

*Design Study for the Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention (SLPQI): Final-Year Intervention
Design and Evaluation Results*

*This project was funded by The Wallace Foundation and The Raikes Foundation. This document, last
updated on 4/25/2017, is submitted to the funders as a final report for the project.*

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Executive Summary

The *Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention* (SLPQI) is a continuous improvement intervention for summer learning systems and settings. The intervention includes: (a) standards and measures for high-quality instructional practices, (b) data products and technology for meaningful feedback, (c) a plan-assess-improve cycle at each summer site, and (d) supports necessary to design and implement the prior three parts. The SLPQI focuses on instructional practices that build student skills during summer and increase school success during subsequent school years.

The SLPQI was the subject of a four-year Design Study involving 152 providers in seven cities. In the final year of the study, the SLPQI was implemented citywide in Denver, CO; St. Paul, MN; and Seattle, WA ($N = 106$ sites). This report presents final specification of the SLPQI design, supports, measures, and performance benchmarks. Key findings from 2016 include:

The SLPQI was implemented at moderate to high fidelity, at scale, in three citywide systems with local provision of supports. The proportion of sites implementing the SLPQI at high fidelity was high in all three systems, and partnerships of school districts, city agencies, community-based providers, and quality intermediary organizations developed capacity to implement the SLPQI at scale. A large proportion of non-school-based sites were connected with information about students' success in the prior school year.

Summer program staff positively valued the SLPQI and the assessor-coach role. System leaders, site managers, and assessors reported that implementation of the SLPQI was a good use of their time and a good fit with their work. They also reported that the Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment (PQA) successfully differentiated between higher and lower quality. Staff valued of the assessor-coach who observed, generated performance feedback, and provided coaching for the site manager.

Performance data indicates that instructional quality and student outcomes improved as predicted by the SLPQI theory of change. Performance data indicates that instructional quality improved from 2015 to 2016. Lower-performing sites improved the most, and high performance was sustained. Innovations were focused on identified areas of low quality: student management of their executive skills, motivation, and emotions. Students in higher-quality summer settings had greater academic skill gains in both 2015 and 2016 compared to students participating in lower-quality summer settings.

Recommendations include (a) marketing the SLPQI in cities with strong summer partnerships; (b) marketing SLPQI to school districts that hope to build summer partnerships; (c) continuing efforts to improve the Summer Learning PQA as a standard for high-quality instruction tailored specifically for students with difficult SEL histories, and (d) conducting a randomized efficacy trial for the SLPQI.

Organizational Background

In 2013, the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (Weikart Center) and the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) began a collaboration to address summer learning program quality improvement. NSLA is the only national nonprofit focused exclusively on closing achievement gaps by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates “what works,” offers expertise and support for programs and communities, and advocates for summer learning as a means for promoting equity and excellence in education. The Weikart Center’s mission is to empower education and human-service leaders to adapt, implement, and scale best-in-class, research-validated quality improvement systems to advance child and youth development. The Weikart Center is an affiliate division of the Forum for Youth Investment.

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I. Introduction to the Summer Learning Design Study

Summer learning programs are positioned to play an important role in reducing summer learning losses that disproportionately affect disadvantaged students (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007; Harris Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse, 1996; Gershenson, 2013; Matsudaira, 2013), and summer learning programs with an explicit focus on improving academic skills are an important part of the out-of-school time landscape (Boss & Railsback, 2002; Newhouse, Neely, Freese, Lo, & Willis, 2013). Although a growing literature suggests that summer learning programs can impact academic and other school-related skills (Borman & Dowling, 2006; Chaplin & Capizzano, 2006; McCombs, Augustine, & Schwartz, 2011; McCombs et al., 2014; Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003), few rigorous studies have closely examined the specific features and practices that mediate or moderate relations between summer program participation and school success outcomes (Arbreton et al., 2008; Augustine et al., 2016; Spielberger & Halpern, 2002).

This relatively oblique understanding about the specific instructional practices that support skill development in young learners presents a number of challenges. First, without a sufficient description of promising practices, it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of those specific practices. Second, without standards and measures for promising practices that are both precise and feasible to implement, it is difficult to plan for high-quality services or provide the performance feedback necessary for accountability and improvement. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, without standards and measures for promising practices it is difficult to promote the most important kinds of staff practices for at-risk students. These are practices that help children be open to, and engaged with, academic content and that support the development of social, emotional, and executive skills that are likely to make students more effective learners in all settings and with all content.

The *Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention* (SLPQI) and the *Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment* (PQA) directly address these challenges. The SLPQI is a continuous improvement intervention for summer learning systems and settings that includes four core parts: (a) standards and measures for high-quality practice anchored by the Summer Learning PQA, (b) data products and technology that support meaningful feedback to summer staff, (c) a plan-assess-improve cycle adapted to each summer site, and (d) coaching, training, and technical assistance necessary to design and implement the prior three parts. The SLPQI and Summer Learning PQA focus summer learning systems on the difficult task of improving instructional practices that build student skills in summer to increase student's school success in subsequent school-years.

Overview of the Four-Year SLPQI Design Study

Since 2013, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (Weikart Center), multiple national funders, and dozens of place-based organizations have partnered to implement a *design and development study* for the SLPQI.¹ The study, and the intervention design and supports produced through the process, were conducted in partnership with expert practitioners and designers in the organizations listed in Table 1.

Table 1. SLPQI Design Study Partnership by Year

	2013	2014	2015	2016
# of summer program sites	16	32	62	106
Largest Providers	Grand Rapids, MI; Oakland, CA; Baltimore, MD	Grand Rapids, MI; Northern California; Seattle Public Schools Washington	Denver Public Schools, St. Paul SPROCKETS, Boys and Girls Club, DU Bridge Project, St. Paul Parks and Recreation	Denver Public Schools, St. Paul SPROCKETS, Seattle Public Schools Boys and Girls Club, DU Bridge Project, St. Paul Parks and Recreation
Collaborating Funders	National Center for Summer Learning, W.T. Grant Foundation	West Michigan Public Schools, Higher Achievement Joaquin County, Stockton Unified School District, City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, YMCA of Greater Seattle, Bay Area Community Resources David and Lucille Packard Foundation, The Doug and Maria Devos Foundation, The Raikes Foundation, and The Wallace Foundation	The Wallace Foundation, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, The Raikes Foundation	The Wallace Foundation, The Raikes Foundation

There were two primary design and evaluation tasks completed over the four-year period. The *design task* was to engage the summer learning experts identified in Table 1 to translate or adapt an

¹ The purpose of *design and development* research is to develop new or improved interventions or strategies to achieve well-specified learning goals or objectives, including making refinements on the basis of small-scale testing. Typically, this research involves four components: (a) development of a solution (for example, an instructional approach; design and learning objects, such as museum exhibits or media; or education policy) based on a well-specified theory of action appropriate to a well-defined end user; (b) creation of measures to assess the implementation of the solution(s); (c) collection of data on the feasibility of implementing the solution(s) in typical delivery settings by intended users; and (d) conducting a pilot study to examine the promise of generating the intended outcomes (Institute for Education Science, 2013; Czajkowski et al., 2016).

existing continuous improvement intervention – the *Youth Program Quality Intervention* (YPQI) - for use in summer learning systems and settings. The YPQI is an evidence-based continuous improvement intervention and was the core design from which the SLPQI was adapted.²

The *evaluation task* was to evaluate each iteration of the SLPQI design on three criteria: First, as the beta versions were fielded, the focus of evaluation was on implementation fidelity to the standard and the feasibility of the effort necessary to attain the standard. Second, we continuously asked the implementers (i.e., city leads, site managers, and instructional staff) about the value of the SLPQI (e.g., Was the SLPQI a good use of their time? Did the SLPQI fit with their local circumstances and resources? What worked and didn't work?). Third, wherever possible, we attempted to answer more specific questions about the validity of the theory of change. In particular, we wanted to know what the effects of implementation of SLPQI were on both instructional quality and growth in child skills. Several reports were produced over the four year study period.³

The basic design for intervention and supports was completed at the end of the second year. During the third and final phase (2015 and 2016), the delivery of the intervention supports (e.g., training, technical assistance, project management) was transitioned to the local intermediary organizations and their summer network partners. The sequence of the study's three phases were:

- Phase I (Summer 2013): Pilot for proof of concept resulting in design of beta intervention and beta supports.
- Phase II (Summer 2014): Feasibility study for beta intervention and beta supports delivered by developer.
- Phase III (Summers 2015 and 2016): Scaled intervention with evaluation of implementation fidelity and student outcomes with local delivery of supports.

During these three phases, SLPQI concepts and practices were tested and evaluated with 152 unique provider organizations and data from hundreds of observations, surveys, focus groups, and interviews

²The Youth Program Quality Intervention is the most widely used quality-assurance process in the afterschool field and was the subject of a randomized trial that demonstrated that high fidelity to the same four continuous improvement elements improved the quality of instructional experiences for at-risk youth (Smith et al., 2012). Subsequent validation studies have linked exposure to high-quality instructional practices, as defined by the Program Quality Assessment (PQA), to improved school success outcomes, including school behavior and achievement (Naftzger, 2014; Naftzger et al., 2013; Naftzger, Tanyu, & Stonehill, 2010; Naftzger, Vinson, Manzeske, & Gibbs, 2011).

³ *Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment: 2013 Phase I Pilot Report* (Ramaswamy, Gersh, Sniegowski, McGovern, & Smith, 2014); *Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention (SLPQI): Phase II Feasibility Study* (Smith, Ramaswamy, Gersh, & McGovern, 2015); *Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention Phase III Interim Report* (Smith, Ramaswamy, Hillaker, Helegda, & McGovern, 2015); *Quality-Outcomes for Seattle Public Schools Summer Programs: Summer 2015 Program Cycle* (Smith et al., 2015); *Quality-Outcomes Study for Seattle Public Schools Summer Programs, Summer 2016 Program Cycle, Interim Findings* (Smith, Roy, Peck, Helegda, Macleod, 2016); *Summer Learning program Quality Intervention Handbook* (Ramaswamy et al., 2017).

were collected and analyzed. This information was part of a feedback loop: first to frontline site managers and teachers, as they worked to improve their practice and curriculum, and then to the technical partners who were using staff input and feedback to improve the design.

