urban areas, such as Philadelphia and Baltimore, school might be in session for 11 months. In rural areas, students might be out of school in May and June for crop seeding, go back to school in July and August, and then have break again in September and October to help with the harvest.

The 3-month hiatus in the current school calendar raises the question of what impact the long summer break might have on students. To find out, my colleagues and I undertook a synthesis of the research on summer learning loss, or more specifically, whether students' standardized achievement test scores declined over summer. We found 39 studies examining the effects of summer vacation. Thirteen provided enough information for us to use in a statistical analysis. A combination of these results, called a meta-analysis, indicated that summer learning loss equaled at least 1 month of instruction. On average, children's achievement test scores were 1 month lower when they returned to school in fall than when students left in spring.

The meta-analysis also suggested that summer loss was more pronounced for math than for reading. We speculated that children's home environments provide more opportunities to practice reading than math. Further, all students, regardless of the resources in their home, lost roughly equal amounts of math skills over summer. However, substantial economic differences were found for reading. Reading comprehension scores of all income groups declined, but more so for disadvantaged students. On other reading measures, middle class children showed gains in achievement over summer, but disadvantaged children showed losses. Again, the income differences may be related to differences in opportunities to practice and learn reading skills over summer. More books and reading opportunities likely are available for middle class children.

Next, my colleagues and I examined the effectiveness of summer school. We looked at effectiveness not only for preventing summer learning loss but also for providing remedial instruction for students falling behind during the regular school year, and for accelerated or enrichment instruction for students wishing to spend their summer in academic pursuits.

We found that summer school serves multiple purposes for students, families, and communities. For example, parents and communities hope that, in addition to academic instruction, summer school will provide positive environments for students and thereby diminish juvenile crime. The current need for summer programs is driven by changes in American families as well as by calls for an educational system that embodies higher academic standards.

We examined and integrated the results of 93 evaluations of summer school. The synthesis revealed that summer programs have a clear positive impact on the knowledge and skills of participants. The average student who goes to summer school jumps over about 5 percent to 10 percent of similar students who do not attend, as measured by achievement test scores. Although all students benefited from summer school, students from middle class homes show larger positive effects than students from disadvantaged homes. We suspect this is because disadvantaged children often have multiple impediments to learning. Even with these impediments, however, summer school proved effective for children from poor families.

Students at all grade levels benefit from remedial summer school, but students in the earliest grades and in high school may benefit most. Consistent with our summer learning loss findings, remedial programs may have more positive effects on math than on reading, though again, the effect on reading is clearly positive as well.

Based on these and other results, we recommended that summer programs be provided with a stable source of funds and that funds be set aside to foster participation, especially among disadvantaged youth. We also made numerous recommendations for summer school implementers meant to ensure that programs were delivered in the most effective manner possible. The benefits of summer school for achievement are clear and its positive effectives may extend beyond the schoolyard gates.

Again, thank you for inviting me. I look forward to answering your questions.

SUMMER LEARNING LOSS AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUMMER SCHOOL:  
RESEARCH-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

PAPER TO ACCOMPANY TESTIMONY BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,  
EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS, JUNE 21, 2002.

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In 1999, a Cox Newspapers survey of the Nation's 10 largest school districts revealed a 20 percent increase in summer school enrollment, to well over 600,000 students (Mollison & Brett, 1999). By summer 2000, the *New York Times* reported the number of summer school attendees in these 10 districts had jumped to over 850,000 (Wilgoren, 2000). The Cox Newspaper research also revealed that nationwide about 5 million students, or 1 in 10 students attending elementary through high school, was enrolled in summer school. Further, between 1991 and 1999, the percent of public elementary schools eligible for Title I poverty aid that used the Federal funds to subsidize summer school programs rose from 15 percent to 41 percent.

There is good reason to believe that the demand for summer school will continue to grow throughout the next decade. This prediction is based on three national trends. First, the nature of the American family has undergone dramatic changes. Reynolds Farley (1996), using the last four U.S. Censuses, found that most common today is a family headed by a single parent or one in which both parents work outside the home. The changes in American families suggest that the years ahead will bring increasing demands for Government-sponsored, school-based services for children when regular classes are not in session.

Second, in the past two decades, many policymakers have become concerned about the global competitiveness of the American economy and the education system that drives it. Statistics from the National Commission on Time and Learning (1993) suggest that students in the United States spend less time in school than students in many other industrialized nations and less time studying core subjects.

Finally, in addition to issues of global competitiveness, an emphasis has emerged nationally on higher academic standards and minimum competency requirements. The new standards and requirements have provided impetus for increased use of summer schools. For example, Chicago Public Schools has a policy that establishes district-wide standards of promotion for students completing 3rd, 6th, and 8th grades. If students do not meet minimum grade-equivalent reading and math scores, report card grades, and attendance criteria, they are either retained or must attend the Summer Bridge Program (Chicago Public School, 1997). In all, 27 percent of the Nation's school districts now impose summer school on poor-performing students as a condition for promotion (Mathews, 2000).

In sum then, the push for more summer learning opportunities for children and adolescents will gather momentum from changes in the American family and from a focus on increasing the time children spend in formal education as a means for meeting higher academic standards and improving America's global economic position.

This policy brief reviews research on the effectiveness of summer school programs. It begins with a short history of the current school calendar and a summary of research examining the impact of the long summer break on student achievement test scores. This is followed by a history of summer school and its goals. Next, a review of research is presented on whether summer school is effective and, if so, what program characteristics are associated with the most effective programs. Finally, the brief concludes with some recommendations for policies makers and practitioners.

#### *Historical Roots of the Current School Calendar*

In the 19th century, school calendars reflected the needs of the families and communities served by each school district (Richmond, 1977). Children who lived in agricultural areas rarely attended school during summer, or during planting and harvesting, so they could be free to help tend crops or livestock. If children lived in urban areas, it was not unusual for them to attend school for at least 2 of summer's 3 months.

By the turn of the century, family mobility and the growing integration of the national economy made it important to standardize the school curricula. Families moving from one community to another needed to find that children at the same age were learning and were expected to know roughly the same things in their new com-

munity as in their old one. This need for standardization resulted in the current 9-month calendar compromise between town and country, and summer became a time without school for children regardless of where they lived (Association of California School Administrators, 1988).

#### *Summer Learning Loss*

The 3-month hiatus in the American school calendar raises the question of what impact the long summer break might have on students. To find out, Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, and Greathouse, (1996) undertook a synthesis of the research on summer learning loss, or more specifically, whether students' achievement test scores declined over the summer vacation. Thirty-nine studies were found examining the effects of summer vacation, 13 of which provided enough information for use in a statistical synthesis. A statistical combination of these results, called a meta-analysis, indicated that summer learning loss equaled at least 1 month of instruction. On average, children's achievement test scores were at least 1 month lower when they returned to school in fall than when students left in spring.

This meta-analysis also found dramatic differences in the effect of summer vacation on different skill areas. Summer loss was more pronounced for math facts and spelling than for other tested skill areas. An explanation of this result rests on the observation that both math facts and spelling skills involve the acquisition of factual and procedural knowledge whereas other skill areas, especially math concepts and problemsolving and reading comprehension, are more conceptually based. Without practice, cognitive psychology suggests, facts and procedural skills are most susceptible to forgetting (*e.g.*, Cooper & Sweller, 1987).

The meta-analysis also suggested that summer loss was more pronounced for math overall than for reading overall. It may be that children's home environments provide more opportunities to practice reading skills than to practice mathematics.

In addition to the influence of subject area, numerous differences among students were tested in the meta-analysis. Overall, there was little evidence to suggest that intelligence had an impact on the effect of summer break. Likewise, neither the student's sex nor ethnicity appeared to have a consistent influence on summer learning loss. Educators expressed special concern about the impact of summer vacation on the language skills of students who do not speak English at home, but the literature search found little evidence bearing on this issue.

Finally, family economics was examined as an influence on what happens to children over summer. The meta-analysis revealed that all students, regardless of the resources in their home, lost roughly equal amounts of math skills over summer. However, substantial economic differences were found for reading. On some measures, middle class children showed gains in reading achievement over summer but disadvantaged children showed losses. Reading comprehension scores of both income groups declined, but more so for disadvantaged students. Again, the income differences may be related to differences in opportunities to practice and learn reading skills over summer, with more books and reading opportunities available for middle class children.

#### **Table 1**

##### Summer Learning Loss

Research reveals that:

- On average, children lose 1 month on achievement test scores over the summer vacation.
- Summer loss is greatest in math facts and spelling.
- Summer loss is greater in math than reading.
- Summer vacation increases disparities between middle class and disadvantaged students' reading scores

The loss in achievement test scores suggests that it might be beneficial to continue summer remedial and enrichment programs. For all students, a focus on mathematics instruction in summer would seem to be most effective. Alternatively, if summer programs had the purpose of lessening inequities across income groups, then a focus on summer reading instruction for disadvantaged students would be most beneficial.

It is important to point out, however, that the existence of summer learning loss cannot *ipso facto* be taken to mean summer educational programs will be effective remedial interventions. Summer school might not change the educational trajectory of students who took part in such programs. The impact of summer educational programs has to be evaluated on its own merits.

