

Expanding Educational Opportunities: Three Models for Extended Summer Enrichment Programs in Massachusetts

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Executive Summary

While there are many causes at the root of the academic achievement gap between high- and low-income students, one that is seldom acknowledged is summer learning loss, which disproportionately affects low-income and minority students. With a wide achievement gap across all regions of Massachusetts, private schools in the commonwealth should consider offering summer enrichment programs, which have been shown to promote student achievement, to underserved students as a tool to combat this trend.

This paper compares the costs and tuition at typical summer programs run by elite private schools to “mission-based” programs that actively recruit disadvantaged students to offer high-quality, longer-term educational experiences. Findings indicate that elite schools often offer single-summer day programs for \$5,500 or more per student for five weeks of instruction, while programming at other schools that extend the program for twelve months, multiple summers or multiple full years can operate at less than half the cost. Not only are these expanded programs cost-efficient, but they fulfill a mission to educate underprivileged students who are most at-risk for summer learning loss.

Because summer enrichment programs, especially those that are extended to provide long-term support, can be so powerful in curbing learning loss and narrowing the achievement gap, schools should continually attempt to magnify their reach by serving additional grade levels or by increasing the number of spots available at existing levels. Using three schools as models of expanded, mission-focused summer enrichment programs, this report compares their annual operating costs, as well as the cost of expanding by five students per grade every year over five and ten years to calculate expansion costs.

Two of the biggest obstacles to creating a mission-based program are recruitment and fundraising. To address both issues, it is helpful for schools to establish partnerships with like-minded organizations, local schools and philanthropists that support the program’s work. These groups can help identify students in need of academic assistance and provide scholarships and other donations to help subsidize the program and maintain affordable rates for disadvantaged students. Furthermore, these relationships help sustain the program and can provide an additional level of legitimacy, stability and advocacy.

While there has been some investment in this initiative, more can be done. A possible way would be to expand partnerships with organizations like Horizons National that already operate programs in Massachusetts. Another option is to fundraise additional money to expand the size and number of programs available at private schools in the commonwealth. However, the strongest approach would be to create a separate non-profit organization that provides Massachusetts schools with

programming, financial and recruitment resources to create and maintain summer programs for disadvantaged students. This would provide necessary structure and organized support schools may struggle with initially.

Introduction

Though Massachusetts has done much to address the education achievement gap, including the creation of charter schools and the METCO program, the gulf between higher- and lower-income students, predominantly along racial lines, is persistently large in the commonwealth. While many factors exacerbate this disparity, one that is often overlooked is the difference in resources and support students receive outside the classroom during the summer.

The largest time lapse in a student’s learning occurs during summer break. Through a phenomenon called summer learning loss, students lose, on average, the equivalent of one month of instruction during this period.¹ Most concerning is that summer learning loss disproportionately affects poorer students. While both high- and low-income students make comparable achievement gains during the regular school year, disadvantaged youth fall behind their wealthier counterparts in the summer.² This is especially prevalent in reading skills, where low-income students lose more than two months of achievement over the summer, while their higher-income peers actually make small gains.³ Studies also suggest that this summer learning loss is cumulative, widening the achievement gap over time as disadvantaged students are unable to catch up during the regular school year.⁴

Considering unequal learning loss takes place every summer, the logical solution is to create more opportunities for students to continue developing their academic skills outside the traditional school calendar. This can be achieved through summer enrichment programs. With many families having a single parent or both parents working full-time, summer programs of all kinds are in high demand, attended by an estimated one in four students.⁵

The problem is that many summer academic programs are only available to those who can afford them, compounding higher-income students’ advantage and leaving low-income and minority students behind. Therefore, a viable way to help close the achievement gap and mitigate the effects of summer learning loss is to offer more summer programs to disadvantaged students at a reasonable cost.

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) claims that summer enrichment programs targeting low-income students can narrow the gap. This is supported by research on Summer Matters, part of an initiative to expand quality summer learning experiences for California students with a focus

on those “most in need.”⁶ The study found that students in the program improved their vocabulary by over one-third of an instructional grade level on the San Diego Quick vocabulary assessment. Furthermore, more than 60 percent of parents reported improvement in students’ reading ability and attitudes towards reading.⁷

It is imperative that this issue be brought to the forefront of education policy discussion, as the gap in academic performance between high- and low-income students has worsened over time. According to the NSLA, the gap is 30-40 percent larger for students who were born in 2001 than those born 25 years earlier.⁸ The time to address this matter is now.

In Massachusetts, independent and parochial schools can expand educational access and help reduce the achievement gap through summer enrichment programs. Many private schools have the flexibility, expertise and resources to offer high-quality summer academic programming to the neediest students. Some have already created programs that benefit underprivileged students who might not otherwise have access to exceptional academic opportunities. Others offer elite summer programs to those who can afford to attend, but these schools have the opportunity to shift their focus towards engaging low-income and minority students. Although many existing programs are limited to the summer, some schools have opted to extend their enrichment programs to maintain relationships with students for multiple years in an effort to provide adequate support to underprivileged students.

While much good work has been done in this space, there is room for growth and expansion. Whether it is a school reworking its mission to serve disadvantaged students in the summer, a school considering starting a new enrichment program, or one with an existing program looking to expand its reach, there is an opportunity to mitigate learning loss and narrow the achievement gap through quality, cost-efficient summer programs that target underprivileged students.

Project Description and Goals

This is the final paper in Pioneer Institute’s three-part series exploring the Massachusetts market for summer enrichment programs and focusing specifically on opportunities for underserved students. Part I reported the results of a survey of summer programs at private schools in the commonwealth, examining their operations to understand the array of existing summer enrichment opportunities. The second paper reviewed best practices of summer academic programs at private schools in Massachusetts and nationally, looking not only into financing, student recruitment methods and programming, but further into their philosophies and how they benefit low-income and minority students.

This final paper introduces three types of expanded summer enrichment program models: 12-month extended programs, multi-year summer-only enrichment programs and multi-year, year-round programs. The traditional single-summer model is also covered to highlight differences between elite private schools serving only students of means (single-summer programs) and private schools educating underserved students in the surrounding area (expanded programs).

While schools starting new mission-focused summer enrichment programs for disadvantaged students may choose to begin with a single-summer program, the goal should be to expand the program for multiple summers or full years. Many of the top schools interviewed in Part II of this project found it beneficial to extend their relationship with students past a single summer. In the words of Jose Oromi, chief operating officer of Horizons National, a non-profit organization that partners with schools across the U.S. to provide summer programs to low-income K-12 students, “we’re offering an opportunity for their student to catch up and maybe get ahead, but the only way we can do that is by focusing on the long term.”⁹ Therefore, schools wanting to serve disadvantaged youth should aim to do so through one of the three models of expanded summer programs described in this paper.

This research is meant to encourage private schools to do more for low-income and minority students in their community and beyond. The different mission-focused models, which provide guidelines for creating programs targeting low-income and minority students, are outlined later in this piece. Each section describes successful examples on which the models are based, reviews the finances, and details what expansion may look like. A later section shares best practices and resources that can help ensure all programs are of the highest quality. Our goal is to empower administrators, schools and organizations that wish to launch a summer enrichment program or support mission-driven programs with the information needed to ensure high quality and cost efficiency.