Although the project design involved substantial commitments and internal costs for all participants, total external funding for the four-year design and development study was approximately \$725,000. This funding was distributed across: *city intermediary organizations* that coordinated the work, managed contracts with assessors and coaches, and transitioned to delivery of the SLPQI supports in the final year; *technical partners* (e.g., NSLA, Weikart, funders) that led the design and evaluation efforts; and *direct service providers* that in many cases were already receiving programmatic support from the funders.

This approach to conducting a design and development study is notable for its efficiency in extracting user experience into several cycles of design iteration, thus leading to a greater likelihood of successful implementation at scale. During the period of the study in the participating sites, higher-quality services were delivered to an estimated 3,350 summer students.

In This Report

This report covers the final year (i.e., 2016) of the study that was fielded in three cities: St. Paul, Denver, and Seattle. The primary objective was to evaluate SLPQI implementation fidelity and feasibility when SLPQI was delivered at city-wide scale and where training and technical assistance supports were provided through local capacity. Experiences from the first two years of the study suggested that cities with mature OST networks and a high-capacity *quality intermediary organization* (QIO) would be ideally suited to scaling up *quality improvement systems*⁴ for summer learning programs. Denver Afterschool Alliance (Denver [<https://www.denvergov.org/denverafterschoolalliance>]), Sprockets (St. Paul [<http://www.sprocketssaintpaul.org>]), and School's Out Washington (Seattle [<https://www.schoolsoutwashington.org>]) are high-capacity QIOs that manage mature QISs anchored by the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI).

Part II of this report describes the summer 2016 SLPQI design (e.g., parts, sequence, and roles), supports, performance benchmarks for high fidelity, and a rudimentary assessment of costs. Although the study did not focus on analysis of costs, we draw upon the information available to discuss costs of

⁴ *Quality Improvement Systems* (QIS) provide normative frameworks for positive youth development and articulate standards for management practices, service quality, and program effectiveness that a wide variety of service providers can agree on and are willing to be accountable for. QIS also frequently create opportunities for cross-age, cross-sector, and cross-town planning and coordination, effectively blending resources from multiple public and private funders through the shared purposes of accountability and improvement. QIS typically include *Quality Intermediary Organizations* (QIO), as dissemination agents for quality improvement interventions, and technical supports necessary for program managers to participate in the QIS. QIO also often provide services related to performance measurement, participation tracking, curriculum, and other professional development (Smith, 2013).

implementation so that school districts, local funders, and QIO can be as fully informed as possible about what it takes to build effective QISs for summer.

Although the intervention design work was less prominent in 2016, we were still improving the design and supports. Appendix B describes improvements to the design and supports that were new in 2016 and how some of 2015 changes were maintained in the 2016 year.

The results sections IV and V draw upon routine performance data produced when the SLPQI is implemented to address a range of research questions related to the validity of summer program designs. First, data describing the quality of instructional practices in summer settings is reviewed to better understand (a) the prevalence of specific instructional practices and (b) the need for quality improvement in the wider summer sector. Second, because the motivation of frontline staff is so important to successful implementation, responses from the summer staff who implemented SLPQI in 2016 are reviewed in order to understand how they valued the SLPQI. Third, data from summer sites participating in two years of SLPQI are used to describe how quality of instruction changed in the three cities. According to the SLPQI theory of change, if summer systems implement SLPQI, then quality should improve, and lower-quality sites should improve the most. Fourth, we present information from interviews regarding the kinds of instructional innovations that occurred during the summer of 2016 as a result of the SLPQI implementation. According to the SLPQI theory of change, teachers should make instructional improvements in response to performance data indicating areas of low performance. Finally, we summarize findings from the one system that also collected pre- and post- student academic skill data. Again, according to the theory of change, students participating in higher-quality summer settings should have greater academic skill growth compared to students in lower-quality settings.

II. SLPQI Design, Supports, and Benchmarks

QISs anchored by the *Program Quality Intervention* approach and *Program Quality Assessment* assessments have proven to be an effective way to bring promising practices to scale in the organizationally and programmatically diverse OST field (Smith & Akiva, 2008; Smith, Akiva, Sugar, Lo et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2017). Because high-quality summer settings are uniquely positioned to address summer learning loss with vulnerable students, the SLPQI was designed to help summer learning leaders and staff focus deeply on instructional practices, assess their strengths, and improve the quality and effectiveness of their services over multiple cycles. In this section, we document the final design specification for the SLPQI, including the overarching theory of change, standards and measures, the parts of continuous improvement cycles that sites implement, the supports (e.g., coaching, training, technical assistance) available to SLPQI adopters, design wisdom, and the costs of implementation.

SLPQI Theory of Change

The SLPQI theory of change describes a cascade of multilevel intervention effects designed to maximize the motivation of frontline managers and staff: motivation to work on improving instructional practices that they believe are most critical for their own students' success. At the system level, system leaders connect public and private organizations with shared goals for summer outcomes, coordinate with the QIO to manage delivery of supports, and send signals to site managers and teachers that the SLPQI is a priority. At the organization level, site managers receive training in the SLPQI and lead their site teams to implement the continuous improvement cycle for their site. Although the decision to adopt the SLPQI may occur at the system level, the most critical work of SLPQI implementation occurs at the site level where the cycle is implemented. The site manager's responsibility for implementation of the cycle is a critical level of accountability in the SLPQI.

At the point-of-service level (POS; e.g., classroom), teachers implement high-quality instructional practices and curricula that are identified in the continuous improvement cycle. Assessment of both instructional quality and student skill growth occur at the POS level as students demonstrate academic and other skills in response to instructional practices. Finally, as students build toward mastery of *social-emotional learning skills* (e.g., management of emotions, executive processes, and social role mastery) and domain-specific *academic content skills* (e.g., math and literacy) in the summer setting, the likelihood of skill transfer to school day classrooms in the subsequent year increases.

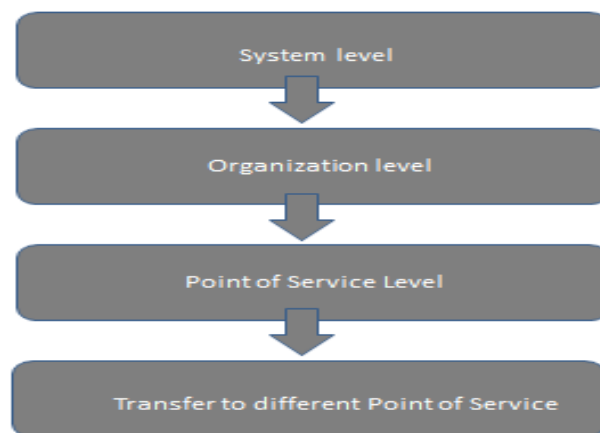


Figure 1. SLPQI Theory of Change

Although the cascade metaphor in Figure 1 describes a top-down flow of effects, the YPQI design is focused on building, simultaneously across levels, motivation in specific summer learning roles (e.g., system leader, site manager, teacher) by focusing on developing empowerment and expertise appropriate to each role. We refer to this as a *lower-stakes accountability* approach (Smith, 2013), wherein most

individual site manager's and teacher's experiences of accountability in the QIS include the beliefs that performance standards and measures are fair, attainment of the standards is possible, sufficient supports are available for improvement, and any single performance measure is insufficient for evaluation of quality.

Perhaps most importantly, in lower-stakes systems, the logic of negative incentives is inverted⁵ so that low performers receive additional supports. This logic, where “low performers receive extra help,” is critical for an intervention like the SLPQI that includes performance measures that could promulgate perverse incentives and behaviors under higher-stakes models (e.g., gaming measures, minimum compliance, or outright resistance). To summarize: We can most easily help people collect meaningful and precise data, using their existing organizational resources, if they are not also at risk of being summarily sanctioned for identifying their own low performance.

Further, although SLPQI performance measures can supply a wealth of valuable performance data, these data do not become meaningful information without a *professional learning community*. Learning from data and using it effectively requires site managers and teachers to engage in conversations about that information that lead to decisions about both curriculum and professional development. This process of coming together around standards and data in a lower-stakes context is an integral feature of the lower-stakes approach. Together, the performance data and learning community provide important informational and purposive incentives for high-fidelity implementation.

Finally, implementation of the YPQI in a lower-stakes context, with an active professional learning community, is a proven framework for growing *public-private partnerships* in a region. Access to high-quality supports and a shared technical language of summer learning can bring summer-focused public and private actors into partnership (Yohalem et al., 2010; Yohalem, Devaney, Smith, Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2012).

In the remainder of Part II, five parts of the final iteration of the SLPQI design are described: (a) *Performance measures*, (b) Plan-Assess-Improve *cycle* sequence and roles, (c) training and technical assistance *supports*, (d) start-up *wisdom*, and finally, (e) *costs* to implement the SLQPI.

Performance Measures

The 2016 suite of performance measures for the SLPQI includes eight composite measures (and their requisite domains, scales, and items) to describe the organization level of setting and seven composite measures (and their requisite domains, scales, and items) to describe the point-of-service level of setting. These measures are described in the Table 2. Appendix C presents additional descriptive information and a summary discussion of their reliability and validity.

⁵ The dominant accountability model in education comes from the No Child Left Behind policy that produces higher-stakes experiences where low performers are identified publicly, outcome measures lack validity, and the cost of improvement is borne by the low-performing organization.