### *Summer School*

As with the school calendar in general, the impetus for summer programs for school-aged youth first resided in economic considerations. As the 20th century took hold, the economy of the United States shifted from an agricultural base to an industrial one. Most children were either immigrants from abroad who made their homes in large urban areas or they were part of the great migration of Americans from the farm to the city. Many children and adolescents held jobs during the summer and those who were idle were a cause of concern for city dwellers (Dougherty, 1981). However, the passage of the first child labor law in 1916 meant that school-aged children had little to do during their vacation from school. Community leaders demanded that organized recreational activities be made available for students when school was out. Today, the purposes of summer programs stretch far beyond the prevention of delinquent behavior but this certainly remains among summer school's latent, if not overt, functions.

By the 1950s, educators realized that summertime held opportunities to remedy or prevent learning deficits (Austin, Rogers, & Walbesser, 1972). Because the wealthy were able to hire tutors for their children, the educational summer programs made available through schools largely served students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### *Goals of Summer School*

Summer programs to remedy learning deficits can be grouped into four categories. First, some summer programs are meant to help students meet minimum competency requirements for graduation or grade promotion. The Chicago Public Schools program mentioned earlier is of this sort. Second, secondary school students who fail a particular course during the regular academic year use summer school as an opportunity to retake the course. This is the type of program most people think of when they think of summer school.

A third type of remedial summer school occurs in response to the movement to insure students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education. In 1979, the United States District Court ruled that the Pennsylvania Department of Education had to provide a program beyond the regular school year for children with disabilities. The ruling was based on the premise that the long summer break would lead to regression of skills in students covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Finally, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and its successors recognized the special needs of students residing in areas with high concentrations of poverty. These programs were meant to break the cycle of poverty through the provision of supplemental educational services. To accomplish this goal, the law suggested that children have full access to effective high-quality regular school programs and receive supplemental help through extended time activities. The latter injunction has led to the establishment of educational summer programs for disadvantaged youth.

With the passage of time, the purposes of summer school have grown beyond the provision of remedial education. In 1959, Conant (1959) recommended that boards of education provide summer opportunities not only for students who were struggling in school but also for those who needed more flexible course schedules or who sought enriched educational experiences. Conant suggested that students who were heavily involved in extra-curricular activities or who held work-study positions could use summer school as a way to lighten their academic burden without delaying their graduation. Students who wished to graduate early could speed up their accumulation of credits. School administrators in the 1960s, faced with the space crunch created by the baby boom, saw the use of summer school to speed graduation as a way to make room for the growing number of students.

Recently, summer vacation has also been embraced as an ideal time to provide specialized programs for students with academic gifts and other talents. Such programs often involve offering advanced instruction that goes beyond the typical course of study. At the high school level, the content of these courses might be based on college-level curricula. Many enrichment and acceleration summer programs operate out of colleges on a fee basis, sometimes with scholarships available.

Finally, summer school provides opportunities for teachers. Summer schools allow teachers to make additional money and to develop professional competencies.

### **Table 2**

#### Goals of Summer School

- Prevent delinquent behavior.
- Remediate or prevent learning deficits.
- Help meet minimum competency requirements.

- Repeat failed courses or grade levels.
- Prevent regression for students with learning disabilities.
- Break the cycle of poverty.
- Provide flexible high school course scheduling.
- Accelerate progress for gifted students.
- Offer teachers additional compensation.

#### *The Effectiveness of Summer Programs*

A meta-analysis of summer school research conducted by Cooper, Charlton, Valentine, and Muhlenbruck (2000) summarized the results of 93 program evaluations. Five principle conclusions were drawn from the research. First, summer school programs focused on lessening or removing learning deficiencies have a positive impact on the knowledge and skills of participants. Overall, students completing remedial summer programs can be expected to score about one-fifth of a standard deviation higher than the control group on outcome measures. This conclusion was based on the convergence of numerous estimates of summer school effects.

The overall impact of summer school should be viewed as an average effect found across diverse programs evaluated with a wide variety of methods. These variations influence the effect on programs in significant ways. Put in practical terms, the overall estimate of effect could guide policy decisions at the broadest level, say by Federal or State policymakers. However, a local official about to implement a specific summer program for a particular type of student may find effects quite different from the overall finding. Generally however, both the overall findings and those associated with specific categories of programs suggested the effect of most programs is likely to be greater than zero.

The second conclusion from the meta-analysis was that summer school programs focusing on acceleration of learning or on other goals also have a positive impact on participants, roughly equal to programs focusing on remedial goals. However, because of the smaller number of evaluations the robustness of these findings could not be tested across student, program, and outcome variations.

The third conclusion from the meta-analysis was that summer school programs have more positive effects on the achievement of middle class students than on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The difference between the economic groups was significant whether or not effects were adjusted for methodological confounds and regardless of the assumptions used to model error variance. This finding may be due to the availability of more resources for middle class families supplementing and supporting the activities occurring in the classroom in ways that may augment the impact of the summer program. Alternatively, summer programs in middle class school districts may have better resources available, leading, for example to smaller classes. Heyns (1978) suggested that these economic differences in summer school outcomes might occur because "programs are less structured and depend on the motivation and interest of the child" (p. 139). Finally, the learning problems of disadvantaged youth may be simply more intransigent than the problems of middle class students.

Two points should be emphasized. First, even though the effect was larger for middle class students, all estimates of summer school's impact on disadvantaged students were significantly different from zero. Second, if summer programs are targeted specifically at disadvantaged students they can serve to close the gap in educational attainment.

The fourth conclusion of the meta-analysis was that remedial summer programs have larger positive effects when the program is run for a small number of schools or classes or in a small community, although even the largest programs showed positive average effects. The size-related program characteristics may serve as proxies for associated differences in local control of programs. That is, small programs may give teachers and administrators greater flexibility to tailor class content and instruction to the specific needs of the students they serve and to their specific context. Small programs also may facilitate planning, and may remove roadblocks to the efficient use of resources. Among the reasons cited by teachers and parents for the failure of summer programs was the last-minute nature of decisionmaking and the untimely arrival of needed materials. These problems may be more prevalent when programs are large. As a caution to this interpretation, the size-related program variables might also be related to the economic background of the community being served, with larger programs serving poorer communities. If this is the case then economics might be the underlying causal factor, not local control.

Finally, the meta-analysis revealed that summer programs that provide small group or individual instruction produced the largest impact on student outcomes. Further, those evaluations that solicited comments from teachers about the positive aspects of summer school often suggested that small group and individual instruc-

tion were among the program's strengths. There is no reason why the more general educational literature showing a relation between class size and achievement ought not apply to summer programs as well (Mosteller, 1995).

In addition to these principal conclusions, there were five other conclusions drawn from the research, but with less confidence. First, summer programs that required some form of parent involvement produced larger effects than programs without this component. Second, remedial summer programs may have a larger effect on math achievement than on reading. It is possible to interpret this finding in relation to summer learning loss. Recall that the review of summer loss research revealed students' achievement scores in math showed more of a drop during summer than reading achievement scores. If this is the case, then control group students in summer school studies likely received less practice in math than in reading. Thus, the difference in the experiences of students not in summer programs may explain the difference in summer school effects.

The finding that summer school may be more efficacious for math than reading outcomes should not create the impression that promoting literacy ought to be a secondary goal of summer programs. Summer school has positive effects on reading as well as math. Further, illiteracy is a strong predictor of negative social behavior in both children and adults (Adams, 1991).

The third tentative conclusion from the meta-analysis was that the achievement advantage gained by students who attend summer school may diminish over time. However, this finding should not be taken to indicate that summer school effects are themselves not long-lasting. Multiple, subtle processes were uncovered that might serve to obscure lasting effects, the most obvious of which is that students who do not attend summer programs may receive similar programs during the school year that are not needed by summer attendees. Also, summer school may have positive effects on developmental trajectories that go unnoticed because of how a study is carried out.

Fourth, remedial summer school programs had positive effects for students at all grade levels, although the effects may be most pronounced for students in early primary grades and secondary school than in middle grades. The underlying cause of this finding may be the existence of three largely independent approaches to summer instruction associated with different grade levels. For example, the Albuquerque Public Schools (1985) described the results of interviews with teachers following a summer program for all students. The interviews revealed elementary school teachers felt summer school gave them the opportunity to be more creative and to individualize instruction. Middle school teachers said they emphasized study and organizational skills more than during regular session. High school teachers, because of the credit structure, taught classes in a manner that adhered most closely to regular session classes. If these differences in approaches to summer school hold generally, we might expect the greatest achievement gains in the earliest and latest grades because it is here that teachers place the greatest emphasis on instruction in subject matter. Summer school in the middle years may place more emphasis on the teaching of subject-related study skills that eventually, but not immediately, have an impact on achievement outcome measures.

Finally, summer programs that undergo careful scrutiny for treatment fidelity, including monitoring to insure that instruction is being delivered as prescribed, monitoring of attendance, and removal from the evaluation of students with many absences may produce larger effects than unmonitored programs.

There were two findings of the meta-analysis that deserve mention because they did not reveal consistent or significant results. First, there was inconsistent evidence regarding whether or how the achievement label given to students was associated with the amount of benefit they derived from remedial summer programs. As noted earlier, one impetus for summer school is the Federal-mandate requiring that extended year services be available to children with disabilities. The meta-analysis showed clear and reliable benefits of summer school for these children, but these benefits appeared no greater in magnitude than the benefits for other students.

Second, summer school remedial programs that require attendance appeared no less effective, and perhaps are more effective, than programs that were voluntary. While volunteering may serve as an indicator of motivation and engagement that would positively influence the impact of the summer program, it may be that compulsory attendance requirements are associated with student performance levels that are most likely to benefit from summer school activities.