Traditional Summer Enrichment Programs: Costly and Elite

With the astounding variation that exists among summer enrichment programs in the United States, it would be impossible to create a one-size-fits-all model that would work for every school. That said, there are ways to group similar programs together to generate a conceptual framework.

For instance, many private schools choose to offer a classic, single-summer program.¹⁰ This is the most common program type in the world of summer enrichment, where students are invited to attend for a few weeks over a summer to learn new subjects, try out a new school or simply continue their studies

during break. These programs often run primarily or exclusively on tuition revenues and are hosted by elite private schools, without the broader goal of extending top-notch educational opportunities to disadvantaged students. Rather, schools typically recruit prospective students who can afford to attend during the regular year for these programs or offer experimental courses that align with current students' interests.

The programs are generally large, often with several hundred students between seventh and twelfth grade. Usually, both day and boarding programs are available, with tuition ranging from \$5,000 to \$9,000 for five weeks.¹¹ Single-summer programs charging thousands of dollars tend to offer a diverse range of course options, sometimes giving students over 100 choices. This is likely because the program is tailored to students with the means to explore their interests, rather than those who need assistance catching up during the summer.

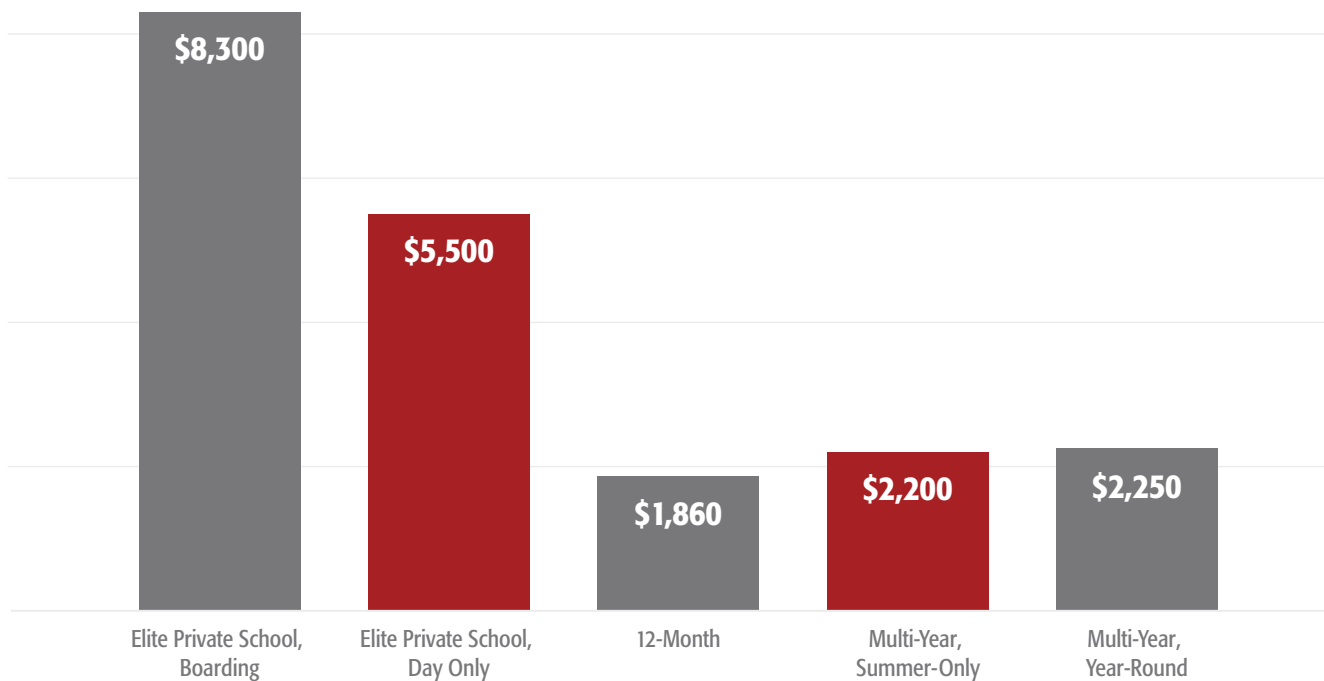
Recruitment efforts at single-summer programs tend to reflect their mission: to attract potential attendees for the following school year and encourage existing students to extend their studies into the summer. While some offer financial assistance to help offset the cost of attendance, most programs at elite private schools operate almost exclusively on tuition revenues. This creates the need for high tuitions, and in turn, wealthier students.

Moving Beyond the Typical Program: Changing the Mission

The depiction of annual per-student costs in Figure 1 facilitates the comparison of tuition at an elite private school's single-summer program to the cost per student at schools offering an extended summer learning experience that charges little or no tuition.¹² These extended programs typically serve more grade levels and operate in a more cost-efficient manner. To attend a five-week boarding school summer experience, students and families often face price tags over \$8,000. Even when choosing the day-only option, tuition routinely tops \$5,000, according to data from Parts I and II of this series. Despite the availability of limited financial assistance, the programs are still far out of reach for low-income and minority students most at risk for summer learning loss.

The difference between single-summer and extended programs lies in their respective philosophies. Because single-summer programs need only focus on the short-term, their missions can vary. Many do not emphasize grades; instead, they seek to foster a love of learning in students or to make learning "fun" by offering custom programs. While this is certainly one of the goals of summer programs, there is a more pressing need to utilize them as a tool to help close the achievement gap.

Figure 1: Comparison of Sample Annual Costs per Student at Summer Enrichment Programs



Many programs that serve disadvantaged students focus on long-term commitments and outcomes. Low-income and minority students need more than a few weeks during one summer to advance their learning; they need continued support to make lasting progress. For instance, Pingree School in Hamilton, Massachusetts began its enrichment program, Prep@Pingree, as a single-summer program for low-income students in the nearby cities of Lynn and Lawrence. However, according to Director Steve Filosa, some disapproved of ending the relationships after a few short weeks.¹³ In response, Prep@Pingree extended to a 12-month program, with support networks in place as students went to high school, college and beyond.

Again, looking at Figure 1, it is surprisingly inexpensive to run these kinds of comprehensive programs compared to those without the same mission. To run a summer program extended through the academic year, the cost per student can be as low as \$1,860. There are also programs in place that educate students over multiple summers, operating at a per-student cost of \$2,200. Additionally, schools could offer programs that focus primarily on the summer session, but also offer year-round additional programming over multiple years, at \$2,250 per student.