Table 2. SLQPI Performance Measures

System Level		
<u>Accurate and On-time</u> – All assessors certified as external assessors; all assessments completed, reports delivered, and coaching visits conducted on time.		Project Records
Org Level		
<u>Staff Training</u> - Staff have adequate preparation and receive comprehensive orientation; high staff retention and adequate staff-to-student ratios, staff has time to plan curriculum to meet student objectives.		PQA Form B Interview
<u>Planning</u> - Site manager plans proactively, articulates mission and goals for youth; strategic plan formally reviewed and communicated to staff; youth included curriculum development, staff have framework for lessons. Data is collected and used for improvement planning.		PQA Form B Interview
<u>Individualization</u> - Student skill assessment to provide individualized instruction; site director and staff discuss needs of individual students. Youth attend sessions frequently, meet program recruitment criteria, have a high retention rate, and receive high level of program hours.		PQA Form B Interview
<u>Family Connections</u> - Program communicates with family year-round, staff have relationships with families, and families have opportunities for participation in program offerings.		PQA Form B Interview
<u>Align to School Achievement</u> – Staff review student’s school data from the previous year; students are recruited based on prior year’s school performance or recommendation from school district or staff.		Site Manager Survey
<u>Staff capacity and expertise</u> – High staff retention and adequate staff-to-student ratios; staff skill assessed, trained in advance, provided year round professional development; frequent collaboration and feedback.		Site Manager Survey
<u>SLPQI Implementation Fidelity</u> - Site manager attended trainings (Summer Institute, Coaching); engage assessor-coach and Report; create Program Improvement Plan; coach staff on instruction using SLPQA.		Site Manager Survey
<u>Staff Valuation of SLPQI</u> - Participation in SLPQI was a good use of time, good fit with job, and administrative support provided.		Site Manager Survey
POS Level		
<u>Instructional Total Score</u> – Total Score for Instructional Quality composed of ratings of practice in three domains Supportive Environment, Interaction, and Engagement		PQA Form A Observation
<u>Safe Environment</u> - Practices that support psychological, emotional, and physical safety; supports for a positive, inclusive atmosphere; physical activity; and a healthy environment.		PQA Form A Observation
<u>Supportive Environment</u> – Practices that support basic skill learning using both exploratory methods (e.g., engage with materials, encourage trying new skills, multiple types of activities) and direct scaffolding (e.g., break down tasks, staff models, monitor challenge) methods; positive emotionality and learning from mistakes; conflict resolution.		PQA Form A Observation
<u>Interaction</u> – Practices that support peer friendships and shared values; group process, social roles, help-giving and seeking, leadership; shared control and work with adults.		PQA Form A Observation
<u>Engagement</u> – Practices that support executive functions necessary for planning and reflection; supports for extension of knowledge; supports for development of strategies and rules for problem solving.		PQA Form A Observation
<u>Math and literacy</u> - In math, access to mathematical problem solving and reasoning, in different contexts, linked to examples. In literacy, access to literacy activities at a variety		PQA Form A Observation

of levels, in multiple contexts and modalities, write about experiences, talk about the meaning of words.	
Greeting, Transition, Departure – Students and families experience warmth and guided interaction at entry and exit; transitions are planned and children are prepared; departure is constructive for remaining students.	PQA Form A Observation
Student Skill - Academic achievement test scores in math and reading including sight word assessments, oral fluency, summer staircase math assessment, and math practice.	Summer Program Skill Assessment
Student Skill Transfer - Subsequent year academic achievement test scores or proficiency levels, grades, school behavior records.	School Data and Records

Standard and Measure for Instructional Quality

The Summer Learning PQA Form A is the anchor measure for the SLPQI. Although current research on summer learning programs continues to extend our understanding of program features such as teacher expertise and curricula (Augustine et al., 2016; McCombs et al, 2011), formative analyses of instructional practices as delivered is relatively rare. The Summer Learning PQA Form A was developed to assess instructional practices that build student skills according to an explicit standard for high quality practice – the *active-participatory approach* which was developed over several decades at the HighScope Educational Research Foundation (Ilfeld, 1996; Oden, Kelley, Ma, & Weikart, 1992). This instructional approach supports learning in two ways.

First, active-participatory refers to a pedagogical approach (i.e., active learning) that makes the presentation of academic content more engaging by blending *exploratory learning methods* that maximize motivation for novices (e.g., choice, concrete and abstract, open-ended questions), *direct skill scaffolding* designed to move students upward on specific skill hierarchies (e.g., clarity of instruction, adult modeling, encouragement to higher levels), and application of *academic learning strategies and rules* (e.g., identify strategies, attribute success to effort, guided error correction) that support more sophisticated forms of academic problem solving. Each of these instructional practices – exploration, direct skill scaffolding, and use of strategies and rules – is known to increase student engagement with academic content (Gagne, Briggs, & Wager, 1988; Martin & Reigeluth, 1999).

Second, the active-participatory approach is also a set of supports for learning *social, emotional, and executive skills* that make students more effective learners in all settings and with all content.⁶ In particular, students who have been exposed to chronic stressors associated with lower-income neighborhoods, under-resourced schools, or environmental contaminants are more likely to achieve the basic regulation and attention skills necessary for learning where there are additional supports in place.

⁶ Crosswalks of practices named in PQA items are available upon request for the common core habits of mind (Devaney and Yohalem, 2012), the Danielson Framework, SEL practices (Smith, McGovern, Peck, Larson et al., 2016), and other school-day practice frameworks.

More specifically, these staff practices provide normative guidance in social interaction (e.g., values communicated, help another child, lead groups), supports for positive emotionality (e.g., warm and respectful, staff acknowledge feelings, opportunities to get to know), and opportunities to practice managing the executive processes necessary for decision making (e.g., make plans, intentional reflection, make connections). Each of these aspects of practice – guidance for social interaction, supports for positive emotionality, and active management of executive processes such as secondary appraisal or meta-cognitive strategies – are also known to increase learning in academic content (e.g., Li and Julian, 2012; Linnenbrink, 2007; Marzano, 1999).

Cycle for Continuous Improvement

The SLPQI improvement cycle can be seen in the exemplar of the SLPQI cycle timelines, activities, and supports presented in Table 3. Determining the sequence of supports for implementation of the site-level cycle is a critical part of the technical assistance that system leaders receive early in the process. The generic sequence of PLAN-ASSESS-IMPROVE, where IMPROVE includes coaching and training, is shown in Table 4, with additional detail on support trainings and actions required. There is overlap in the final two stages of the process to recognize that performance feedback and improvement happen both during and after the summer session ends.

Table 3. Sample SLPQI Cycle Timeline, Activities, and Supports

Element	Cycle Timeline	Activities and Supports
Plan	March 1	<i>SLPQI Kickoff Webinar or Recruitment meeting</i> (Optional)
	April 23	Live <i>Summer Learning Institute</i> training (site lead plus other staff as needed)
	May 18	Live <i>SLPQA Assessor</i> training (reliable PQA external assessors only)
Assess	May 19	Live <i>Quality Coaching</i> workshop (assessors and/or site leads)
	June 22	<u>START OF SUMMER PROGRAM SESSION</u>
	July 2	External Assessment Site Visits and Reporting
Improve (Coach & Train)	July 8	Assessor-Coach site visits (assessors, site leads, and staff)
	July 9-24	Mid-session program improvement (site leads and staff)
	July 31	<u>END OF SUMMER PROGRAM SESSION</u>
	August 10	Live <i>Planning with Data</i> Workshops (site leads and staff as available)
	September 1	Live <i>Youth Work Methods</i> Workshops

Table 4. SLPQI Process Overview

Element	Activity	Supports (Training <i>Italicized</i>)	Action Example
PLAN (Pre – Summer)	Adapt SLPQI design & costs	Consulting	System leaders receive guidance on fitting SLPQI to local purposes; review relevant exemplars.
	Plan for high quality instruction	<i>Summer Learning Institute</i> training	Site leads learn quality standard for instruction and amend curriculum plan to increase the prevalence of specific high quality practices
ASSESS (During Summer)	Build coaching capacity	<i>Quality Coaching</i> training	Assessors and/or site leads gain skills for providing ongoing, meaningful coaching support to instructional staff
	Collect performance data on PQA Forms A & B	<i>PQA Reliability & SLPQA Assessor</i> trainings	Assessors conduct site visits to collect data and create site-level reports
IMPROVE (During and post-summer)	Coach staff	NA	Site manager engages staff through coaching around plan for instruction
	Summary Report	NA	Assessor-coach visits site team to discuss Summary Report
	Mid-Session Improvement	NA	Assessor-coach supports site team to pursue a short-term improvement
	Post-Summer Improvement Planning	<i>Planning with Data</i> training	Site leads engage in longer term data driven improvement planning, setting specific goals for improvement in the following summer session
	Post-Summer Improvement	<i>Youth Work Methods Workshops</i> trainings	Site leads and staff engage in targeted professional development for long-term improvement of summer program quality

Roles and responsibilities

There are several key roles that support high-fidelity implementation of the SLPQI. Each role is described briefly below. Table 5 presents the role tasks for each phase of the plan-assess-improve cycle. Roles and responsibilities include:

System Lead. The System Lead (or Network Lead) is responsible for overseeing the SLPQI at the city, school district, or region level. The System Lead sets overall goals for the network, provides clear messaging and advocacy around the process, coordinates training logistics, communicates timelines to sites, and provides troubleshooting supports as sites implement the SLPQI.

Site Manager. The Site Manager (or site supervisor, site coordinator) is responsible for leading a site team through the SLPQI. It is important that this person has sufficient time to attend trainings before and after the summer session and coordinate staff engagement with the process during the summer session. Key responsibilities include communicating with assessors, managing improvement planning, and seeing that improvement plans are carried out.

Instructional Staff. The Instructional Staff are primarily responsible for working directly with students and enacting improvements in the quality of youth experience available at the summer program. They may also have some responsibilities for leading their team through elements of the SLPQI.