### Table 3

Effectiveness of Summer School  
Research reveals that:

- Remedial summer school programs have a positive academic impact on participants.
- Summer school programs focusing on multiple goals or acceleration also have a positive impact on participants.
- Summer school programs have more positive effects on middle class students than on students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Remedial summer programs have larger positive effects when:
  - The program is run for a small number of students and schools in a small community.
  - The program provides small group or individual instruction
  - Remedial summer programs may also have larger effects:
    - When parent involvement is required.
    - On math achievement than on reading.
    - In early primary grades and high school than in middle grades.
    - When they undergo careful scrutiny for treatment fidelity.
    - The effect of remedial programs may diminish over time.

#### *Implications for Summer School Policies and Practices*

The research results can be used to propose some guidelines to policymakers and program implementers concerning the funding, development, and operation of summer schools.

Most obviously, Federal, State, and local policymakers should continue to fund summer school programs. The research demonstrates that summer programs are effective at improving the academic skills of students taking advantage of them. Further, summer school likely has positive effects well beyond those that have been measured in past research. For example, summer programs may inhibit delinquency among idle youth.

To ensure that summer programs are most effective and are accepted by the general public, policymakers should require that a significant portion of funds for summer school be spent on instruction in mathematics and reading. For single-parent families and for families in which both parents work outside the home, summer school will serve a childcare function. For children who live in high crime and high poverty areas, summer programs will provide safe and stimulating environments clearly preferable to the alternatives. However, summer programs are proven vehicles to remedy, reinforce, and accelerate learning and this opportunity should not be missed.

Third, policymakers should set aside funds for the specific purpose of fostering participation in summer programs, especially participation by disadvantaged students. Summer programs often face serious problems in attracting students and maintaining their attendance. They compete for youthful attention with alternative activities that are often more attractive, but less beneficial. Even the most well-conceived program will fail if students choose not to enroll or attend. Policymakers should earmark funds for transportation to and from summer programs and for food service at the program site. Policymakers might even make provisions for siblings to attend summer programs so that parents will not keep older brothers and sisters home to provide childcare for younger family members.

Policymakers should offset the mandate for reading and math instruction by providing for significant local control concerning program delivery. The research suggests the possibility that flexible delivery systems may lead to important contextual variations that significantly improve the outcomes of summer programs. Therefore, policymakers ought to resist the temptation to micromanage programs and give local schools and teachers leeway in how to structure and deliver programs.

Finally, policymakers should require rigorous formative and summative evaluation of program outcomes. Credible evaluations provide the accountability that is called for to justify expenditure of public funds. Policymakers can make a substantial contribution to future decisionmaking by requiring and providing funds for systematic, ongoing program evaluation.

#### **Table 4**

##### Implications of Research for Summer School Policies and Practices

Policymakers should:

- Continue to fund summer school programs.
- Require that funds for summer school be spent on instruction in mathematics and reading.
- Set aside funds for the purpose of fostering participation in summer programs, especially by disadvantaged students.
- Provide for significant local control concerning program delivery.
- Require rigorous formative and summative evaluation of programs.



Practitioners should:

- Plan early.
- Provide program and staffing continuity from year to year.
- Use evaluations to identify successful sites and program content.
- Integrate summer teaching with staff development.

There are numerous suggestions for how summer programs should be implemented that can be gleaned from the research. For example, surveys of teachers often point to a lack of planning time and late-arriving program materials as two of the most severe impediments to the success of a summer program. Thus, just as policymakers need to provide stable and continuing sources of funds for summer schools, program implementers need to plan early. The pragmatics of program operation will take on a higher priority as summer schools come to be seen less as “add-ons” and more as integral parts of the array of services provided by schools.

Related to planning is the need for program implementers to provide continuity from year to year. Priority for staffing should be based on past participation in the summer program itself so that teachers, administrators, aides, and support staff who took part in past years are given the first opportunity to be involved again. Evaluations should be used to continue successful elements of a program, from site locations to program content, and to discontinue unsuccessful ones.

Finally, program implementers might also consider integrating summer staff development activities for teachers with the teaching of summer school. The relatively small classes and relaxed atmosphere that many summer programs provide could make them an ideal laboratory for teachers to experiment with new curricula or pedagogical approaches. For example, teachers might learn about and discuss a new teaching strategy in the afternoon and then practice the approach using the next morning’s summer school class. The coupling of staff development and summer teaching might also increase the pool of teachers interested in taking part.

Policymakers and practitioners might also consider more innovative ways of recasting summer school to take advantage of what the research reveals about summer learning loss and successful summer programs. For example, a “Running Start” summer program might commence close to the beginning of the new school year rather than follow on the heels of the old year, as is typical of many current programs. It might also enlist the participation of regular classroom teachers, although they need not be full-time summer instructors. Regular class teachers might function as the resource teacher who pulls out students from the ongoing summer class routine. The teachers would meet with, get to know, assess the strengths and weaknesses of, and begin instructing students who will be in their class when the new regular session begins. This strategy would seem most beneficial for students who are struggling in school, need special attention, or have the potential to present behavior problems when school begins.

This running start might smooth the transition to the new school year by causing less time to be spent reviewing material when classes begin and, hopefully, diminishing disruptions caused by struggling students. These outcomes should benefit all class members, not just the program participants.

#### *Conclusion*

The 9-month school calendar was adopted in America to accommodate the needs of a family-based, agrarian economy. In areas of the country where the 9-month school did not fit the economy, summer programs were quickly developed to prevent the negative social behaviors associated with idle youth. Educators soon discovered the potential of summer programs to improve learning. Summer education programs were viewed as especially attractive for children from homes with limited resources and for students with special learning needs. Although the benefit varies according to characteristics of the child and program content and delivery, the generally positive effects of summer school for those who participate are unmistakable.

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Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much, Professor Cooper.

Ms. Ramoglou, thank you for being here and being part of this panel.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINA RAMOGLOU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROGERS SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTER, STAMFORD, CT**

Ms. RAMOGLOU. Good morning. Thank you, Senator Clinton, Chairman Dodd, for the opportunity to testify about the need for summer school programs. I have to share with you this is the first time I am in a hearing room, so I hope I am not too nervous.

Senator CLINTON. You are doing great.

Ms. RAMOGLOU. Today, I would like to share with you what, in essence, is a tale of two cities named Stamford.

The families in the first Stamford are very affluent, they have an average median household income of \$61,000. The value of their homes range from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million. Many of their children attend public schools, some may attend private schools. They have at least one computer in their home and use it extensively for school projects. The children of these families have the opportunity to attend extracurricular activities and take advantage of all of the enriching, cultural and arts experience that the city of Stamford and surrounding communities, especially the greater New York metropolitan area have to offer after school and during the summer.

These children most likely will not be required to attend Stamford summer schools due to low grades or test scores. More likely than not, they will be attending private summer day camps or even sleep-away camps.

Now let us meet some of the other families in the other Stamford. Their average median household income is \$20,000. This enti-

tles their children to have free or reduced lunch in the Stamford public schools where the children are students. They probably do not own their own home. They are tenants and meeting their rent is very difficult, since 1-bedroom studios begin renting at \$1,400 per month. As a matter of fact, if they are not receiving Section 8 housing subsidies, they cannot afford to live in Stamford unless they are sharing housing with other relatives or friends.

These families are probably also making monthly visits to the local food bank and receiving clothing and household supplies from Person-to-Person, a local philanthropic agency. More times than not, the children of these families go home directly after school. Many of them are the caregivers of their younger brothers and sisters since both of their parents or other adults in the household are working, sometimes even 2 and 3 jobs paying the minimum wage.

These children do not have many, if any, opportunities to attend the rich cultural arts experiences the city of Stamford and surrounding communities have to offer. More likely than not, they do not own a computer, and an adult is not at home who can give them homework assistance when they need it. The likelihood is that the adults at home have limited English proficiency, attested to by the fact that 55 different languages are spoken in the homes of Stamford children. The most common are Spanish, Creole, Polish, Russian, French, Chinese, Albanian, Portuguese and Bengali.

Let us also keep in mind the children of those families who do receive free or reduced lunch, however, are not poor enough to meet the income eligibility guidelines for childcare assistance subsidies. These families cannot afford to pay the going rate for after-school or summer camp programs offered by many of our local agencies.

The good news is that some of the children will be able to participate in an after-school or summer school program either because their families meet the income eligibility guidelines to receive child care subsidies or because they attend one of the schools receiving Federal 21st Century Community Learning Center funding. The disadvantage here is that Connecticut will close the childcare subsidy program to new applicants at the end of this month, and only two Stamford schools are 21st Century CLC schools. The prospects of other schools receiving funds look rather bleak, especially if there is no increase in Federal funds, in light of proposed State cuts.

To continue our tale, approximately 2,500 children in Stamford are eligible to receive free or reduced lunch, while 2,000 Stamford school children have received letters informing them they are required to attend summer school. You might be thinking, "Excellent. We in Stamford are trying to help these children, and we are working on closing the gap between the haves and the have-nots, between the fortunate and the not-so-fortunate." Yes, we are trying. However, due to budget deficits, we are sending 1,000 less children this year. Just this week, the *Stamford Advocate*, our local paper, has featured front-page articles and editorials about our school system's projected approximately \$2.5-million deficit, citing unexpected health insurance, special education, and summer school expenses as the cause.

Senators, I have been involved with before- and after-school and summer programs for many years. I have participated in the Lights on After School Campaign sponsored by the After School Alliance. I have served as past treasurer and board member of NSACA, as vice president and current member of CSACA, the Connecticut affiliate. Through my involvement and experience in the field and, yes, even in the trenches, I know you are familiar with the research on the positive impact of affordable, quality after-school and summer programs on children and the negative impact if these programs are not available.