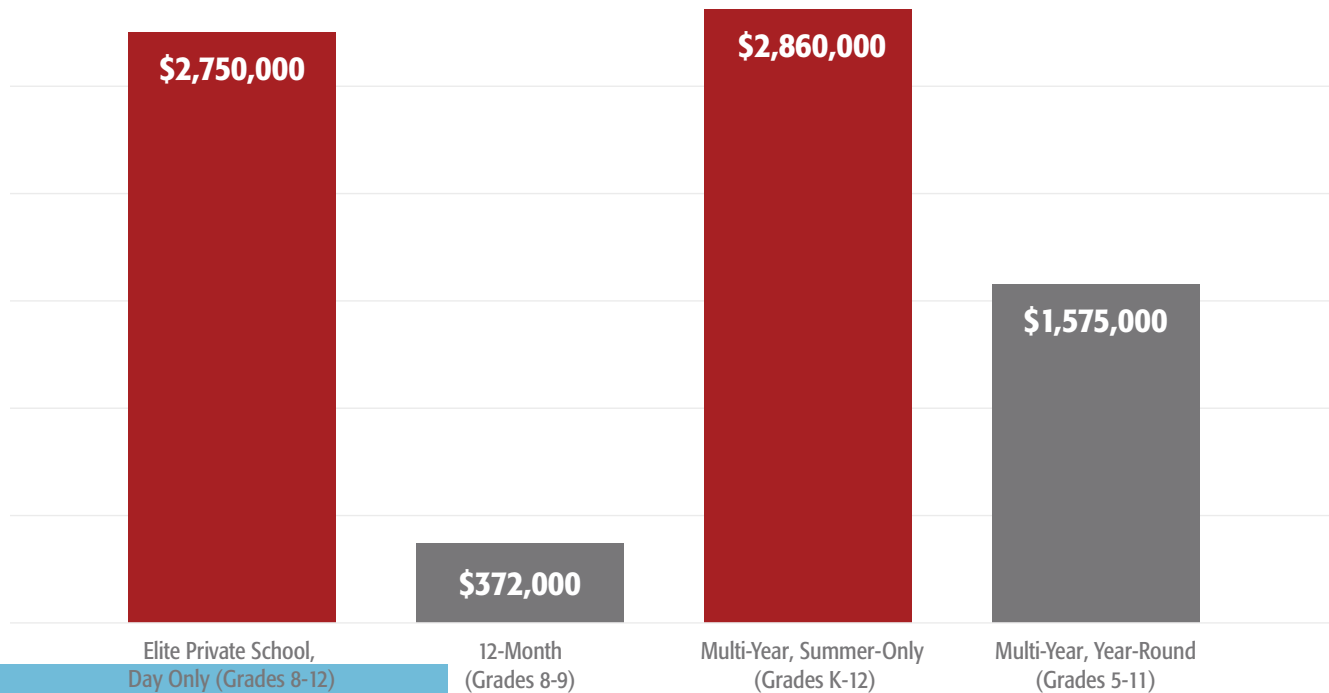
The bottom line will be largely affected by how many students attend the summer program. Figure 2 illustrates estimated annual operating costs for different models of summer

enrichment programs. Annual costs are determined by multiplying the cost per student, number of grades served and number of students per grade. For consistency and a better comparison, the number of students is held at 100 per grade; the number of grades served reflects the data from schools used as program models later in this paper. It is important to note that tuition data was used as the “cost per student” for elite private school day programs, so the total annual costs may actually be lower, as per-student cost data was unavailable.

Here, it is clear that not only does it not cost more to operate a mission-driven summer enrichment program than a tuition-based one, but that it is also possible to expand mission-based programs beyond a single summer at a lower cost or a nominal increase, depending on the number of grades served.

At 100 students per grade level, private schools charging \$5,500 per student in tuition while serving five grade levels (8 through 12) would generate \$2.75 million in annual expenses for 500 students. Using the same number of students per grade, a 12-month extended summer enrichment program for 8th and 9th grade students, like Prep@Pingree, would cost \$372,000 annually, including the cost of providing additional, intermittent support throughout high school. For schools operating a multi-year, year-round program serving seven grades (5th through 11th) like Punahou School in Hawaii, it would cost just about \$1.6 million annually for all 700 attendees, over \$1

Figure 2: Annual Costs at Summer Enrichment Programs¹⁴



million less than private schools that do not offer any programming beyond the summer, while also serving two additional grade levels. Based on this data, the only model that would require more resources on an annual basis is a multi-year summer-only program similar to Horizons National, due to the fact that Horizons serves students at every grade level, K-12.¹⁵ Considering this long-term support, it is a worthwhile investment of \$2.86 million to have 1,300 low-income and minority students attend the program throughout their entire primary and secondary education, at only \$110,000 more per year than single-summer programs at elite schools that serve 700 fewer students and charge exorbitant tuitions.

Of course, securing millions of dollars is no easy task. Start-up financing is a major challenge for summer enrichment programs, not to mention working to ensure continued funding for existing programs. However, partnerships with other organizations, described in another section of this paper, can be crucial in identifying students who could benefit from these experiences, providing financial support to offset program costs and eliminating or greatly reducing tuition. Another option to be touched on later is private donors.

Outlining Three Models of Extended Summer Enrichment Programs

A. Single-Summer to Full-Year Expansion

As previously mentioned, many summer enrichment programs that serve underprivileged students find it useful to extend the program to provide continued support.

This was the case with Prep@Pingree. After operating for about 10 years, Pingree decided that to fulfill its mission of expanding access to high-quality educational opportunities for underserved students, it needed to extend the relationship.

Prep@Pingree serves about 75 students in grades 8 and 9. However, for purposes of our model, we will assume a 12-month program with 200 students. Pingree's approach is similar to a single-summer model, as the bulk of its programming takes place outside the regular school year. For five weeks during the summer, students take math, English, engineering design, and history.

The difference at Prep@Pingree, and the reason it is used as a model in this paper, is its full-year strategy. As discussed in Part II, more than a few weeks is necessary to provide the support students need to succeed. Prep@Pingree students are engaged for 12 months, with additional programming for high school and college-aged alumni. Relationships are maintained well after the program ends to address student needs all the way through post-secondary education. Meetings are held

once or twice each month for workshops on topics including public speaking, financial literacy and writing, as well as college tours.

Prep@Pingree is able to do this at an impressively low cost—approximately \$1,860 per student—but students are not responsible for covering it. Instead, disadvantaged students from the surrounding communities who are interested in the program complete an application and, if accepted, attend Prep@Pingree free of charge. Comparing these figures to the roughly \$5,500 tuition families pay to send their children to elite private schools for just five weeks paints a portrait of the stark contrast between these summer enrichment models in terms of mission and financing.

It is entirely possible to simultaneously provide quality, long-term programming and keep costs low. Partnerships with other organizations are the key to making it happen. Pingree's recruitment and financing tactics rely heavily on the assistance of organizations that share its mission of extending quality educational opportunities to underprivileged students. These partnering organizations are typically located within the geographic area the program serves and may include other schools, public or private, as well as community organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club. Partnerships help market the program and open up opportunities for financial assistance that help keep the program tuition-free. For Prep@Pingree, \$2,500 is typically covered for students by a sponsoring organization. The program also attracts the interest of private donors wishing to support its goals, further helping to offset costs.¹⁶

Prep@Pingree boasts an attendance rate of 95 percent or higher. In the first three years of its extended program, many Pingree students remained connected to the program and maintained relationships established in the summer. Lauri Perez, who attended the Prep@Pingree program in 2003, says it was key to learning “how to advocate for yourself, how to ask the teacher questions if you're not understanding material.”¹⁷ She now teaches at Pingree both during the academic year and in the summer enrichment program. Ariel Portorreal, a Lawrence native and Prep@Pingree 2012 graduate, says he built “bonds with the teachers here that really helped me going into my freshman year.” He returned to volunteer and teach during the summer, which inspired him to look into colleges that offer education programs.¹⁸ With many alumni returning to volunteer or teach, the experience clearly draws high satisfaction from its attendees.