External assessors. The External Assessors are data collectors for the SLPQI process. They receive training on the SLPQA, conduct site visits, and score the tool so that the site lead has immediate access to the data. External assessors may also function as coaches (see next paragraph).

Assessor-Coach. The Assessor-Coaches are trained assessors who provide both data collection and coaching on the results of the assessment for the site team. Rather than being in a position of monitoring or performance evaluation, assessor-coaches employ a lower-stakes and strengths-based coaching method.

Data Collection Coordinator. The Data Collection Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the scheduling and logistics of the data collection process. This role is essential for ensuring that assessors are paired promptly and appropriately with sites and that site visits and reporting happen in a timely manner. System Leads can take on this role in certain circumstances.

Table 5. SLPQI Roles and Responsibilities by Intervention Step

	Network Lead	Site Lead	Program Staff	External Assessor	Assessor-Coach	Data Collection Coordinator
PLAN						
Pre Summer	Sets SLPQI timeline for training events and data collection. Sets SLPQI network-level goals. Attends Summer Learning Institute. Oversees process.	Attends Summer Learning Institute. Completes Pre-Summer Quality Plan.	Participates in pre-summer professional development.	Attends PQA reliability training as needed. Attends SLPQA assessor training. Receives site assignment(s)	External Assessor roles + Attends Coaching training.	Creates final master list of sites and external assessors. Works with site leads, assessors to complete data collection calendar. Monitors data collection process.
ASSESS		Receives external assessor on pre-determined day. Participates in Form B interview.	Observed by external assessor.	Visits site(s) to conduct data collection. Inputs data into Scores Reporter to generate report.	External Assessor roles + Establishes follow-up visit date for coaching.	Ensures timeliness of reporting.

Improve	Oversees process. Reviews reports and Program Improvement Plans.	Engages staff in mid-session planning using Summary Report. Participates in Planning with Data at end of summer.	Participates in mid-session planning process.	—	Facilitates mid-session improvement discussion based on Summary Report.	Monitors completion of Program Improvement Plans
	Coordinates professional development opportunities aligned with program goals. Engages in network-level reflection and planning for subsequent year	Coaches staff during the session to improve practice. Oversees execution of improvement plan between summer sessions.	Engages in improvement actions during the session. Engages in targeted professional development between sessions.		Coaches staff during the session to improve practice. Leads sites in sustaining improvement plan between sessions.	Ensures that data is available for improvement and planning between sessions.

Supports: Training, Technical Assistance, Technology

Several types of supports are provided through the SLPQI, including (a) technical assistance for system leaders supporting summer learning systems, (b) training for site managers on the content of the SLPQI, and (c) training for assessors and assessor-coaches. This section briefly describes each of the component trainings that are a part of the SLPQI.

Training for Site Managers

Summer Learning Institute. The Summer Learning Institute is a planning workshop designed to familiarize site leads with the SLPQA tool and research-based best practices in summer learning programs. During this training, site leads have opportunities to anticipate their program's strengths and areas for improvement as they create a plan for summer quality.

Quality Coaching: Site leads can also attend a coaching training with, or separate from, assessor-coaches. This training provides concrete skills for supporting staff in making improvements to their practice during the summer session.

Planning with Data: After the summer session is over, site leads convene with their peers to review in detail all of their performance data and create longer-term improvement plans. These plans are intended to apply directly to summer sessions in subsequent years.

Training for Instructional Staff

Summer Learning Institute. If staff are able to attend with their site leads, they can benefit from learning more about the SLPQA and participating in planning for quality. For staff that cannot attend the

training, the site lead is encouraged to communicate to staff back at the site what they have learned at the training and engage site staff in the process.

Youth Work Methods. The Methods workshops are aligned with the SLPQA and are designed to provide program staff with meaningful professional development opportunities to improve their skills. Specific Methods workshops (i.e., workshops focused on specific learning goals) are selected based on each site's improvement goals.

Training for Assessors and Assessor-Coaches

PQA Reliability Training. Assessors who wish to use the SLPQA must first be reliable in either the Youth or School-Age PQA. This rigorous training and certification process is designed to ensure as much consistency as possible in the quality of data collected. Experience conducting and scoring observations using the Youth or School-Age PQA is also very helpful as preparation for using the SLPQA.

SLPQA Assessor Training. Reliable PQA assessors then attend a one-day training that focuses on the unique elements of the SLPQA. Participants have a chance to practice scoring and discussing the new items. The training also teaches assessors the data collection methodology for the SLPQA, which differs from the standard school-year PQAs.

Quality Coaching. Assessors who will also work as coaches for their sites can attend a Quality Coaching training in order to improve their coaching skills and learn the observation-reflection method for instructional coaching.

Data Products

The assessor scored the SLPQA and drew from the performance data to produce recommendations for improvement in the remaining weeks of the program. This process of converting data to a customized data product supporting the performance feedback and improvement process is facilitated by the Online Scores Reporter, an on-line data entry and report-sharing portal that supports PQI-type interventions (<http://cypq.org/content/scores-reporter-30>). For the design study, the Online Scores Reporter was set up to allow assessors to input their scores and generate reports on their own. The reports include:

- The morning and afternoon scores for all SLPQA items and scales
- One-page guide about how and where the data could be used during their summer session
- One-page overview of the quality standards referenced by the performance data
- Take-it-back agenda for a 30-minute workshop on the Summary Report
- Guidance on interpreting PQA data

- The Summary Report, a one-page narrative summary of strengths, suggested improvement actions, and other specific feedback from the assessor (an example of this report can be found here: <http://cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/examplerreport>)

Design Wisdom

Make the Design Fit the Resources. In order for the SLPQI to be successful, even in a pilot year, a network or site must have resources (both time and funds) to support the process. If a program is short on time, money, or human resources, it may be possible to acquire the necessary resources in some other way, reassign roles, or adjust goals and scale back the intervention to a level that matches the available resources. Perhaps most importantly, it may be necessary to start small and focus resources on a few sites.

Start Small with Motivated Participants. Even though a complete SLPQI process is designed to involve all of the elements described above, a single program could start on its own by downloading a copy of the SLPQA (available at cypq.org/downloadpqa), reviewing the handbook (Ramaswamy et al., 2017), and spending some time in a staff meeting or training discussing the standards. A site lead or other designated person could even conduct a short observation and then discuss their notes with a colleague as they think about what the scores might be. Simply engaging with the Summer Learning PQA Form A is a first step that should build buy-in and momentum.

Systemic Implementation in a Region Requires a Network of Providers and a Quality Intermediary Organization. It is most effective to be part of a larger network so that resources can be pooled and a QIO can manage resources and systems, connect to the Weikart Center and NSLA, and bring the learning community of service providers together. A strong QIO will be able to help set and manage network goals, timelines, trainings, and data collection.

Cost to Implement a QIS anchored by SLPQI

Although the SLPQI Design Study was not focused specifically on analyses of cost, the contracting model used to fund the study – wherein funds pass to the QIO and other network actors who then purchase services from the Weikart Center and each other - did require monetization of some aspects of the work as well as estimation of staff time for various actors in the QIS to carry out their roles.

Using a hypothetical summer learning system consisting of 25 sites, cost are likely structured in the following way: The SLPQI package of services and supports from Weikart/NSLA costs approximately \$30,000 per year to produce. Staff time for participation in training and coordination of the improvement work at each site, valued at \$40 per hour, is projected to cost approximately \$1,000, or \$25,000 for a system with 25 sites. Finally, overall project management and assessor-coaching services are estimated to cost approximately \$25,000 in a project where assessment and coaching visits (including preparation and follow up in the per-visit cost) were valued at \$400 each. In total, to bring a summer

learning QIS to scale would cost between \$80,000 and \$100,000 per year for two years. The higher range would include additional consulting for the curriculum and an evaluation report paralleling sections III-V of this report.

III. 2016 Performance Study Questions, Sample, and Procedures

Methods

In this section, we discuss the research questions, participant organizations and staff, and procedures for collection of performance data.

Research Questions

This report addresses the following questions related to implementation fidelity and program effectiveness: Was the SLPQI implemented at high fidelity? Was the SLPQI valued by the staff who led implementation? What level of quality is being achieved in the field? What are examples of instructional innovation that occur as a result of SLPQI participation? Did the quality of instruction in summer program settings improve after two years of implementing the SLPQI? Is student academic skill growth related to participation in high-quality summer settings?⁷

Sample of Organizations, Sites, Curricula, Staff, and Students

Table 6 describes the number of provider organizations (e.g., St. Paul Public Schools, Seattle YMCA), the number of summer learning sites, the number of staff represented in the performance data for all sites, and an estimate for the number of children and youth served across these summer learning sites.

Table 6. Study Sample by Year and City

Year	Characteristic	City A	City B	City C	Total
2015	Number of Organizations	7	13	6	26
	Number of Sites	13	15	34	62
	Number of Staff*	31	36	52	119
2016	Number of Organizations	9	16	34	59
	Number of Sites	24	18	64	106
	Number of Staff*	48	46	107	201
	Number of Children		(estimated)		3,350

⁷ Although we summarize information about student skill gains related to participation in higher-quality summer settings, these data were collected only in the Seattle system and are discussed in greater detail in two reports: *Quality-Outcomes for Seattle Public Schools Summer Programs: Summer 2015 Program Cycle* (Smith et al., 2015); *Quality-Outcomes Study for Seattle Public Schools Summer Programs, Summer 2016 Program Cycle, Interim Findings* (Smith, Roy, Peck, Helegda, Macleod, 2016).

The summer learning sites in 2016 reflected a mix of designs, auspices, and organizational purposes related to minimizing or eliminating summer learning loss. These networks and sites reflected the diversity of the summer learning field through, in particular, a varying emphasis on blending academic and enrichment content using both public and community-based providers. It is interesting to note that despite the relatively low proportion of school-district sites, a high percentage of site managers in the study reported having access to student records for targeting and diagnostic purposes, suggesting that these summer systems were connected to public schools but administered through public-private partnerships.