You are familiar with the research which states that the quality of these programs directly impacts children's success in school, also that the time in after-school and summer programs is directly related to the rise or decline of delinquency, juvenile crime, and teen pregnancy prevention, and our others have spoken about the summer slide. So I am not going to repeat that.

Our children deserve to have equal opportunities, equal access. They deserve the tools and skills to help them succeed. Please create the systemic reforms and allocate the funding that will enable our schools and our social and community organizations to help all children succeed. We need more after-school programs, we need more summer school programs. Our social service agencies and community organizations, such as ROSCCO, need support and assistance to do their work and work with the schools in collaboration. We serve 750 children in before- and after-school and summer programs. Eighty-five percent of these receive free or reduced lunch.

Last week, I was reminded of a "Simpsons" episode, which satirically advocated holding prisoners in schools and using the savings on prison costs for school programs, but this idea is no joke. In reality, the most effective way to allocate resources over the long run is to invest them in our children's education, social and emotional development.

Can we of this great and most powerful Nation afford to incarcerate, but not to educate? Can we, as a Nation, afford to have high school graduates who cannot read; workers who are not skilled; future citizens who are not productive members of this great society? We must find the way to provide for the education and success of our children—all of our children, regardless of where they might live, what their language might be or which language they speak at home or what their family income might be.

In which Stamford would you want your children to live?

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ramoglou follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTINA RAMOGLOU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROGERS  
SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTER, STAMFORD, CT

Good Morning. Thank you Senator Dodd, Chairman Kennedy, Senator Gregg, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify about the need for summer school programs.

My name is Christina Ramoglou; I am a citizen of the wealthiest and most powerful country on earth. I am a resident of Connecticut, the wealthiest State of this great Nation and my family and I live in Fairfield County, Connecticut's most affluent. I have lived in the city of Stamford since I was 3 years old. Stamford has a population of 110,000 and is located on Long Island Sound wedged between Greenwich and Darien, Connecticut.

I am a graduate of the Stamford Public School System and my son will be a senior at Stamford High School in September. I am here today as Executive Director of the Rogers School Community Center Organization, otherwise known in Stamford as ROSSCO Inc. ROSSCO is a local not-for-profit organization established in 1975, which administers and offers school-based family and children support programs. Our board of directors is volunteer parents who are present or past program participants. I am an educator and I have held the position of ROSSCO Executive Director for 15 years.

Today, I would like to share with you what is, in essence, a tale of two cities named Stamford.

The families in the first Stamford are very affluent; they have an average median household income of \$61,000. The value of their homes ranges from \$500,000 to \$1,500,000. Many of their children attend public schools some may attend private schools. They have at least one computer in their home and use it extensively for school projects. The children of these families have the opportunity to attend extra-curricular activities and take advantage of all of the enriching cultural and arts experiences the city of Stamford and surrounding communities and the greater New York metropolitan area have to offer after school and during the summer. These children most likely will not be required to attend the Stamford Summer Schools due to low grades or test scores. More likely than not, they will be attending private summer day camps or even sleep away camps.

Now let's meet some of the other families in the other Stamford. Their average median household income is \$20,000. This entitles their children to have free or reduced lunch in the Stamford Public Schools where their children are students. They probably do not own their own home. They are tenants and meeting their rent is very difficult since one-bedroom studios begin renting at \$1,400 per month. As a matter of fact, if they are not receiving Section 8 housing subsidies, they cannot afford to live in Stamford unless they are sharing housing with other relatives. These families are probably also making monthly visits to the local food bank and receiving clothing and other household supplies from Person-to-Person, a local philanthropic agency.

More times than not, the children of these families go home directly after school. Many of them are the caregivers for their younger brothers and sisters, since both of their parents or other adults in the household are working, sometimes even two and three jobs. These children don't have many, if any opportunities, to attend the rich cultural and arts experiences the city of Stamford and surrounding communities have to offer. More likely than not they do not own a computer and an adult is not at home who can give them homework assistance when they need it. The likelihood is that the adults at home have limited English proficiency, attested to by the fact that 55 different languages are spoken in the homes of Stamford children. The most common ten (other than English) are Spanish, Creole, Polish, Russian, French, Chinese, Albanian, Portuguese and Bengali.

Let's also keep in mind the children of those families who do receive free or reduced lunches however who are not poor enough to meet the income eligibility guidelines for childcare assistance subsidies. These families cannot afford to pay the going rate for afterschool or summer camp programs offered by many local agencies.

The good news is that some of the children will be able to participate in an afterschool or summer school program, either because their families meet the income eligibility guidelines to receive childcare subsidies or because they attend one of the schools receiving Federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding. The disadvantage here is that the State will close the Child Care Subsidy Program to new applicants at the end of this month and only two Stamford schools—the Hart Magnet Elementary and the Cloonan Middle School—are 21st Century CLC Schools. The prospects of other schools receiving funds look rather bleak, especially if there is no increase in Federal funds, in light of proposed State and local cuts.

To continue our tale, approximately 2,500 children in Stamford are eligible to receive free or reduced lunch, while 2,000 Stamford schoolchildren in grades K-12 have received letters informing them they are required to attend summer school. You might be thinking "Excellent, we in Stamford are trying to help these children, and we are working on closing the gap between the haves and the have-nots, between the fortunate and the not so fortunate." Yes, we are trying. However due to budget deficits; we are sending 1,000 less children to summer school this year. Because of funding or lack thereof, only children in targeted grades will be invited to attend summer school. Just this week, the *Stamford Advocate*, our local paper, has featured front-page articles and editorials about our school system's projected \$1,000,000–\$2,800,000 deficit citing "unexpected health insurance, special education and summer school expenses" as the cause.

Senators, I have been involved with before- and afterschool and summer programs for many years. I have participated in the Lights on After School Campaign sponsored by the After School Alliance. I have served as a past treasurer and board member of NSACA, the National School Age Care Alliance, and a vice president and current board member of the Connecticut School Age Care Alliance. Through my involvement and experience in the field and yes, the trenches, I know you are familiar with the research on the positive impact of affordable, quality, afterschool and summer programs on children, and the negative impact if these programs are not available. You are familiar with the research, which states that the quality of these programs directly impacts children's success in school. Also, the time spent in afterschool and summer programs is directly related to the rise or decline of delinquency, juvenile crime and teen pregnancy prevention.

Our children deserve to have equal opportunities, equal access; they deserve the tools and skills to help them succeed. Please create the systemic reforms and allocate the funding that will enable our schools and our social and community organizations to help all children succeed. We need more afterschool programs. We need more summer school programs. Our social service agencies and community organizations need support and assistance to do their work. ROSCCO serves more than 750 children in before, afterschool, and summer programs. 85 percent of the 250 children in the ROSCCO summer programs receive free or reduced lunches.

Last week, I was reminded of a "Simpsons" episode which satirically advocated holding prisoners in schools and using the savings on prison costs for school programs. But, this idea is no joke. In reality, the most effective way to allocate resources over the long run is to invest them in our children's educational, social, and emotional development.

Can we of this great and powerful Nation afford to incarcerate but not to educate? Can we, as a Nation, afford to have high school graduates who cannot read; workers who are not skilled; and future citizens who are not productive members of this great society? We must find the way to provide for the education and success of our children—all of our children, regardless of where they might live, what language they might speak at home, or what their family income might be.

In which Stamford would you want your children to live?

Senator DODD. [presiding]. Excellent, excellent testimony. I am very proud to represent you.

Ms. RAMOGLU. Thank you. I am very proud of you, also.

Senator DODD. You do great work.

My colleagues, let me express Senator Sessions is going to try and rejoin us, and Senator Clinton is heading up to New York and so wanted to be here for as long as she could, but apologizes for having to leave a little earlier. We are going to leave the record open, by the way, for Members who have some questions they would like to submit to all of you so we have a complete record on this.

I have got to tell you, when I was getting ready for the hearing, the notion of summer school, I almost have this sort of a Pavlovian response to the word, as a lot of children may. I guess the idea of summer school always conjured up in my mind is things did not go well during the academic year, and so you went to summer school, either to pick up in an area you had not done as well as you should have. I remember a couple of courses in Latin I had to do some summer work, and I dreaded it. It was something I did not look forward to particularly.

I have got a relative of mine who has some learning disabilities, and they are working, and so summer school becomes an opportunity for this child to really be able to try and stay up and to stay even. The notion of having time off in the summer to be carefree and not having to worry about academic exercises is sort of one reaction. But I think if we look at it in a broader context, as you all have here, then I think we begin to realize the value of it.

One of the things I wanted to begin the questioning with is that notion, in a sense, if we can talk about this slide, in a sense, and begin with you, Sandra, if I could, that the notion I almost heard, I thought, was that this is something not just for students who may not have performed well in a particular course or courses, although it may do that as well, but that we are talking about something more broad-based here than taking a child who did not do as well in math or reading or whatever else it might be and filling in, in that gap over the summer, so that when it comes the fall, they are on an even, level playing field with the student who did do well and left the class in June.

I wonder if you might address that. Because, obviously, if we are talking about eliminating these programs, the gap of some, everyone who learned on the same level and starting up, you are going to have a disparity between—as you point out—between children who come from less-advantageous families economically than others. But if you are a child that was a bit behind, for whatever reason, either because of language proficiency, slight learning disabilities, whatever it may be, if you are a bit behind in June, and then there is no place to fill in the gap, it seems to me that gap is even wider with a child who is trying to catch up.