The extended 12-month enrichment model is an excellent option that schools with existing summer-only programs, or schools looking to start a long-term program, should certainly consider implementing. The full-year model maintains academic programming, and provides sustained support for

students throughout their high school years, all at a relatively low cost. Elite private schools could give back to the community by using their resources to make a difference in the lives of students who could not otherwise attend such an institution. For many elite schools, this would represent a change in program mission as well as duration.

Further Expansion

Whether a school already offers a small-scale version of the 12-month enrichment program or plans to start out with this model, ongoing expansion should be a goal. There is no shortage of students who could benefit from these opportunities. Schools should strive to increase the number of attendees to do as much as possible for disadvantaged students.

Figure 3 demonstrates the annual cost of expanding the 12-month enrichment program model by five students per grade each year for a decade, assuming 2 percent annual inflation. Beginning in 2017 with an estimated annual cost of \$372,000 for 200 students total (100 in 8th grade and 100 in 9th), the total increase in annual costs is \$902,097. By 2027, the annual operating costs would amount to about \$1,274,097 for 150 students in each grade, or 300 total.

This would triple the annual operating costs of a full year summer enrichment program. However, it would allow an additional 100 students, most of whom currently experience summer learning loss, to benefit from the program. While this might be out of reach for some, adding a total of 50 students (25 per grade) annually over five years would cost \$562,540, or an additional \$190,540. This could be a more reasonable goal,

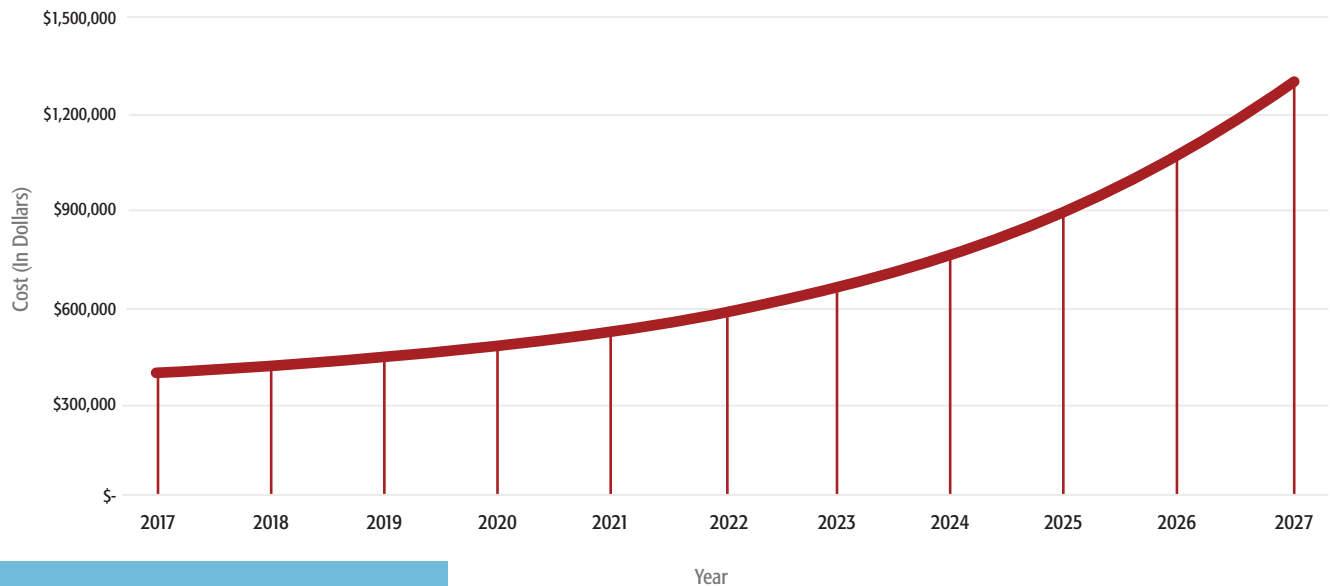
especially when taking help from partners and donors into account. Once the program has been operating for a few years and has established itself as a successful vehicle for change, other organizations, corporations and individuals will likely be inclined to offer financial assistance to expand the scope of the program to include more underserved students.

B. Multi-Year Summer-Only Enrichment Program

Multi-summer enrichment programs take the notion of an extended program a step further. Utilizing a summer-only model, students participate in these programs for multiple consecutive summers. This represents another way to extend the relationship with disadvantaged students to fill the gap in schooling that low-income and minority students experience each year. A great model of this is Horizons National, a non-profit organization that partners with private schools across the U.S., using their facilities to offer summer enrichment programs to local low-income students. Horizons operates nation-wide, with 47 programs across 17 states.

While schools can choose to serve any number of grade levels and consecutive years that best suit students' needs, Horizons National engages its students for 13 grades, starting at kindergarten and running until they graduate high school. Programming runs for six weeks each summer, focusing on literacy and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). When students come into the program, Horizons teachers use Star Reading and Star Math assessments to determine the level a student is at, then create personalized lesson plans to help students improve. The same tests are given again at the conclusion of the program to measure progress.

Figure 3: Ten Year Expansion Costs of Twelve-Month Enrichment Programs



During high school, Horizons connects students with academic coaches, college visits and SAT preparation, as well as guidance on financial planning, college applications and college selection.

The cost of the Horizons program is about \$2,200 per student, slightly higher than Prep@Pingree, but families only pay \$25 to \$50, making it attractive both academically and financially. Given its national scope, Horizons is able to partner with large corporations and foundations to fund its work. Since Horizons isn't typically well-known within the communities where it establishes new programs, it relies on partnerships with a minimum of two local schools. Horizons develops relationships with these schools to identify students who could most benefit from their summer program.

A challenge of operating a multi-summer enrichment program is convincing parents and students to commit to its full term. Often, families are not looking to enroll in such a long-term program. Parents may feel one summer is sufficient, or they are unsure of what their child's needs will be five or ten years down the road. However, once the program establishes itself and students experience it for themselves, recruitment and retention become easier.

Students in the Horizons National summer enrichment program have experienced admirable academic growth. During each six-week period, Horizons has measured eight-to-twelve weeks of growth on Star Reading and Star Math scores measured at the end of each summer session. Additionally, Horizons has contributed to higher graduation rates. In 2015, 99 percent of students who attended the full program graduated on time and nearly 100 percent enrolled in college.

Furthermore, students and families have expressed satisfaction with the program. Over 80 percent of Horizons students return year after year, for an average of 6 years. Similar to Pingree, many Horizons graduates return to intern or volunteer.

Horizons National is different than the other models in this study in that it is a national non-profit organization, not a school, facilitating multiple summer programs around the country. Even more unique is its mission is to offer low-income and minority students the opportunity to catch up to their peers over the summer by addressing summer learning loss from the beginning (kindergarten) and helping close the achievement gap through personalized programming and long-term support. Horizons seeks to create an entirely new environment for its students, with new classmates and a new setting, making it easier for teachers to introduce new behaviors.