Table 7. Summer Learning Program Designs

	City A	City B	City C
Morning academic curriculum content	Academic 61% Literacy 65% Math 26%	Academic 58% Literacy 67% Math 25%	Academic 80% Literacy 84% Math 73%
Includes afternoon enrichment	14%	10%	19%
Site is a school	8%	0%	38%
Staff is a certified teacher (CT) or social worker (SW)	16% (CT) 16% (SW)	8% (CT) 4% (SW)	45% (CT) 13% (SW)
Program targets academically at risk	87%	46%	56%
Program uses school year or other diagnostic data on achievement	64%	29%	85%

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for the 2016 year included the following data sources, measures, and procedures:

Project records. Project records included records of training attendance, assessor reliability test results, dates for submission of observations, dates when performance reports were sent to each of the 106 programs, and notes from technical assistance calls.

SLPQA Form A. Form A is an observational measure designed to evaluate the quality of staff instructional practices where interacting with children and youth at the “point-of-service” during program offerings. Assessors were required to achieve 80 percent or greater perfect agreement with gold standard scores of a video-taped program offering before conducting observations.

Each observation, morning and afternoon, utilized a method where the assessors collected a detailed running record of staff behavior and youth responses, during 15-30 minute observation blocks in

a cross-section of program offerings, led by different program staff. Each rating was based on a total of approximately 90 minutes of observation time. Assessors then used the anecdotal records to score the rubrics that constitute Form A, typically requiring about 60 minutes to convert the anecdotal records into a complete Form A rating. For full-day programs, a distinct Form A rating was produced for the morning and the afternoon sessions. For half-day programs, only the respective morning or afternoon rating was produced.

Assessors also completed a checklist related to basic best practices for three transition periods during the program day. Ratings for the Greetings Index were collected only during morning observations, whereas ratings for the Departures Index were collected only during afternoon observations. The following ratings were produced during all observations.

SLPQA Form B. Form B is an interview-based assessment of management practices. The assessor interviews the program manager and records written responses. Later, this written record is used to score the Form B rubrics, typically requiring about 30 minutes.

Site Manager Survey. The program manager survey was developed to assess a number of attributes at each site, including: (a) fidelity of the SLPQI implementation, (b) staff valuation of the SLPQI and the Summer Learning PQA, (c) any innovations or changes during the program as a result of receiving the Summer Learning PQA data, and (d) the implementation of management practices regarding the capacity of the staffing model and school connections related to targeting students based on academic risk and prior academic performance.

Assessor survey. The assessor survey was developed to better understand successes and challenges in the assessment process and to gain assessor perspective on the SLPQA. Ninety-nine external assessors completed an assessor survey via an online data collection system.

Staff interviews. Phone interviews ($N = 12$ in 2016) were conducted with staff members from each network. Interviewees were nominated for an interview if their site manager thought they were making innovative instructional responses to the SLPQI.

Missing Data

Performance data for the 2016 year had little missing data. The 269 PQA Form A assessments included information on all participating sites; the 106 PQA Form B assessments included all sites, the 113 site manager surveys included 93% of sites, and the 64 assessor surveys included 97% of sites.

IV. Results for Implementation

This section presents 2016 results for *implementation* of the SLPQI in 106 summer learning program sites in three cities. This section describes (a) implementation of SLPQI supports, (b) fidelity and feasibility of the SLPQI sequence, and (c) staff valuation of the SLPQI process.

Implementation of SLPQI Supports

SLPQI supports are the training and technical assistance necessary for program managers to implement the work. Participants ($N = 203$) gave the trainings positive ratings. Eighty-four percent of participants indicated that the trainings were a good use of their time, 89% indicated that the trainings were a good fit with their current position, and 82% indicated that they had administrative support to implement the content of the training. Assessors ($N = 58$) attended a Summer Learning PQA Reliability Training. All assessors completed training evaluations and reported that the events were worth their time and that they either acquired new skills or strengthened skills they already had. Eighty-seven percent of assessors reported previous experience with the YPQI and Youth PQA. Table 8 describes training locations, dates, and attendance.

Table 8. Training Events

Program Staff Training Events	Location	Date	Attendance
Summer Learning Institute	City A	April 6, 2016	33
Summer Learning Institute	City B	April 12, 2016	21
Summer Learning Institute	City C	May 13, 2016	34
Summer Learning Institute	City C	May 14, 2016	32
Quality Coaching	City B	May 3, 2016	21
Quality Coaching	City A	May 10, 2016	17
Assessor Training Events			
Assessor Reliability Training	City A	May 5, 2016	18
Assessor Reliability Training	City B	May 10, 2016	15
Assessor Reliability Training	City C	June 3, 2016	12

SLPQI Implementation Fidelity and Feasibility

Implementation Fidelity

SLQPI implementation fidelity was assessed by creating a *fidelity index* to describe overall implementation of four SLPQI elements: Planning, Assessment, Coaching, and Training. The index ranges from 0 to 4 and was created by summing responses to four dichotomous items (where 1 = implemented and 0 = not implemented) corresponding to each of the SLPQI elements. Across the three cities, in 2016, 75% of sites achieved a high level of implementation fidelity, defined as implementing at least three of the four elements (see Table 9). Because, in 2016, the SLPQI was implemented at greater scale in each city, and used local capacity to produce supports, we interpret this level of implementation

as a success benchmark for scaled implementation.⁸ SLPQI *performance benchmarks* are described in Appendix A.

For comparison, we include in Table 9 comparable implementation data from the YPQI Study, a randomized trial which produced a Cohen’s *d* effect size (Cohen, 1988) of *d* = .55 for the relation between assignment to a group of sites implementing the SLPQI and instructional quality (i.e., PQA Form A) following one year of implementation. Fidelity in the SLPQI study was close to the fidelity achieved in the YPQI study treatment group and substantially greater than that achieved by the YPQI study control group. Further, because the lowest fidelity occurred in the City C system, it is important to note that many of the City C sites were new to the SLPQI in 2016, meaning they did not have a 2015 year dedicated to preparing for scale-up. For this reason, communication with the City C sites – that is, communication among summer learning sites, the QIO, and technical partners – was not as tightly coupled as it was in Cities A and B. It is also the case that City C summer learning settings were already characterized, on average, by very high instructional quality (i.e., PQA Form A), so in some cases very high-quality sites may have made rational choices not to fully participate in the SLPQI elements.

Table 9. Comparison of the SLPQI Implementation Fidelity Index with the YPQI Study Treatment and Control Groups

	2016 SLPQI Study				YPQI Study	
	All Sites N=87	City A N=24	City B N=16	City C N=47	Treatment N=37	Control N=42
% sites 0 practice	3	0	6	4	0	0
% sites 1 practice	3	0	0	9	4	40
% sites 2 practices	18	17	17	21	13	34
% sites 3 practices	33	38	33	28	32	10
% sites 4 practices	42	46	44	38	53	16

Note: Practices include program improvement planning, assessing, training, and coaching.

Feasibility

We asked site managers about the timeliness of trainings and the success of their implementation to address the question of feasibility. In 2016, 83% of site managers indicated that the trainings (Summer Learning Institute, Quality Coaching) were “provided in a timely fashion to meet the needs of your programs,” and 78% of site managers indicated that their site was “able to successfully implement the SLPQI.”

Staff Valuation of SLPQI

With respect to the overall value of the SLPQI, an average of 74% of site managers agreed that participation in the SLPQI was “worth my time and effort” (less than 10 percent disagreed), 78% agreed

⁸ In 2014, when the beta version of the SLPQI was introduced, high fidelity was achieved by 63% of sites (*N* = 11), and in 2015, when the SLPQI supports and coordination were being delivered by the developer (Weikart Center), high fidelity was achieved by 99% of sites.

that the SLPQI “is applicable to my current job position and fits my role,” and 70% indicated that they “have administrative support... to implement the SLPQI.” Where asked to describe what was most valuable about the process, most site coordinators mentioned the process of PQA assessment and coaching with the assessor-coach.

Site managers and assessors were also asked about the value of the Summer Learning PQA. Seventy-eight percent of site managers and assessors agreed that the Summer Learning PQA was “able to accurately assess the presence of academic practices” at their site. Eighty-eight percent of assessors agreed that the Summer Learning PQA “was able to capture essential differences in the quality of programs.”

Table 10 presents a sample of the responses to two questions: “What aspect of your experience with the SLPQI was most valuable?” and “Please share any additional thoughts you may have about any aspect of your experience with the Summer Learning PQA.” In general, comments indicated that staff saw positive value in the SLPQI; in particular, the feedback visit with the assessor-coach. However, it is clear that “fitting” the intervention to local circumstances is critical to achieving both high implementation fidelity and staff value. All open-ended survey responses are provided in Appendix E.

Table 10. Open-Ended Responses Regarding SLPQI Value and Fit

The visit and review with the site assessor was extremely valuable to our site. As a team, we were able to ask clarifying questions and receive detailed descriptions on how we could improve our practices.
It was very helpful to sit down the assessor and the data. During this time we were able to have a conversation about the strengths and areas of improvement of the programming. I appreciated the time to dialogue and brainstorm ways to strengthen the program offerings.
I feel that when we participate in the SLPQI the feedback, help and the training myself and my staff receive make us better able to provide a stronger program for all the youth in our community. If at any point in time I need to talk to my coach he would have been available. The support we receive is invaluable and could never be replaced. Seeing our program through the eyes of another program coordinator. It was really helpful to hear some things a neutral party noticed--both good and bad--and to be able to use this feedback to help our staff hear alternative ways to do things.
The training just reaffirmed my philosophy of teaching and learning. It was nice to get the reports after each observation. The reports provided an honest lens from an outside source that has no idea about how we run our program. We were able to adjust as needed.
It would have been helpful to have two coaching sessions; one at the beginning of the program and one towards the middle.
The summer is such a fast moving train, that even when the SLPQA was done in the 2nd week of program the results and coaching were not available to the 4th or 5th week of program and the program was finished after the 6th week. I think we will see the value in using those results to influence our school year planning and the planning for next summer, but we were not really able to make changes in the moment.
Some of the aspects are really difficult and don't actually match up with what the district has asked us to do. For example, the SLPQI places high value on total student choice. The Math for Love curriculum gives a directive for narrowly limiting student choice. We can't do right by both.
It was an overall positive experience. The assessor was understanding and flexible. I thought he led a very pleasant feedback session in which the teachers came out with a positive outlook.