I wonder if you might just address that.

Ms. FELDMAN. Well, you know, if you are taking Latin, and you did not do your homework, and you have to go to summer school—

Senator DODD. You sound like my mother. Please don't. I am having this reaction here.

[Laughter.]

Ms. FELDMAN. So, you know, that should not go away. But what we are talking about here, especially when you talk about very young children, children learn in many, many different ways. Children learn through playing, they learn through sports, they learn through all kinds of recreational and cultural activities, they learn from interaction with other kids, they learn from seeing new places that they never would have had the opportunity to see, they learn from learning about animals that they otherwise might never have come into contact with. They have the opportunity, if they are a city kid, to go to summer camp in the country.

So the worst thing we could do is think about summer school as punishment. Summer school should not be punishment and especially when you are talking about very young children. The years kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, if we had children during the summer—poor children in particular—able to engage in the kinds of activities that more advantaged kids just take for granted, you know, it is the stuff that Senator Clinton was talking about, that families just do with their children. They take them on family vacations. Well, poor families may not be taking vacations during the summer or have a weekend house to go to, or have the wherewithal to take a picnic to a lake a hundred miles away.

So those are the kinds of experiences that we can organize for children. The schools can do it in collaboration with community-based organizations. It is happening in a lot of places where children could actually look forward to it. I do not think that for most children you want them to get the feeling that, oh, you know, I am

not going to get any kind of a break here. You do need some kind of a break, and some children will need to be in remedial classes, hopefully surrounded by some pleasurable activities as well. But we need to think about summer school much more broadly.

Senator DODD. Dr. Cooper and Ms. Ramoglou, do you want to comment on this at all?

Ms. RAMOGLOU. Yes, I would like to share our experience in Stamford.

We have a citywide initiative with the Stamford Public Schools where the academics are done in the morning from 9 till 11—they are offered by teachers in the school system—and from thereafter, through collaboration with all of the community agencies, the children are coming into summer programs. They do not have to choose between going to school or daycare, as they used to in the past. We have worked out transportation. So this collaboration is in its third year, and each year it gets better and better.

So we are talking summer programs, and it is not a punishment, it is not a drill and kill, and then be sent home. Because what happens at 11 a.m. if they were out of school? Again, the children need somewhere to be, somewhere to go and have their summer experiences.

Senator DODD. Are you using school facilities for a lot of this?

Ms. RAMOGLOU. Yes. I would say half of the programs are extending the day with in-the-school facilities and the other half are using the community centers.

Senator DODD. I am wondering, and this has always been a huge debate, obviously, about buildings and facilities that are open for a few hours each day most of the months, but there are periods when they are vacant during the day. I was wondering how children's attitudes change about school if, in fact, they spend part of the year in the very buildings where they are doing something other than exactly learning in an academic sense, so that the place becomes a place where not only you learn, but also where you have fun. So you are going back into that institution which causes different responses in you, as a human being. I wonder if you have seen anything like that at all?

Ms. RAMOGLOU. I can share with you that ROSCCO, as a community agency, has been offering programs in the school building for 25 years, and the children are in summer program mode when it is summer. The atmosphere is set in such a way, they are in summer program—

Senator DODD. How about coming back to that school in the fall, having had a good experience there and fun, do they react to the institution as a building differently?

Ms. RAMOGLOU. As a matter of fact, I think they are even more positive to the institution.

Senator DODD. That is my point.

Ms. FELDMAN. I think that the point about being in summer mode is very well-taken. A school building in the summer that has got summer programs going on, even if some of them are remedial, is just a different place.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ms. FELDMAN. It is a very different place. Remember, first of all, you do not have a full complement of students usually, so you have



much smaller groups of kids with adults, and it is just a different feeling. You know, a school is a living, breathing place, and it becomes a summer school, and it is quite different.

Senator DODD. I understood that. I was just getting at the notion because, like with parents, one of the problems I have heard about over the years, particularly from parents who may not have completed high school themselves or did not have an educational experience here, to get them to show up at a school during an academic year is hard. It is going back into an institution where they did not have a good experience themselves. They are visiting that facility in a “non-academic” environment.

I am not using the right words here, I am afraid, but the notion is something other than—I am curious as to whether or not that is having the kind of positive effect on both the student and the parent looking at that facility, that building, that can cause one set of reactions from September to June, and because they had a different relationship with that institution from June to August, whenever it is, that come September there is a more positive response to the facility, and I do not know, I am just asking the question of whether or not there is any—

Ms. FELDMAN. Well, I think they would find the school more approachable, more accessible.

Senator DODD. Yes, that is a good word. Yes.

Ms. FELDMAN. By the way, putting parent programs in place in the summertime is another thing that could be done that is very helpful.

Mr. COOPER. There are a couple of things you mentioned about the punitive nature of summer school—

Senator DODD. That is a good word. There is the word I was looking for.

[Laughter.]

Mr. COOPER. It was clearly the case years ago, especially for high school students that that would be the case, but I think you would also find today that summer school has a very different connotation. Lots of kids who are doing quite well in high school use summer and go to summer school for enrichment purposes or acceleration. So it does not really have that at that level, obviously. If it is remedial, it is remedial, but the notion of having to go to school in the summer for high school kids is a little bit different today than it used to be.

Most of the programs that we looked at do not last the entire 12 weeks, but will last between 4, typically 6, and up to 8 weeks. So kids still do get some downtime, and I think most parents will tell you that after 2 weeks of vacation, their kids start to get bored.

Senator DODD. Yes. You mentioned, obviously, some of these issues of resources. Are there other things that we can do to promote and help out the lower income parents? If we accept the notion, and I think it is rather obvious, again, people have fewer choices with less income, and so their opportunities of doing the things that we are apt to do with our children, it does not even necessarily mean vacations in some cases. I mean, there are things that people can do that do not have the opportunity to take vacations or go to some fancy place or a weekend at the beach or a week at the beach that you can do, parents can do. There are

things that we can do here to help promote ideas or things that would assist that lower income family to help them hedge against that slide.

Mr. COOPER. There are a couple of things that we recommend along those lines, and they deal with free opportunities, especially in cities, but all over the country you can find them. Most libraries will run reading programs that are free during the summer for kids, museums are free and typically quite available, and also businesses and factories will run tours that can be very instructive.

What we suggest for parents, in that regard, is that before their kids leave school at the end of the year, to speak with teachers in the coming grade and discuss with them what it is their kids are going to be studying the next year and use that as a springboard for the kinds of opportunities that they might build into their summer activities.

So, for instance, if you live in the city of Philadelphia or near Philadelphia and you discover your child is going to be studying the Constitution the next year, it makes a heck of a lot of sense to jump on Amtrak—if it is still running at the time—and take your kid down to Philadelphia and take them to Constitution Hall. So those kinds of things are available and can be done pretty cheaply.

Ms. FELDMAN. We have actually got a program that we try to get out there of summer learning activities that we ask our members to share with parents, and I can provide you with some of those materials. I think they are full of ideas of the kinds of ways that—

Ms. RAMOGLU. Senator, can I respond—

Senator DODD. I suspect you are working through public service, getting your local TV stations, radio stations, others to make people aware of what exists. A lot of time finding out where to go to find out what is available can be not easy.

I was curious, and then I am going to turn my colleague from Alabama, just one other question that gets to the finance issue a bit. We have not completed the budget process here in terms of the education budgets, but we all know—I do not know what Alabama's situation is—I know in Connecticut we have had a marked change in our fiscal picture in Connecticut, so that we are now looking at a shortfall I think that it dipped into our Rainy Day fund to the tune of around \$300 million to meet this year's obligations in the State.

I am wondering if budgets, if States or communities are looking in terms of what is going to be required in addition, and I am not sure how much we are going to make up, and, for instance, the testing requirements in 3 through 8 and the like, there is a lot of concern being raised about whether or not we will come up with the resources to assist these schools in that regard.

Is part of what we are looking at a reaction to that in terms of budget allocations, holding back funds? Is there some relationship between the cutbacks that I have mentioned here this morning and the anticipatory cost or is it present costs that we are looking at?

Mr. COOPER. Ms. Feldman said earlier about the notion of the costs, and you have to be careful about whether it is really a savings and the idea that summer school is actually an add-on, wheth-

er it is really a savings or if it is just a delaying in what would be a much larger expense if summer school is cut back.

The perfect example is the districts and the movement to do away with social promotion. It is clearly much more expensive to educate a child for an additional year during the regular school year, probably 3 to 4 times more expensive to retain a student in a grade than it is, as in the Chicago experience, to give them an intense summer program in reading and mathematics and that that permits to continue at grade level.

So, if that program were to disappear, but the notion of social promotion also disappeared and many more kids are being held back or being retained in grade, the expense of educating those children, if they finish school at all when retained, and it is not clear that they do—the drop-out rate is higher—is going to be much greater than is the expense of the summer programs.

Ms. FELDMAN. I think what is happening across the States, though, right now is that we had an economic turndown, most of the States—almost all of them—require balanced budgets, and they are finding that they simply do not have the tax revenues coming in to provide the same level of service to education and lots of other things that they were providing before.