A benefit to the multi-year summer-only model is that it provides continuity for students without requiring programming during the regular school year, when resources may be scarcer

and both program providers and students have other priorities. Other schools can replicate this model by creating new or expanding existing programs to include multiple summers. Again, Horizons' financial information shows that this is not a prohibitively expensive endeavor. At less than half the cost of tuition at an elite private school, Horizons National encourages students to continue their studies, instills a love of learning, provides individualized lesson plans and mentors students over time, ensuring what is learned one summer is not lost the next. This relationship building and sustained support is essential to mitigate summer learning loss and spur higher achievement among underserved students.

Further Expansion

Given their mission of helping disadvantaged youth, expanding summer enrichment programs' reach should be a high priority. Once a program has gathered momentum and its students have demonstrated academic progress, administrators should work to grow the program to include more students and help alleviate the summer learning loss that widens the achievement gap.

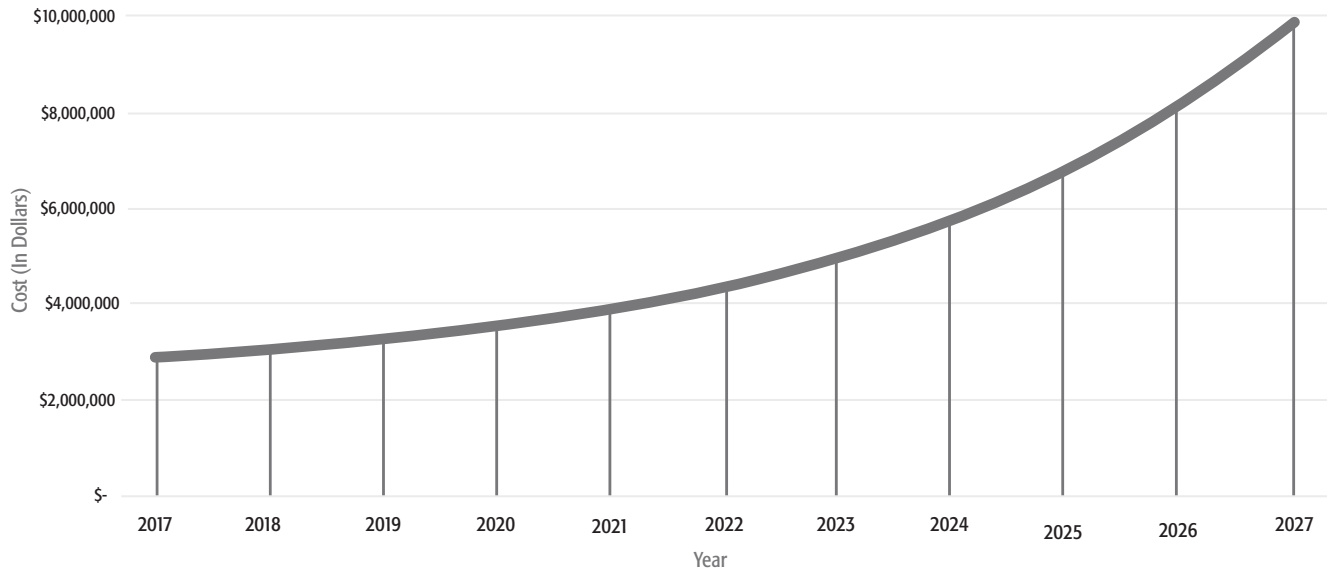
Of all of the models, the multi-summer model has the highest annual costs because it serves 13 grades, or 1,300 students, using our estimate of 100 students per grade. But if programs experience success similar to that of Horizons National, offering this long-term programming is well worth it.

If, as detailed in Figure 4, a multi-summer enrichment program modeled after Horizons National begins with 100 students per grade (1,300 total) and expands by five students per grade annually for 10 years, annual costs can be expected to jump from \$2.86 million in 2017 to about \$9.8 million in 2027, again assuming 2 percent annual inflation. This means that over 10 years, a program could serve 65 more students per year, or 650 new students by 2027, for an estimated additional \$6.94 million.

Even considering the enormous benefit of these programs, securing nearly \$7 million in additional funding over 10 years might be too challenging for most schools. However, adding five students per grade over five years, or 325 by 2022, would cost about \$4.3 million, or an estimated additional \$1.44 million. This is more realistic, and could even be spread over 10 years, with inflation being the only additional cost. If possible, schools that are well-established and have perfected their operating model should try to extend the opportunity to more underprivileged students to combat summer learning loss.

C. Multi-Year, Year-Round Enrichment Programs

Some private schools have combined the models of the 12-month and the multi-summer enrichment programs to

Figure 4: Ten Year Expansion Costs of Multi-Summer Enrichment Programs

create multi-year, year-round programs. This model takes the best of both approaches—the full-year structure and the summertime focus on curbing learning loss—and creates a hybrid that offers students the most extensive support system.

While this requires more resources, it is entirely feasible. This long-term, focused programming can make notable differences in the futures of low-income and minority students. A great example originally profiled in Part II of this series is the Clarence T. C. Ching PUEO (Partnerships in Unlimited Educational Opportunities) Program at Punahou School, a private school in Hawaii.

PUEO is offered to low-income students enrolled at local public schools. The program serves about 325 students in seven grades, 5th through 11th, making class size about 50 per grade. Its courses in reading, writing and math are designed to address individual students' needs to boost academic progress over the summer.

Punahou's PUEO program is free for its students. Each student receives a "scholarship" for the \$2,250 cost per student for each of the seven years of the program, plus additional money in their senior year for college counseling and standardized testing. To provide these scholarships, PUEO partners with a number of private donors and foundations that provide enough funding to cover costs and remove the burden of tuition.