Quality of Management Practices

The SLPQA Form B includes 31 items in four domains – Planning, Staff Training, Family Connection, and Individualization – that are described in the second panel of Table 2. Median scores from each domain for all of the 2016 summer sites are provided in Figure 2. The median of each variable (domain) is marked by the dark line in the middle of the box. The box represents the interquartile range, which describes where 50% of cases fall around the median (i.e., 25% above and below the median). The distance between the lowest and highest markers delineate the range of scores on the variable, and the numbered circles denote outlier cases. Form B data are best interpreted within the context of local policies and regulatory environments because local policies and regulations tend to vary widely. In other words, the best comparisons for Form B performance are local, and not all indicators in each domain necessarily apply to all organizations given regional variation in policy and regulations.

With that caveat in mind, scores of 4 or higher indicate that most of the desired management practices included in the domain score were present in the setting, whereas a score of 1 indicates the absence of the practice. Overall, 2016 sites reflected moderately-high quality of management practices, with practices supporting individualization scoring lowest. Descriptive data for the 31 Form B items are provided in Appendix Table C-3.

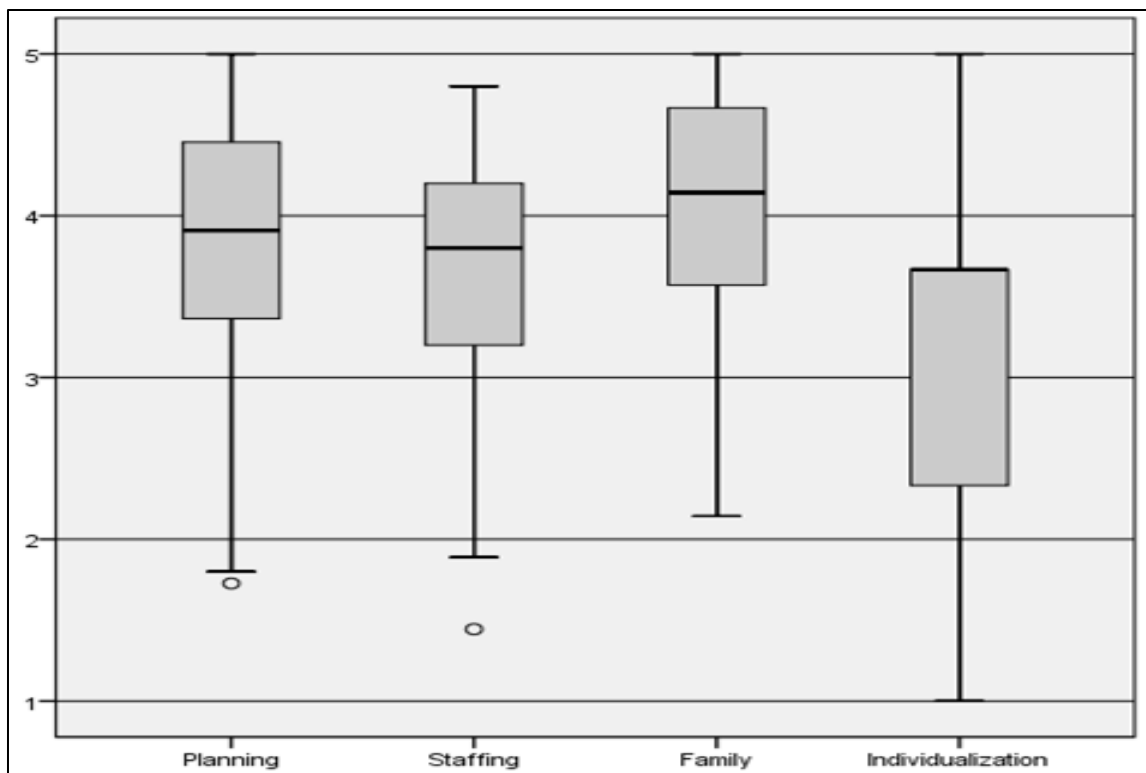


Figure 2. Median Quality of Management Practices in 2016

V. Results for Quality of Instructional Practices

This section describes instructional practices used in summer learning programs. First, a field-wide interpretation of the results is supported by drawing on the complete sample of summer learning settings across the wide range of program designs, public and private auspices, staff expertise, and connections to school-year content. This broad perspective is useful for developing an appreciation of the need for quality improvement in the summer sector and identifying specific instructional practices – and student skill groups that are supported by those practices – that may not be supported sufficiently in summer programs as currently conceived.

Second, the results for change in quality from 2015 to 2016 are presented, drawing on data from 46 sites that implemented the SLPQI in both years. According to the SLPQI theory of change, implementation of the SLPQI at high fidelity should improve the quality of instruction available in summer settings where SLPQI is implemented over multiple summer cycles.

Quality of Instructional Practice, Field Perspective

To best understand “quality in the field” of summer learning settings, we constructed a data file consisting of the 245 independent observational ratings available in the 2015 and 2016 years.

Four Domains of Quality, Plus Math and Literacy Scales

The third panel of Table 2 refers to measures of performance at the POS level. Measures at this level describe staff practices assessed in each of four domains of instructional quality: Safe Environment, Supportive Environment, Interaction, and Engagement. POS-level measures of instructional quality also include indexes for the presence of domain-specific Math Practices and Literacy Practices.

Figure 3 presents the SLPQA median scores for the four domains and two academic practice indexes. These scores represent overall quality of summer learning services available in the three cities in summer 2016. A score of 4 or higher indicates that most of the desired instructional practices included in the domain score were present in the setting, whereas a score of 1 indicates the absence of the practice. On average, summer learning settings are safe and support skill building with both more exploratory and more direct-scaffolding types of instruction. However, social and executive skills (e.g., planning, reflection) are less well supported. Finally, not all summer learning programs included explicit math or literacy practices. Descriptive information for all item, scale, domain, and total scores associated with Figure 3 is provided in Appendix C.

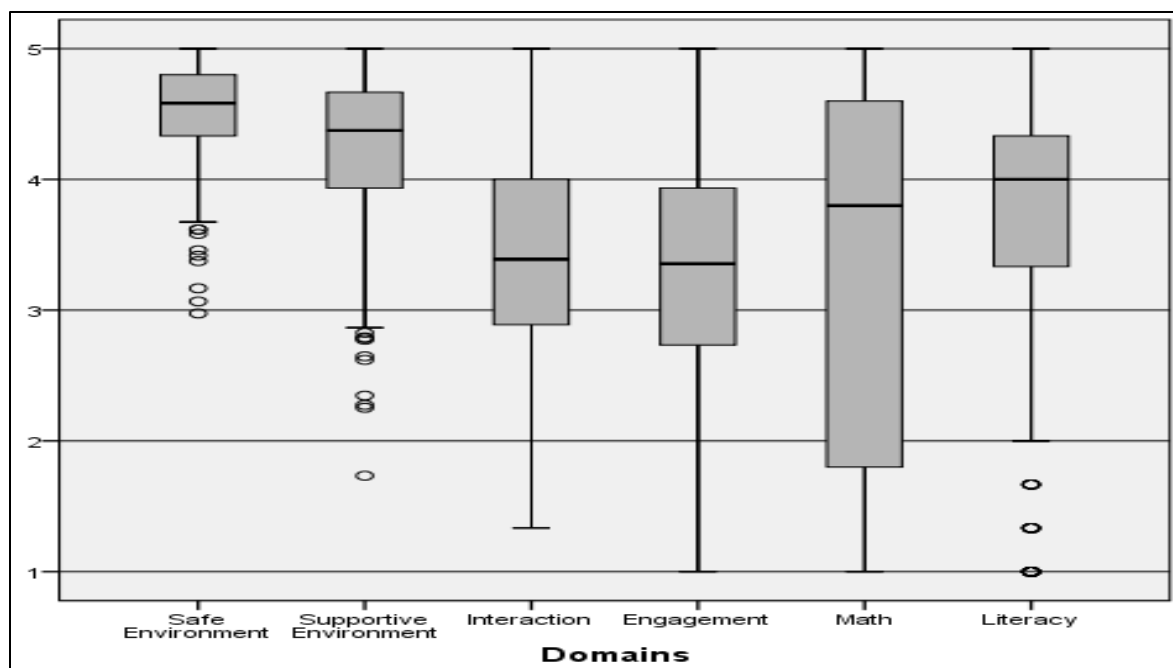


Figure 3. Quality of Instructional Practices All Years, Academic and Enrichment (N = 425)

Low-Scoring Items

Table 11 presents a selection of the lowest-scoring items across the 245 ratings for 2015 and 2016. Staff practices identified in the table were not present during 30% or more of those sessions. The infrequent opportunities for “examine actions and consequences,” “suggest solutions,” “express in writing,” “staff seek youth input,” “make plans,” provide feedback,” and “intentional reflection” suggest that summer programs could seek to add practice and curriculum elements related to means-ends thinking, reflection, and other forms of executive functioning. Infrequent opportunities for “use reasoning to evaluate,” “link concrete examples,” and “identify learning strategy” suggest the need for greater emphasis on learning strategies.⁹

Table 11. Low-Scoring SLPQA Items

Item	Short Name	Percentage Scoring "1"
Y.RC.3**	(Y) Youth examine actions and consequences	73%
Y.Ld.3	(Y) All youth lead group	72%
SA.MF.4**	(SA) Children suggest solutions	64%
Y.RC.2**	(Y) Staff seeks youth input	53%
Lit.3	Staff encourage expression in writing	53%

⁹ Appendix C, Table C-2, presents information for the PQA Form A measures for quality of greetings, transitions, and departures – another important aspect of classroom quality and student experience.