So cuts that we are seeing, as I said, I mean, the summer school, it cannot be considered a frill, but people still go back to, “Well, where am I going to cut? I will cut summer school, I will cut after-school.” They are experiencing cuts across the board in the States, and it is pretty frightening. It is very serious because we have been making progress. People are being asked to meet higher standards. They have been trying to meet those higher standards, and now they are going to be looking at higher costs as a result of the Federal law, and we have to find a way to help them meet those costs.

I mean, yes, there is some money for testing this year. They will be getting a very good increase in 2003, which we thank you all for, but so far the budget is not looking so good for next year, I mean, for 2002 versus 2003. Next year, and I know that the discussion is just starting, but there is a lot of concern about whether we can carry forward the expectations that I think everybody has, bipartisan expectations, for the children in the schools in the coming years.

So I do not think people are setting some money aside; I think they are experiencing huge shortfalls and trying to find a way to live with them.

Now I do want to just take that opportunity, though, to say that we do see something happening in relation to the reauthorization, in relation to the Leave No Child Behind Act, which we are a little concerned about. We do not have full information on it. But in anticipation of potential transportation costs, we are finding that some States are holding back much more money than they should in anticipation of needing to pay for transportation because of the public school choice element in the law.

We are going to be studying that and trying to come to grips with it. We also talked to the Department about that, trying to discourage them from doing that. But that could end up being a problem where the promise of funds, which this Senate and the Congress made generally and the Administration made generally, is not

going to bear fruit because of the holding back of some of those funds that they anticipate needing to spend on transportation because of choice.

So we will see what happens with that, but I do not think that is what the overall problem is. The overall problem we are experiencing right now and the cuts that we are having in summer school this summer have to do with economic downturn, with the lack of tax revenues coming in. Some of it may have to do with the tax cut that was enacted. That is what is going on.

Ms. RAMOGLU. The need has not changed, and it is not going away. So, if we are not investing in it currently, I believe it is going to be paid for further on down the line. So we may be saving now, but what is the actual cost?

Senator DODD. I know, and every State is different. In our State, in Connecticut, there is a tremendous dependency on the local property taxes, our major funding source. That is what most communities in most States—although others do it somewhat differently, some are just pure State, and obviously we are finding—I always say at the Federal level we cut taxes, and the President, and the Congress, and the States do it. When it gets down to the lowest level of Government, the local level, they are not left with many alternatives because everything has been cut back. The poorer communities, obviously, do not have the base to begin with, and it makes it hard.

Let me turn to my colleague from Alabama. Thank you.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you.

Our State budget has been squeezed, as most States have, and it is a tough time, although the reductions are not significant, but they are felt significantly—not significant in terms of overall expenditures, but they are significant in terms of the impact they have.

I would note that I think in the last 2 years, Mr. Chairman, that we have got about a 30-percent increase in Federal aid to education. I think it was 15 or 20 percent last year and about that much the year before, and we got a nice increase for next year. We may not be able to hold it because the deficit is greater than we expected, but we have increased funding many multiples of the cost of living in America. So the Federal Government is enhancing its share of the funding. There is no doubt about that, and President Bush has pushed for that.

Professor Cooper, we know we are spending a lot now. Most systems do have summer school programs of some kind. Can you tell us, have you studied what works, or have other authoritative persons done it, and analyzed existing studies, and conducted studies to determine what really works and what amounts to a little benefit from summer schools?

Mr. COOPER. Yes. In fact, we titled our report, “Making the Most of Summer School,” figuring that the more important question, the real question was how to make these programs as effective as possible. When we looked at these 93 evaluations and looked at the impact that each one of the programs had, we tried to sort them into different program characteristics and see if larger effects were

associated with programs that had particular characteristics. So that was our way of going about doing it.

Senator SESSIONS. Could I just interrupt? Did you feel like the studies that were conducted, those programs were adequate scientifically or, if you designed it yourself, could you have designed it better?

Mr. COOPER. Most of the studies have deficiencies in them, and it is unquestionably the case that we need to pay greater attention to getting the best possible, sound scientific evidence on these issues.

Senator SESSIONS. And objective. Because the truth is, and I have seen it in the Department of Justice, where we study every kind of idea to fight crime, whoever believes in that idea somehow influences the study.

Mr. COOPER. Right.

Senator SESSIONS. It oftentimes turns out to be more favorable, and then it confuses you about precisely what works and what does not.

Mr. COOPER. I understand. We are looking across studies with lots of different methodologies. I am not going to claim that these are definitive answers, but that, in fact, they give us some suggestions. And a lot of them will be very consistent with the knowledge the teachers would have, but perhaps one way to think about it would be to say, using these as guidelines, now let us go out and give these really good tests, objective tests of if these types of program characteristics are important.

Senator SESSIONS. Do you think it would be good—before you get into it—do you think it would be good for the Department of Education to assemble a top group of researchers to establish what needs to be determined about programs, what does work and really conduct a substantial analysis nationwide?

Mr. COOPER. Yes.

Senator SESSIONS. Are we doing anything like that?

Mr. COOPER. I am not aware of any association, particularly with summer school. Obviously, there are an enormous number of topics in education that could benefit from that kind of study. I am sure you are as aware, if not more aware than I am, of the efforts in the Department of Education, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, to increase the rigor and the standards of educational research.

In fact, there is a bill in the Senate at the moment to reorganize the research capacities in the Department. I think it is a very positive step forward that requires the employment of scientific standards. OERI is bidding for a “What Works Clearinghouse” that would do the kinds of things that we have been doing over a multitude of topics, trying to bring together the best evidence available and synthesize it in support of policymakers and policymaking decisions.

So I think that there is definitely a change in the ethos within the Department of Education about getting evidence-based practices and getting a lot of these practices out of the advocacy mode and into hard evidence, the same way we use in medicine.

Ms. FELDMAN. Can I just—I wanted to add to that, that where we do have evidence, and I think the professor would agree, is in

early childhood, in the very early years. I mean, there has been some astounding work done at Johns Hopkins, the Entwisle work, which does point out—which I think is pretty rigorous—

Senator SESSIONS. Preschool or early school?

Ms. FELDMAN. We are talking about the summers between, let us say, before and after kindergarten, between kindergarten and first grade, between first grade and second grade. Those summers make a tremendous difference. There, we have longitudinal evidence. We have the National Center on Educational Statistics did this longitudinal kindergarten study. These researchers at Johns Hopkins and others have looked at it, and we can provide you with that.

So I think in early childhood we know that lengthening the school year, giving the children more time during the summer, doing the kinds of things with them that families who have the wherewithal, the advantage to do makes a tremendous difference. It enables them to catch up at those early years.

Now the other further years maybe the evidence is not as rigorous. I am not familiar with that, but I think we can say so about early childhood.

Senator SESSIONS. With regard to this, your research and studies, have you determined that some things, if they are made a part of the summer school program, seem to increase success?

Mr. COOPER. Yes, we have.

Senator SESSIONS. Can you share some of those ideas with us?

Mr. COOPER. Sure. Ms. Feldman mentioned this as well.

Summer programs tend to have smaller class sizes, and the programs that do have smaller class sizes tended to have larger effects on kids. Parent involvement, also, getting parents involved was associated with larger effect sizes.

What we would call “monitoring fidelity,” which is sort of a fancy way of saying the program needs to be focused so that there are clear goals and that those clear goals then are assessed in a very precise way so that people know, when they are going in, what it is they want to achieve, and their outcome measures. Along the way, people check classrooms to see that, in fact, the instruction is in the area, that proper amounts of instruction are occurring, and then testing those particular goals at the end of the program.

It is also the case—and let me just mention a couple of other things that are less—they are more experience based, that are based more on surveys that involve teachers who take part and what they would see. One of these is very pertinent, and that is that teachers need time to prepare. Because summer budgets often await the end of the school year, teachers often do not know until March, April, May, June and sometimes July that they are actually getting the summer money.

There are instances where summer programs have failed because the funding comes in so late that the materials for the program do not actually show up until after the program has begun. So that is one of the reasons why we said a stable source of funds.

The notion that teachers who have seniority in summer programs be given first opportunities to teach again, so that there is some stability in the staffing, as well as in the funding sources, can be very important. There are a lot of school districts that use summer programs to institute or try out innovative teaching methods,

more informal teaching methods and that have even incorporated teaching summer school with teacher development, so that teachers can move up on the salary scale because they are using it to learn new kinds of techniques.

All of those activities, all of those aspects, the second group being more informally based, the first group being part of our statistical evaluation, suggest that those would be important aspects for getting summer school to be most effective.

Senator SESSIONS. You know, from the taxpayers' point of view, I think the American people would like to know that we have a vision for what we are going to reinforce in that summer and what we are going to maybe learn anew and that there be accountability in that process into that.

Do most summer school programs have a clear understanding of what skills that they want the students to be reinforced in or enhanced in?

Mr. COOPER. They vary. I think the most clearly focused one is the Summer Bridge program in Chicago, which has been very effective, and in an environment where you would anticipate summer school would have a lot of trouble, but they have done a fairly good job of implementing these kinds of principles. I think Minneapolis is another one that has done it. Other school districts pay less attention and probably get less "bang for the buck" because of it.

Senator SESSIONS. One more question I might ask each of you or whoever would like to share on it. Do you know to what extent summer school is compulsory in the areas that have it? Is it a compulsory program or, for the most part in the country, a voluntary program?

Mr. COOPER. That also varies. Again, to point to Chicago, the Bridge program is compulsory, and if you do not take it, you are retained, you go back a grade or you do not get promoted. Then, there are others in which it is voluntary.