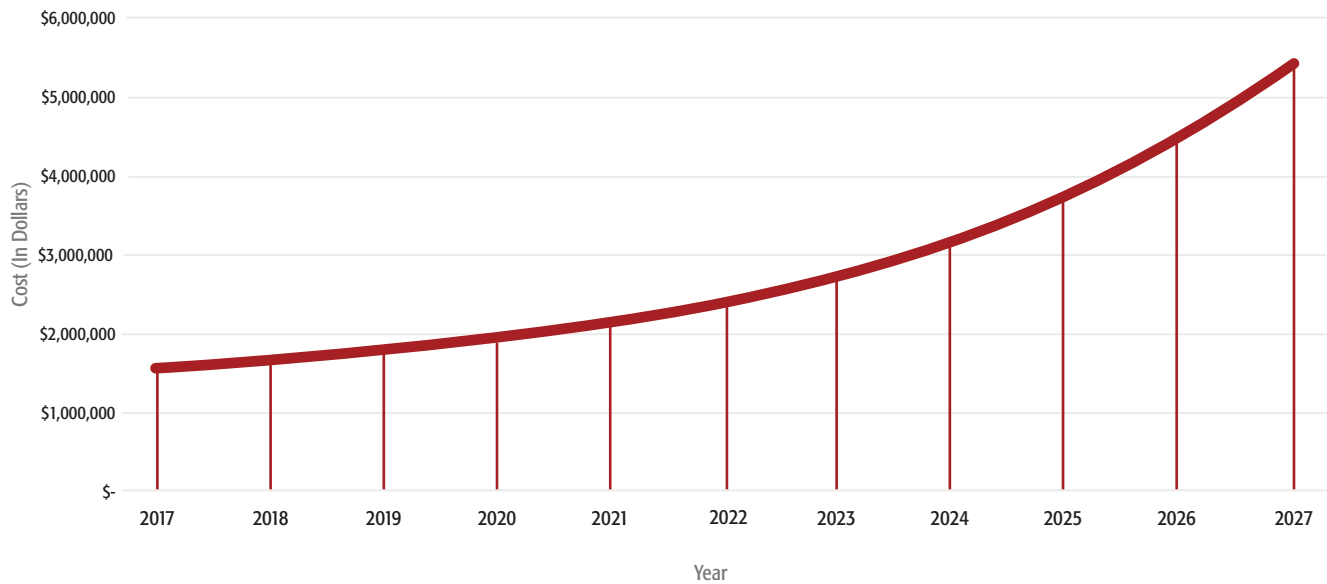
To identify students who would benefit from the experience, PUEO's recruitment staff partners with a network of 30 schools on the island of Oahu, as well as schools in California, Arizona and Washington. PUEO organizes a variety of

events such as workshops and field trips to extend relationships developed with students during the summer into the academic year.

Keeping students engaged is a great way to keep attendance rates up and provide year-round support. PUEO has experienced great success, with 99 percent of its students graduating from high school, outperforming the 80 percent average graduation rate for low-income students in Hawaii and the overall state graduation rate of 82 percent. Furthermore, it exceeds national average graduation rates of 72 percent for low-income students and 80 percent overall.

The multi-year, year-round model is by far the most involved. It requires extensive programming in the summer as well as additional events, workshops and classes throughout the regular school year. However, the cost per student (\$2,250) is not much higher than that of other similarly functioning summer enrichment programs that serve fewer students or operate for less time (\$1,860 to \$2,200). It is far more cost-efficient than elite private school programs charging more than twice that amount.

By targeting at-risk or disadvantaged students, multi-year, year-round summer academic programs can offer needed assistance to students who may not have otherwise graduated, let alone attended college. Impressively, about 85 percent of PUEO students accepted into college enroll. This success can be replicated by other summer enrichment programs that extend their relationship with underserved students to a full year for multiple years in middle and high school.

Figure 5: Ten Year Expansion Costs of Multi-Year, Year-Round Enrichment Programs

Further Expansion

Schools operating high-quality summer enrichment programs for low-income and minority students year-round over multiple years are already doing great work to narrow and hopefully close the achievement gap. This success should push schools to magnify their influence and engage more disadvantaged students in need of extra educational assistance.

Figure 5 shows what an expansion of a multi-year, year-round program modeled after PUEO might cost. If a program operating at a per-pupil cost of \$2,250 serves seven grades of 100 students each in 2017, and over 10 years enrolls an additional 5 students per grade each year, its annual costs would rise from around \$1.6 million to about \$5.4 million, again assuming a 2 percent annual inflation rate. This represents an increase of about \$3.8 million to educate an additional 350 students by 2027.

While an expansion of this size would be admirable, it may be more fiscally prudent to focus on something less ambitious like adding five students per grade over five years. This would allow a multi-year, year-round program like PUEO to serve an additional 175 underserved students by 2022 at a total annual cost of about \$2.4 million. Finding an estimated additional \$800,000 over five years is an achievable goal that would support an additional 175 low-income and minority students each year through a multi-year, year-round enrichment program.

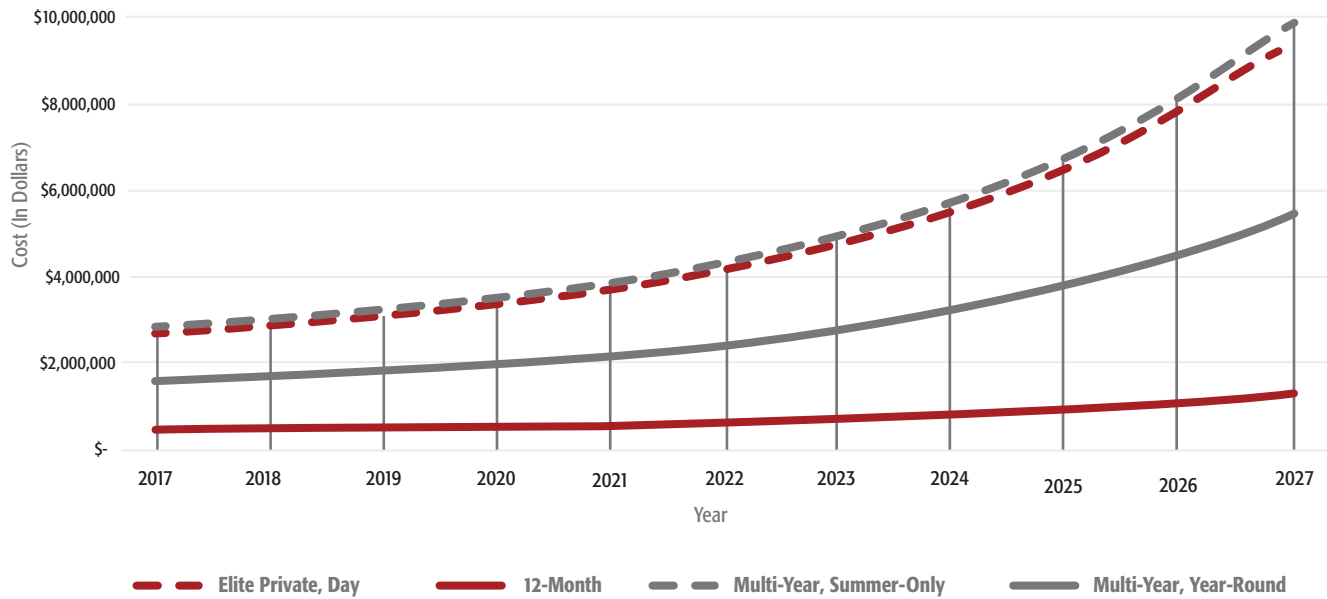
Comparison: Annual Costs of Expansion Across All Programs Over Ten Years

As a point of reference, Figure 6 compares the change in annual costs for all models, as well as typical single-summer programs at elite private schools, when expanding by 5 students per grade each year for a decade. It starts at 2017 at the annual costs or tuition referenced in Figure 2 (using 100 students per grade) and extends to the year 2027.

This graph highlights how the cost per student, number of grades served and number of students per grade all have significant effects on a summer enrichment program's annual operating costs. Interestingly, the 10-year cost increase is similar for elite single-summer programs and multi-summer programs like Horizons National, which serves seven additional grades and, by 2027, 1,200 more students than this extension of a typical single-summer program.

According to this data, the multi-year, year-round program modeled after PUEO presents a middle ground, which is impressive given its full-year structure. A 12-month enrichment program modeled after Prep@Pingree would be the least costly to expand, but primarily offers programming to only two grade levels.