Item	Short Name	Percentage Scoring "1"
Y.Pn.1	(Y) Opportunities to make plans	52%
Rf.3	Structured opportunities to provide feedback	47%
Y.RC.4**	(Y) Staff acknowledges and follows up	46%
Math.3	Use reasoning to evaluate	45%
Math.4	Linking concrete examples	43%
A.LL.2	(A) Staff has youth identify learning strategy	42%
Rf.1	Intentional reflection	41%
Y.Co.2	(Y) Interdependent roles	37%
SA.MF.1**	(SA) Staff acknowledges feelings	37%
Y.AE.4	(Y) Tangible products or performances	36%
Math.5	Support the conveying of concepts	36%
SA.Ld.2	(SA) Opportunities to help another child	33%
SA.MF.2**	(SA) Staff asks children to explain situation	32%
SL.Be.6	(SL) Values communicated and integrated	31%

* This item was scored in less than 50% of offerings

** This item was scored in less than 25% of offerings

Profiles of Instructional Practices

Although the prevalence of specific types of practice is informative for thinking about program design and improvement goals, other policy-relevant questions can be addressed best by considering the prevalence of patterns, or profiles, of instructional practices; that is, by using simultaneously all of the data on instructional practices to identify, for example, groups of sites that do not achieve high quality on any of the measures. These lower-performing sites may not be producing positive effects on student learning and are obvious targets for lower-stakes QIS policies.

Figure 4 presents results from a cluster analysis¹⁰ using data for instructional quality in the three domains described in the third panel of Table 2 (i.e., Supportive Environment, Interaction, and Engagement). The distribution of the three profiles of instructional practices shown in Figure 4 indicates that 20% of summer settings were characterized by the lowest-performing profiles and 37% were characterized by the highest-performing profiles.

¹⁰ A hierarchical cluster analysis (using Ward's method on squared Euclidean distances), followed by *k*-means relocation analysis, was conducted using the ROPstat (version 2.0) statistical package for pattern-oriented analyses (Vargha, Torma, & Bergman, 2015) to identify relatively-homogeneous subgroups of sites based on profiles of the three instructional PQA domain scores in 2016. The analysis revealed that a 3-cluster solution was the most parsimonious and yielded meaningful profile interpretations. Full analytic details are available upon request.

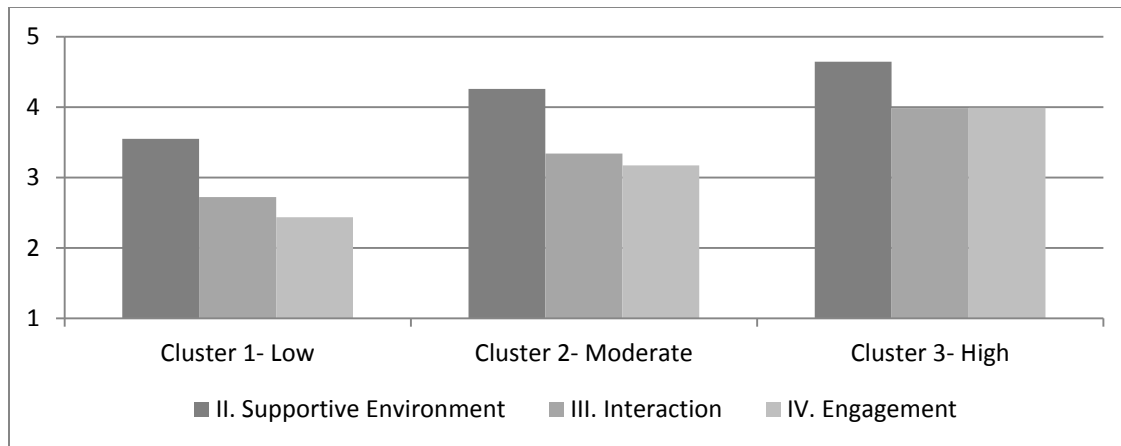


Figure 4. Profiles of Instructional Practices

In Table 12, we present characteristics of the three 2016 profiles of instructional practices. *Higher-performing sites* tend to be located in City C, tend not to offer academic enrichment in the afternoon, tend to be located in schools, and are more informed about student’s school year achievement. Interestingly, the high-quality instruction subgroup reported lower levels of SLPQI implementation than the lower-quality subgroups, possibly indicating a rational choice by higher-performing sites to focus less on improvement.¹¹ The high-performing sites are considered high because scores of 4 or more in all three domains indicate that most of the instructional practices identified in the Summer Learning PQA are present on an average day of programming.

Lower-performing sites tended to be located in City A, tended to offer full-day programming with enrichment, were most frequently located in community-based organizations, and were moderately informed about student’s school year achievement. The low-performing sites are of concern because they fail to provide basic supports for skill building, positive emotionality, and executive functions.

Table 12. Profiles of Instructional Practices by City, Program Structure, Auspice, Benchmarks for SLPQI Fidelity, and School Connection

	% within Cluster 1 - Low	% within Cluster 2 - Moderate	% within Cluster 3 - High
City A	57	22	5
City B	24	22	8
City C	19	57	87

¹¹ However, also impactful here was the relative latecomer status of City C to the project (joining the SLPQI study in 2016) that may have had the effect of lower implementation fidelity because summer sites in City C were less well connected to the technical partners or the quality intermediary organization.

	% within Cluster 1 - Low	% within Cluster 2 - Moderate	% within Cluster 3 - High
Full Day Only	67	61	36
Morning Only	5	24	59
CBO Sites	91	80	60
School District Sites	10	20	41
Above School Connection Benchmark	5	17	42

Change in Quality of Instruction from 2015 to 2016

The Instructional Total Score (ITS) for the PQA Form A is a composite score constructed from 42 items in 12 scales across three domains for which the average is taken to produce the total score. With sufficient observation time, this rating can be used to reliably differentiate between summer settings and between time points for the same setting (Smith, 2013). This section presents results for analyses of change in the ITS from 2015 and 2016 in a subsample of 46 sites for which we had data for both years. The ITS increased significantly from 3.58 in 2015 to 3.82 in 2016 ($p = .004$; $d = .64$). ITS in 2015 and 2016 were normally distributed, displayed homogenous variances, and are shown in Figure 6.

To better understand which sites improved the most, cluster analyses methods were used to identify four performance subgroups in the 2015 data.¹² As shown in Figure 7, the average ITS for sites in the Low cluster ($n = 8$) increased from 2.79 to 3.71 ($p < .001$; $d = 2.79$). Comparison of profile memberships across 2015 and 2016 indicate that, on average, sites in the two low-performing clusters, particularly in the lowest-performing cluster, increased their ITS, whereas sites in the two highest-performing clusters stayed about the same.

¹² A hierarchical cluster analysis (using Ward's method on squared Euclidean distances), followed by k -means relocation analysis, was run using the ROPstat (version 2.0) statistical package for pattern-oriented analyses (Vargha et al., 2015) to identify low-performing sites based on the score of the four PQA domains in 2015. The analysis revealed that a 4-cluster solution was the most parsimonious and yielded meaningful profile interpretations. Full analytic details are available upon request.