What our research did show is that it really does not matter. We were actually anticipating that the voluntary programs, kids who go voluntarily would benefit more, but in fact we did not find that at all. Making kids go maybe it is a motivator in itself saying, "You are going to have to go," and "I better get through this, because I do not want to do it again next summer." In fact, if anything, the programs that were mandatory tended to have a slightly larger positive impact than the ones that were voluntary.

Senator SESSIONS. You know, that is a big thing to think about, Mr. Chairman—who is going? Are the people that need it the most benefiting, or are there any thoughts on that?

Mr. COOPER. Actually, one of the things that we discovered is that it is possible that the students who truly need it the most, the kids who are really at the bottom of the distributions are the ones who are most difficult to get into the programs, likely because they are coming from the poorest families, because issues of transportation, of lunch. One of the interesting things that we found was a notion if—and it was mentioned as well, I think Senator Clinton may have mentioned it—that in a lot of instances, an older sibling who needs summer remediation, the parents will not let them go because they need them to babysit younger children in the family. So, in a situation like that, it is not going to matter. The parent

just will not, either they have to leave their job or they cannot send that child to summer school. They need them there to take care of the younger siblings.

One of the things we suggest is the possibility, especially where you can have that level of focused attention to families, is to, in fact, look at the entire family need during the summer and not only give summer school to the eighth grader, but also to the fifth grader and the third grader in the same family, even if the fifth and third grader might not actually meet all of the requirements for the program, but to get the whole family in and do some preventative work with the younger children and at the same time permit the older kid to be able to go.

Ms. FELDMAN. I think that, given the tremendous need out there, that it would be useful to focus on where the need is greatest and come up with a phasing in of a program which starts, first, with the children we know will have the greatest need and also the greatest benefit from such a program, and we know enough now at least to begin. I think, as I said earlier, it is also in the context of so many other needs that we owe it to ourselves, to our citizens, to our children to make those distinctions and to start where the greatest need is.

Ms. RAMOGLU. Our summer school children are identified. They are invited to attend summer school, but they are also told if they do not make arrangements that are acceptable to the school that they may be retained. I also wanted to say—

Senator SESSIONS. So it focuses on children in need.

Ms. RAMOGLU. In need, absolutely.

I also wanted to respond to something Senator Dodd asked earlier, in that when the school—and this also includes what you just responded to—when the school is meeting the needs of the family, as keeping the fourth grader along with the eighth grader, the parents that had negative experiences when they were students become very positive toward the school.

I also wanted to point out a perfect example is that we have our president of our board, who is with me here today, and can attest to the positive spirit that is in the school building because of what is being offered to the families, to the parents and how needs are being met. So it is really very strong.

Senator DODD. Anything else?

Senator SESSIONS. Do you want to do another round?

Senator DODD. Yes, sure. These are excellent questions you are raising and very good points. That was very valuable to learn about that study on the voluntary and mandatory. That was a very good question and very, very helpful to us.

Let us follow up on the family issue a little because I think this is so important. I mean, I think one of the frustrations, I think, Sandra, you have testified to this on countless occasions in the past, that is what we all worry about is how do you increase parental involvement? Particularly, again, we are talking about the students who are in need. Invariably, it seems that the ones who are doing well, one of the factors that always sort of tracks that, not always, but is their parental involvement. In fact, so much so that I know from my sister who is teacher, some of them will drive you nuts as a teacher because they just—they are so in your face they



do not give you a chance to teach sometimes, but it is hard to argue with it if they care enough about it, they are there all of the time and worried.

Getting the parent of the child who is not doing that well to become engaged in the process is very, very hard. Under Head Start programs, we have a requirement that there be parental involvement, have for years. It is not perfect, but we end up with about 80-percent, I think the numbers are, if my memory serves me well, about 80-percent parental involvement in Head Start programs. Those are the national numbers I think, and then when you get to the first grade, that number drops. It goes from 80 percent, I think, down to around 20 percent.

I am wondering what relationship this summer experience—you mentioned having a place where younger siblings can go—it addressed, Dr. Cooper, one of the points you made, what other things can we do to utilize this time so that when September rolls around and it does change, you go from a summer mode to an academic year mode, that we can transition that parent who may have had that pretty good experience over the summer to now carry on so that when that fall starts with that same child, they are going to feel less threatened by that building and institution that they have not been willing to visit in the past?

Ms. RAMOGLU. It is interesting that you mentioned 80 percent in Head Start, and it falls down to 20 or 30. Are they different parents? No. They are the same parents. So something is not happening in school that was happening in Head Start.

One of the things is that with Head Start, with daycare, child care, you see the teacher, you are in the building every day because most likely you are dropping the child off and picking the child up. The other is that schools, unfortunately, have not been as inviting to parents as a daycare center. So family resource centers, community centers in schools have really embraced exactly what you are talking about, 21 CLCs, and trying to create that environment in the school building—

Senator DODD. Twenty-one CLCs, you better explain what that is or you are going to lose people.

Ms. RAMOGLU. Twenty-first Century Community Learning Centers have become or are trying to be that inviting place. To make the schools the place that the Head Start or the preschool was, where the parents can come on in a daily, if not a daily, a regular basis to meet the teacher, to be in the building, to take part in activities that are planned for families and for parents.

Ms. FELDMAN. There are a lot of models now that have had success in getting parents into school and getting them involved in a more intense way with their children's education. They are few and far between, though. I mean, it is not done enough at all, and it is something that could be built on. Summertime might be a very good time to do it because there is more time. It is sort of a looser schedule, and I think that it would be one of the things, getting parents—

There are programs, for example, I mean, we could talk all day about very good programs anecdotally, and I know programs where the parents actually go to school with the children in the summertime, parents who are in Welfare to Work programs, for example,

and who have very young children. So we have a program for the young child in the school and a program for the parent in that school.

There are lots of ways that we can increase parental involvement of the neediest children. If we focus on the neediest children and we do it intelligently, I think we can make a tremendous difference because getting the parents involved in this is essential.

Senator DODD. Do you want to come in on this, Dr. Cooper, at all?

Mr. COOPER. The only thing is a small note of caution that parents, especially parents of limited means, with limited education, you have to make sure the kinds of involvement you ask for are within the capabilities of the parent. So you can't ask a parent who has had difficulty in school themselves to act as a mentor in the same way that you might a middle-class professional parent. Likewise, a middle-class professional parent with 5 kids cannot be asked to spend an hour a night with each one of the children acting as a mentor.

So it is important for educators to be sensitive to the types of families that they serve, and every parent needs to be involved. There are always attitude components and support components that even the poorest families ought to be held responsible for, but you need to be careful about not turning parents off by asking them to do just a little bit more than is beyond their means.

Senator DODD. You raised an interesting point, and I would love you to respond to it, Dr. Cooper, here. You testified that students in all grades benefit from summer school, but that the benefits seem to be greater for students in earlier grades and in high school.

Obviously, a couple of questions. First, which grades are referred to by early grades and, second, what is your sense of why the benefits seem to drop off and then pick up again so you get the sort of test curve?

Mr. COOPER. That is a very good question. Most of the research we looked at, summer school for kindergartners, first graders, second graders just does not really exist in a lot of places yet, and the evaluations obviously are for programs that have been in place for at least a year. So there is very little evidence at the very earliest grades.

So I would say upper primary grades is what we mean by the earliest grades. We think that they work real well because they function, as I said, on the basic skills. Kids who they see falling behind in math and falling behind in reading, they bring them in for remedial education in those specific topics.

In high school, it is sort of the same way. A student flunks a course in geometry so it is very focused. They come back to take geometry class, the curriculum is prepared, the tests are there, so again it is very focused.

The middle-school programs tend to look more at the whole child. They are not as focused on academic pursuits, in particular, but will be more concerned about attitudes toward school, helping kids transition as they move through puberty, helping them in transition as they move from elementary school to junior high school and more self-concept kind of issues.

So the focus of the programs is more diffuse in terms of looking at the whole child and helping them through what is a difficult transitional period, rather than focusing on specific academic needs. So that is why I think that it falls off. It does not necessarily mean those programs are less valuable for those kids, but what educators have defined as the most valuable thing to do with them during the summer is help them learn how to be a junior high school or middle school kid, where they will go from one class to another, as opposed to the self-contained classroom, and then also as they are wondering about who am I and what role will school play in my self-definition.

Ms. FELDMAN. I do not disagree with that, but I just wanted to put a marker on the problem of the achievement gap because we know that the achievement gap continues, you know, progresses through schools, and that, in some instances, it appears even to widen as the kids go through school.

We also know that in the very earliest—of course, if you get children before school, if you have got a high-quality preschool program, it makes a tremendous difference. If you can extend the time that very young children spend in school so that they continue, that you accelerate their learning during that period of time, you can narrow the gap early-on and hopefully, keep it narrowing as they go forward.

So there are a couple of different purposes here. There is the remediation purpose, and the evidence is there, but there is also, I think, the very great concern that we all have and that a lot of the premise of the Leave No Child Behind Act was based on is about how to close the achievement gap, and closing the achievement gap by providing very young children with richer and longer school experiences is something that we just should not lose sight of.

Senator DODD. Let me, because I wanted to sort of, in a polite way, challenge something that all of you sort of agree with at the outset, and that is the notion that during the academic year, that in the school year, in fact, in school there is no difference. Time out of school, not in school, that causes the gap. I think, Sandra, that was the quote.

I am curious, because if you are—let me see if I can articulate this without sounding—it seems to me if you are all performing basically in school pretty well and then you have this gap over the summer because it is not there, the assumption I was sort of left with is that, come the academic year again, somehow everyone gets back up to that same level.