This graph can be misleading if it is not understood that all three of the extended summer enrichment models are comparable in cost per student, which ranges from \$1,860 to \$2,250.

Figure 6: Ten Year Expansion Costs Across All Programs

Therefore, the cost of enrolling additional students per grade is determined mostly by the number of grades served. For instance, if a multi-summer program like Horizons operating at a per-student cost of \$2,200 served only seven grade levels, as PUEO does at \$2,250 per student, it would cost less to add new students for Horizons than for PUEO.

Partnerships, Fundraising and Other Resources

One of the key features of a mission-driven summer enrichment program is providing high-quality programming at little or no cost to students. This requires relying less on tuition and more on partnering organizations and private donors, creating one of the biggest barriers to starting or expanding programs. Even when funding is secured, recruiting underserved students can prove to be a challenging task.

Fortunately, when schools make the decision to use their resources and expertise to help underserved students, it opens up new opportunities for partnerships, fundraising and cost savings. In Part I of this series, the survey of summer enrichment programs throughout Massachusetts showed that the majority of respondents with a summer program partnered with outside organizations for recruitment, financial support, or both.¹⁹ Part II used in-depth interviews with summer enrichment program administrators to paint a clearer picture of exactly how these partnerships can work.²⁰

Partnering organizations can help identify students most at risk for summer learning loss and connect them with an

accessible summer enrichment program. If their students are accepted into the program, many partners will sponsor them through scholarships that cover the cost of attendance, simultaneously solving the two major issues of funding and recruitment.

All three model summer enrichment programs use partnerships of some form. Prep@Pingree's 12-month extended program relies most heavily on partners that provide both recruitment and tuition assistance. Pingree has connected with nearby organizations to identify students who could benefit from its program. These include Boys & Girls Clubs, neighboring public schools and organizations like SquashBusters or Elevated Thought—local organizations that seek to provide disadvantaged children with quality summer experiences. The tuition sent by these partnering organizations is typically \$2,500 per student, fully covering Prep@Pingree's cost per student of less than \$2,000.

Horizons National, running a multi-summer program, and PUEO, operating a multi-year, year-round program, both establish partnerships primarily for recruiting purposes. This highlights the benefit of collaboration with partners to ensure each student is a good fit. Horizons looks to local schools to act as “feeders” that send students to its program at a host campus. PUEO similarly partners with principals at schools throughout Hawaii and in several other states to bring in students that are appropriate for the program.

There are a number of additional non-profits that partner with

mission-based summer academic programs, including Reach Memphis, Squash Haven in Connecticut, Minds Matter and Summer Search, both of which have a national presence. These organizations work to place students with high academic potential from low-performing schools into elite programs, or connect students in need of supplementary academic study with applicable summer programs.

Beginning a partnership with one of these non-profits, or a similar one, requires relationship building. Before starting a summer enrichment program, administrators should seek out potential partnering organizations to gauge their interest in supporting the new program. Having a clear mission, budget, goals and curriculum will help to get partners involved. Once an agreement has been established, schools should work with partners to recruit students on the school's behalf and/or provide financial assistance, likely in the form of sponsorships that cover per-pupil costs and eliminates the need to charge tuition.

To maintain partnerships and expand program attendance, schools should conduct surveys and exit interviews with participants and their families to measure satisfaction and academic growth, as well as solicit constructive criticism. This helps the program improve and stay true to its mission. The results of this measurement and self-reflection can be used when marketing the program as a worthwhile investment for partners.

Another way to pursue funding is cultivating private donors, including corporations, foundations and individuals. Similar to partnerships, philanthropy should be approached through the lens of relationship building, particularly when considering the goal of ensuring funding over multiple years.

Schools with larger or better-known enrichment programs already take advantage of this form of funding. Horizons National, operating on a much larger scale than most summer programs, has secured sponsorships from corporations and foundations including Aetna Foundation, Facebook, Newman's Own Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Bank and the Xerox Foundation. Through these partnerships, Horizons can offer its summer program to students at just \$25 to \$50 and not the per-student cost of \$2,200. Similarly, PUEO raises money through private donors that include the Harold K. L. Castle Foundation, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the Clarence T.C. Ching Foundation. These

partnerships allow PUEO to grant scholarships to cover the full cost of seven years in the program for its attendees, plus senior year college counseling and testing.

Smaller programs, like Prep@Pingree, also engage private donors, typically individuals who may be especially interested in making a gift to help create opportunities for low-income and minority students. Schools with summer programs serving this population may find many individuals with a shared belief in its mission, including alumni and local philanthropists.

Whether pursuing corporate, foundation or individual donations, summer program administrators will need to collaborate with their school's advancement team to identify interested

Figure 7: NSLA Quality Standards²³

Category	Recommendations
Program infrastructure	
Purpose	<p>Program has mission and vision statements that are grounded in the needs of its community.</p> <p>Program sets annual goals for youth and for the organization that drive a continuous cycle of data collection, evaluation, and quality improvement.</p> <p>Program has evidence that it is meeting its goals and the needs of stakeholders.</p>
Finance and sustainability	<p>Program develops and implements a clear strategic plan and aligned fundraising plan.</p> <p>Program shares information about the program with key stakeholders to promote sustainability.</p>
Planning	<p>Program is designed to allocate enough time, staff, and resources to promote positive academic and developmental youth outcomes.</p> <p>Program has a proactive summer program planning process that is inclusive of all key stakeholders and connected to the goals of the program.</p> <p>Program has a comprehensive structure in place for all programming throughout the summer, in advance of the session.</p>
Staff	<p>Program's recruitment and staffing process intentionally yields culturally competent staff with relevant skills.</p> <p>Program staff is empowered to manage the program and has a voice in organizational decisions.</p> <p>Program provides extensive opportunities for staff development and advancement before, during, and after the session.</p>
Partnerships	<p>Program builds and maintains strong linkages with partners, including community organizations, the public school system, and government agencies, that are supportive of its mission and have a vested interest in the program's success.</p> <p>Program has a formal structure for communication and data sharing with all key external partners.</p> <p>Program builds and maintains strong linkages with families.</p>
Point of service	
Individualized	<p>Program assesses young people's needs early in the program and develops individualized strategies for meeting program goals.</p>
Intentional	<p>Activity planning and execution shows intentional focus on meeting learning goals and use of research-based instructional methods.</p>
Integrated	<p>Programming builds skills, knowledge, and behaviors that promote academic success and healthy development.</p> <p>Activities show a blend of academic strategies and social/emotional development strategies throughout the entire day.</p>
Unique program culture	<p>Program creates a "summer culture" that is different from the school year and promotes a sense of community.</p>

SOURCE: National Summer Learning Association, undated(b).

parties and targets. Beginning a new program creates new fundraising opportunities, such as starting a campaign around the program's mission and goals and, later, its success. This effort will require cross-organizational support between program managers and the school's development office.

While all programs will differ in size and content, and each school will need to tailor its specific program to fit its mission, resources and demographic, there are some general guidelines that can be helpful to observe. For instance, research by the Wallace Foundation and the NSLA show that the most successful summer learning programs utilize smaller class sizes with personalized instruction.²¹ Additionally, the study shows that it is important to align regular academic year and summer term programming and to create a rigorous evaluation process to help improve program effectiveness.²²

The report also references the Quality Standards that the National Summer Learning Association published, which can

serve as guidelines for starting a summer academic program or examining the efficacy of an existing one. It provides a general outline of the components schools should consider when beginning and operating a summer enrichment program. As shown in Figure 7, a summer enrichment program must have a clear purpose, rooted in a community need, and be committed to improvement and evidence-based results. It must also have a clear and sustainable fundraising plan with an engaged donor base, as well as the resources necessary to ensure a high-quality staff and curriculum. Further, it is vital that a summer academic program cultivate partnerships with organizations and individuals who are invested in the mission and intend to maintain and expand it. Finally, the Quality Standards stress the need for individualized student attention with intentional and integrated programming that creates a unique culture, which in turn breeds new behaviors and opportunities for success.

CONCLUSION

Shifting the traditional notion of summer enrichment from an elite tuition-fueled program into an opportunity to serve disadvantaged students and narrow the achievement gap has been successful for programs like Prep@Pingree, Horizons National and PUEO. But the opportunity to capitalize on this innovative approach to education and leveling the playing field for students with fewer resources is severely underutilized.

This paper covered the traditional model of summer enrichment programs offered at private schools, as well as three alternative models that not only represent a change in mission to serve disadvantaged students, but go further by expanding their programs beyond a single summer into the regular school year, multiple summers, or both. Claims that this will lead to higher costs are refuted by the financial models of extended programs. Private schools operating typical single-summer day programs charge about \$5,500 per student for a five-week session. There are schools operating 12-month extended programs, multi-summer programs, and multi-year, year-round programs for less than \$2,300 per student, such as those discussed in this paper.

Schools looking to start a new program can use these models as a baseline to create a budget and shape the summer academic program that will best fit their means and community needs. Resources like the NSLA and Wallace Foundation reports, referenced in this paper,

can also be of value. One of the most important assets summer programs should take advantage of is partnerships with organizations that assist with recruitment and funding. These relationships help sustain a program and add a level of legitimacy, stability and advocacy that schools may be unable to establish on their own.

Furthermore, it is important to note that it is insufficient for mission-driven schools to simply maintain the status quo. In addition to tracking success and making improvements, programs should seek to expand, both in duration and number of students served. Research and anecdotal experience suggest long-term support is the best way to mitigate learning loss and help close the achievement gap. To truly progress, underserved students need more than a few weeks over one summer; they need consistent supplementary education over multiple years to advance their learning and develop good habits.

Programs should maintain an ongoing goal of expanding their reach to help as many students as possible, either by serving additional grade levels or increasing the number of spots available at existing levels. As discussed earlier, adding five students per grade every year over 10 years may be an ambitious goal, but cutting that back to five students per year over five years is an achievable one. Using the financial data from our three model schools, we found that the cost of this kind of expansion would

be an additional \$190,540 for a 12-month program like Prep@Pingree, about \$1.44 million for a multi-summer program like Horizons, or about \$800,000 for a multi-year, 12-month program like PUEO. Again, this varies largely due to number of grades served rather than cost per student. While requiring more funding, expanding these opportunities to more low-income and minority students is an important step toward narrowing the achievement gap by alleviating the summer learning loss that disproportionately affects this demographic.

According to Massachusetts' results on the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the achievement gap is wide throughout the state.²⁴ Summer enrichment programs that recruit low-income and minority students could play a part in combatting this trend. There are three main avenues forward to offering more of these opportunities to Bay State students through private schools:

1 Expand partnerships with organizations like Horizons National operating in Massachusetts to include more schools and students.

There are already some of these organizations operating in the Boston area, including Steppingstone Academy, Boston Beyond and the Boston chapter of Minds Matter, but most take place exclusively at public schools.²⁵ With so many underprivileged students across the state in need of academic support, it would be beneficial to utilize the resources of private schools as well. Horizons National already operates in Massachusetts, with programs in Dedham and Lexington at Dedham Country Day School and Lexington Montessori School. School administrators looking to start a program could contact Horizons to form a partnership and take advantage of its programming expertise.

2 Fundraise and funnel additional money to schools and organizations with mission-focused summer enrichment programs, or those looking to start one, without establishing a separate organization.

While this could certainly benefit existing programs through increased financial support, it

would likely require more organization, as it would be difficult to build a concerted initiative on summer enrichment without the framing of an organization or experienced staff to facilitate the effort.

3 Create a separate non-profit organization that assists Massachusetts schools with financial aid and programming support for summer programs serving disadvantaged students.

There is space to create non-profit organizations that support Massachusetts schools with summer enrichment programs serving disadvantaged students. This approach would better accomplish the intent of the second recommendation, as it would provide more structure and organized support for schools operating summer programs. Not only could a non-profit organization act as a fundraising mechanism to provide financial aid, but it could also serve as a resource for schools beginning or looking to improve a program by collecting and sharing best practices. With partnerships and fundraising being such a critical part of operating a mission-focused summer enrichment program, support from a non-profit dedicated to these efforts would be invaluable.

Though there has been some investment in mission-based summer enrichment in Massachusetts, the opportunity at private schools, many of which have the expertise and resources to operate a high-quality program serving local disadvantaged students, should be pursued and expanded. Not only can new programs be created, but existing ones can improve by applying the approaches and best practices outlined in this series to help prevent learning loss by offering summer programming to low-income and minority students who lack resources during school break.

Access to quality educational opportunities should not be determined by a student's zip code or income. Summer enrichment programs, which have a proven record of narrowing the achievement gap and helping students grow academically, can and should be implemented by private schools in Massachusetts and throughout the country.

Endotes

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10. See Part I (<http://pioneerinstitute.org/featured/survey-majority-ma-independent-schools-offer-academically-oriented-summer-programs/>) and Part II (<http://pioneerinstitute.org/news/study-highlights-best-practices-summer-enrichment-programs/>) of this series.
11. See Part I (<http://pioneerinstitute.org/featured/survey-majority-ma-independent-schools-offer-academically-oriented-summer-programs/>) of this series.
12. Note: Costs per student are based on data collected during Part II of this series. Elite private schools represent the estimated average tuition costs of single-summer programs profiled in Parts I and II of this project; the twelve-month extended represents the cost per student at Prep@Pingree at Pingree School; the multi-year, summer-only represents the cost per student at Horizons National; and the multi-year, year-round represents the cost per student at the PUEO program at Punahou School.
13. Lauren Corvese and William Donovan, *Expanding Educational Opportunities: Best Practices in U.S. Summer Enrichment Programs*, Boston: Pioneer Institute, August 2016, <http://pioneerinstitute.org/news/study-highlights-best-practices-summer-enrichment-programs/>.
14. Id.
15. Horizons National's program is discussed at length beginning on page 8.
16. Further elaboration on fundraising can be found after the model descriptions.
17. "The Malcolm Coates Prep@Pingree Program," *Pingree School*, <https://www.pingree.org/community-life/prepatpingree>.
18. Id.
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