My assumption would be that if you were falling behind, you did not get the summer school experience, that when you start back up again in September, that your ability then to catch up with people who have had those good experiences during the summer, have not fallen behind, have not been sliding back, widens. So that you get sort of an exponential growth in the gap over the—so by the time you do reach the upper levels of primary school or high school, that gap has really widened, not just because of what you have missed in the summer, but the cumulative effect of that, in terms of your ability to stay up once the gap starts.

Did I say that—

Ms. FELDMAN. That is exactly right.

Ms. RAMOGLU. Exactly right.

Senator DODD. Why did I think you said something differently earlier? I thought earlier you were saying basically performing—

Ms. FELDMAN. I am talking about kindergarten, that children during these very early school years, these kids are not learning in lock-step, but poor children learn tremendously, they learn at very high rates. When they get to kindergarten, they accomplish what kindergarten children are supposed to accomplish. Now they may not be at the same place as more advantaged kindergartners, but then they fall back in the summer, and then that is cumulative, just as you said.

Ms. RAMOGLU. But we also find that children come to school prepared at different levels, even beginning kindergarten, and that is the purpose of the school readiness.

Ms. FELDMAN. I am talking about the rate that kids learn at. There is nothing wrong with the kids is what I am saying. They just need more time.

Senator DODD. Yes. Obviously, I think that the gap, we have learned now from I think the survey, as I recall it, we were looking at the early learning issues, and I think a survey done recently of kindergarten teachers, some 46, almost 50 percent, indicated that the children in kindergarten are just not ready to learn. So the assumption that everybody comes into kindergarten sort of on a level playing field is now totally wrong and that you are looking at very wide differentials already at that earliest level. So that once the process really starts with the formal education, if you are already behind the curve when you start, it is awfully difficult to catch up.

Ms. FELDMAN. It is, but I think it is important to remember that the children can learn, I mean, they do well. They are behind because they started behind, but during the time that they are learning, they are learning as well as any other children.

Senator DODD. One last question from me, and then we turn to my colleague.

I am just curious if you might comment. I think you have already indicated this, but I wonder if there is any evidence to support this, and that is we have all talked about—at least I did anyway—the beneficial effect, aside from the academics of, obviously, it is a child care setting, it is an alternative, it is keeping kids busy, less likely to be on the streets getting in trouble and so forth, that all seems sort of self-evident and obvious, but I wonder if there is any sort of empirical data and evidence to indicate that, in fact, these levels of activities also have a social benefit aside from the academic benefits? I wonder if you could quickly comment on that.

Ms. FELDMAN. Well, they do have social benefits, but as we know, there is also a tremendous variation in quality that is being looked and studied. In our opinion, there needs to be an upgrading of the quality of a lot of the programs that children are in. Some of the child care settings what you could say about them is hopefully they are doing no harm. But a lot of children are not getting what they need in many of those settings.

We know that there has been tremendous improvement in Head Start. There are studies to show that Head Start works, but there is still a lot of what is called early childhood care that needs tremendous upgrading and needs a lot more infusion of quality.

Senator DODD. Any other comments on that?

Ms. RAMOGLU. Yes, I would like to address that.

NSACA has done pilots in standards and has published them, addressing the quality in what we call school-age care programs for children that are in elementary and spend time in school, either in extended day or in after-school programs.

Senator DODD. We mentioned, by the way, I said last, but just one further point here, what goes into a quality program and whether schools get that information about best practices. I wonder if we are doing a very good job, speaking at the Federal level, about collecting best practices and getting that information out, then, to schools that are anxious for good ideas.

Dr. Cooper, are you—

Mr. COOPER. There are regional laboratories that do that kind of dissemination work. At the moment, as I mentioned earlier, OERI is attempting to put together what they will call a “What Works Clearinghouse,” which will bring together, synthesize the best evidence on educational practices and then have a web-based model as an opportunity to make that available so that school district personnel will have sitting on their desk, essentially, availability to an encyclopedia of what the best evidence suggests practices ought to be. So there definitely are efforts in that direction.

Senator DODD. Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you.

Just to follow up this analysis of how the system works. I wonder, in a business, people are intensive about the resources they have invested to make sure they get the maximum benefit from the resource they have invested. Social promotion, the ending of that I think has a net healthy effect, in my personal view, but it does, as you note, Dr. Cooper, require us to focus on those kids that are in danger of being held back at the much greater expense than summer school a whole additional year. So, if you could move them forward, it would be better for them and for the budget and a net gain.

My question is this: We do a lot of testing. The President has required testing in third through eighth grades and that sort of thing, and in IDEA you have an individual education plan for each disabled student. Does anybody analyze a child’s deficiencies and strengths before summer school and could you recreate a system in which those very deficiencies are addressed more effectively through the summer?

Mr. COOPER. They do in IDEA. Each child who gets special education has an individual plan. In fact, the legislation includes that that plan examine what is called “regression” during summer. So that for children in most severe need of additional educational interventions, the team of educators who put together the program is required to say will this child lose over summer and, if so, we need to provide services for them during that time. So that is a model. In the best of all possible worlds, every child would have an individual educational plan, but obviously that is a resource-intensive activity.

Senator SESSIONS. But it is not happening basically now.

Mr. COOPER. It is not happening now.

Senator SESSIONS. Would you consider reaching a higher level if you had a sizable summer school program in a mid-size to larger school that you could identify children in third, fourth, fifth grades that have this kind of difficulty in mathematics and a tract could be set aside—or an hour a day that they would be sure to go through that kind of reinforcement in their weak areas, or maybe it is reading or other subjects, and a teacher would be able to teach a group on about the same level?

Mr. COOPER. Yes.

Senator SESSIONS. Could we do that?

Mr. COOPER. I do not see why not. Obviously, we are thinking it out here. We do not understand perhaps what all of the logistical problems would be, but I think the model that you have identified would be a very positive one.

Senator SESSIONS. I do not think it would be particularly expensive. Probably a good educator could study a person's test score numbers and their grades and identify their weaknesses pretty quickly, and the perfect being the enemy of the good, you would not have to have an absolutely perfect system, but one that emphasized more effectively focusing on the needs of each child should be achievable to me.

We have a lot of professionals that, frankly, consider summer school to be glorified child daycare, you know, play school. I have heard that said. I do not think that is what is happening, but I do believe we can reach a higher level there.

Has any thought been given to high school students who may be working in the summer? Have there been any programs for night school for them in which they could come and do advanced mathematics or basic math or science or reading courses and that kind of thing? Have we done anything like that?

Mr. COOPER. I know there have been some programs that incorporate both education in the classroom and work experiences as part of a summer program. So they will do an internship in an afternoon and have classes during the morning. Even there a couple of programs—I believe I have got this right—where the classes are actually held at the business. They will open up the business.

I know in my school district there is a program where some of the high school kids actually run a deli for a business, and the business not only lets them do that so they get a sense of operating a business, but they have also set aside a classroom space. Teachers come in and teach the kids right in the work environment.

Ms. FELDMAN. In New York City, we have high schools—I think there are four now—that actually run all day and all night. Kids who work different shifts, work all day, can come to school after work, and kids who are starting at some early hour can actually come to school right after that, at a very early hour. So that is possible to do.

Senator SESSIONS. Work is good, I believe. You work in a fast-food restaurant, you learn something about management, how systems are organized, you learn a lot of things that people I think fail to recognize.

I worry a little bit about that middle student, the C-plus/B student who has a chance to go on to college, are they losing too much in the summer? Do we have any numbers that show how much it

enhances their test scores maybe getting them into college, that they would not otherwise do? Do you know about that?

Mr. COOPER. I think the greatest impact of the summer is on the kids who are struggling. They lose the most, and especially if they come from families that do not speak English at home. So, if you speak with special educators—

Senator SESSIONS. So, in priority, that would be your first.

Mr. COOPER. I think it would clearly have to be, yes.

Senator SESSIONS. But do we know how much impact it might have on an average student's learning—

Mr. COOPER. We know they are losing, also.

Senator SESSIONS [continuing]. If they were given a pretty rigorous summer school program?

Mr. COOPER. We know all kids are forgetting stuff over summer. There is no question about it.

Senator DODD. This has been very, very helpful. I want to thank my colleague for being here—I am flattered—to help out with this. Some wonderful questions, I think, are very enlightening.

Our three witnesses were excellent. Sandra, we always love to hear your thoughts and views. You know so much about the subject matter. It is wonderful to hear you talk about these models.

Dr. Cooper, I cannot thank you enough. Your studies have been wonderful and very, very helpful today. I will reiterate we would love to have you come back to Connecticut. Missouri is lucky to have you, but you are welcome to come home any time.

Ms. Ramoglou, you have been terrific—

Mr. COOPER. Pick out a chair and I will come.

Senator DODD. All right, fine.

[Laughter.]

I am afraid I cannot do that. I can get you a chair, but I cannot—

[Laughter.]

Ms. Ramoglou, it is very exciting to hear what you are doing in Stamford, CT. It is been exciting over the years. You have spent a lot of years working at this, and you bring a wealth of very practical experience of how a good program can really reach and make a difference in families' and children's lives.

So, hopefully, we can convince others of the importance of this and do so in a very smart, intelligent way so that we can increase the opportunities of all kids, and particularly those who are most needy.

I thank all of you for being here to participate in this hearing. We look forward to your continuing participation.

The record will stay open. Other colleagues may have some questions to ask before we close the record.

With that, this hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]