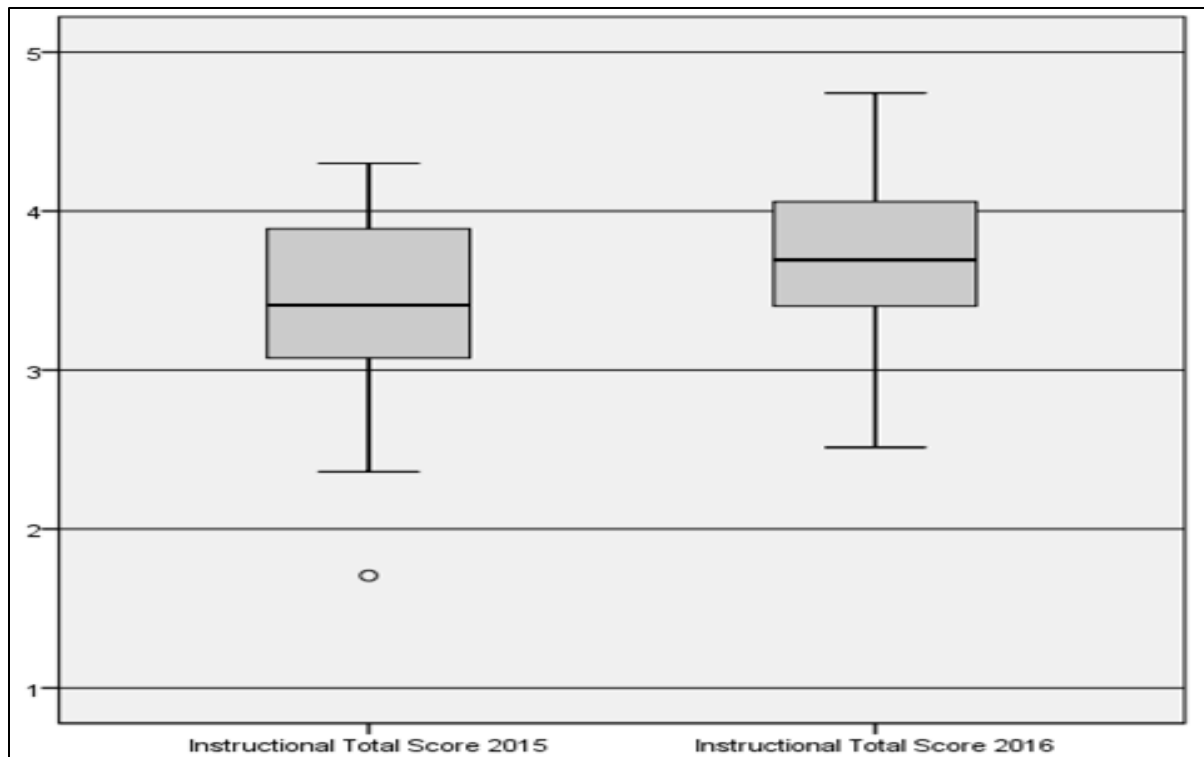


Figure 6. Instructional Total Score for sites in 2015 and 2016

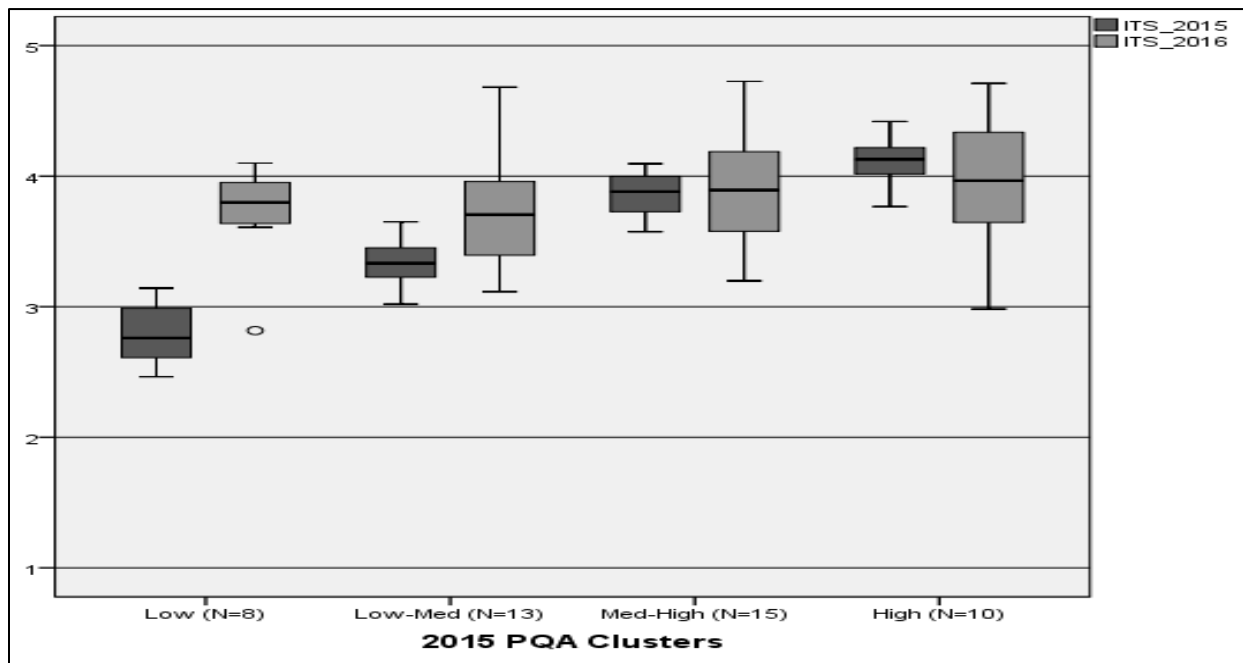


Figure 7. Instructional Total Score Change from 2015 to 2016 by Profiles of Instructional Practices

Instructional Innovation During the SLPQI

In order to better understand the effect of SLPQI on the quality of instruction (e.g., teaching practices, curriculum, or youth's learning experiences), we conducted qualitative analyses of interview data from staff. This interview information is important given the short duration of the summer session and the rapid turnaround time necessary for participants to receive the Summary Report and the assessor-coach visit early in the summer session. In 2016, 64% of site managers said this feedback visit was the most valuable part of the SLPQI, and 78% reported coaching their staff based on the results of the Summary Report. When asked "How did instruction change as a result of participation in the SLPQI?" Eighty percent of the site managers who coached staff reported that there were resulting innovations in instruction.

Twelve instructional staff were either self-nominated or recommended by their site manager to participate in an interview at the end of the summer 2016 sessions. Four staff from each of the three cities were selected from a pool of nominees from sites that also had high SLPQI fidelity ratings. The specific questions from the interviews focused on staff experience with the SLPQI and staff assessment of the SLPQI impact on instruction during the 2016 summer session. Our qualitative method involved three steps: (a) conducting a structured interview with each staff, (b) conducting thematic analyses to summarize the major types of innovation that staff described, and finally, and (c) identification of at least one primary instructional innovation discussed in each of the twelve interviews.

Tables 13 summarizes the results of the thematic analyses. Across the twelve interviews, some of the changes reported involved improvements in staff planning practices and learning experiences. However, all of the staff interviewed were able to describe benefits for youth resulting from the innovations or adjustments they made. Several staff reported improved behavior; for example, the innovation or adjustment cut down on behavioral issues because youth had a role, or it reduced recess and lunch conflicts because staff were more actively involved and supervising. Some staff reported that youth experienced a greater sense of belonging or had more fun.

The specific themes, and their definitions in terms of the interview content, suggested that participation in SLPQI provided the following benefits:

- Staff found the need to be more intentional about planning their objectives and trainings.
- The SLPQI incentivizes learning because it raises standards and creates opportunities for intentional reflection.
- A common framework helped staff to discuss and evaluate their program using a common language.
- More opportunities for student choice and voice improved student engagement, behavior, and retention.

Table 13. Themes and Exemplary Quotations from Staff interviews

Incentivizes intentional planning	Incentivizes Staff Learning & Innovation	Common framework for staff and students	Improvement in student engagement, behavior and retention
It (SLPQI data) kind of put a mirror in front of my eyes saying "Hey guys, that's what you do." And we said, "Okay, we would like it to look a little different."	"The reason we are so confident that we can do Math better is because Reading worked(SLPQI goal from previous year)"	"The whole assessment allowed me to name, label and identify those points of my program- like the good, the bad, what do you work on. And it allowed me to just kind of be more intentional about improving my program."	"One of the first things that I see when the kids really enjoy something is just a huge drop in needing to manage behavior."
"Just because you know everything was so hectic in the beginning that having another set of eyes really made us see what we were missing"	"I appreciate the standards that it sets. And it has introduced me to some better practices".	"It's a good way to have a common language among youth workers... I like having a similar language and being intentional about how we program and what the benefits are. I like the commonality and the intentionality it creates".	"I definitely think the students felt more engaged in the class. I don't know how it affected them overall but I think it affected their kind of behavior in the class... They were more willing to participate."
"But after the evaluation just to have specific objectives and specific goals for them (assistants) to focus on was really good. ...It definitely grew deeper relationships with the kids- and be more purposeful with their learning."	"The YPQA process has really taken me to-out of my comfort zone as far as teaching things and doing activities that the kids tell me they enjoy, even if it is not something I'm very good at. I take the time to learn it now so I make it so I can teach it."	"(The Assessments) started conversation and it kind of brought us on board... I think that really kind of opened our eyes to say" Okay we have this tool we can use and we can do it on an in level and we can have people externally who come out and let us know what they see."	"I have been a part of summer program and attendance would dwindle a bit but it remained steady. And I think partly because you know how were able to use what we observed (data) and stuff to change."
"We found that we need to be more intentional about the kind of training that we offer our staff prior to the summer just to make sure some of these missed areas are included prior to the summer starting just so everybody is on the same page."	"It was a good way to position me to reflect on my own teaching, which doesn't always happen during the summer programs because they tend to be so short. It feels like it is just starting and then it is over so having some intentional reflection felt really good."	"They felt more confident about leading activities. So we did a lot of you know one on one conversations. Especially me, the director, sat with the youth and had one-on one conversations about improvement and how it goes, what's wrong, what's good, how we can improve what we do and give them lots of feedback"	

Table 14 provides a summary of specific instructional-quality improvements (e.g., teaching practice, curriculum, and youth's learning experience) resulting from of each interviewee's involvement with the SLPQI. For each improvement, the table provides a description of the specific innovation, a relevant quotation for that innovation, and the corresponding PQA domain to which the innovation applies. From these alignments, it is possible to extrapolate to the student skills that the innovation supports. It appears that the primary innovations were focused on students' executive function skills (e.g., reflection and and planning), motivation management skills (e.g., choice and leadership), and basic emotional regulation (e.g., emotional safety and belonging).

Table 14. Specific Improvements in the Quality of Instruction During the Summer Session

Innovation	Description of Innovation	Impacts on teaching practice, curriculum and youth's learning experience	Alignment with PQA
Teacher-Student combined book creation	Teachers collaborate with students to create their own books for reading	"The book idea was a great way to encourage them." "Once you make it (books) their own they will be more likely to read."	Leadership, Collaboration Planning, Choice
Tally	Students reflect on the session completed with three choices "They did not like it", "They were okay with it" or "They Loved it"		Reflection Active Engagement
Line on a Barometer	Students reflect on their session by lining up on a Board Barometer divided into "loved it", "I am Neutral" and "I don't get it/I didn't like it"	"Trying to improve the environment for our students and make them feel welcome and have those good relationships with adults."	Reflection Active Engagement
Surveys, registration sign ups	Students are provided with content/project choices through surveys and sign up for registration with no set of required classes.	"I think the students felt more engaged in the class...but I think it affected their kind of behavior in class" "Affected the participation level of students who were just used to sitting on sidelines."	Choice Planning
Round Robin	Students do a Round Robin reflecting on things they have learnt		Reflection Active Engagement
Short journals	Short journals on things learnt when the content is dense. Discussion on what they have learnt and how to use that in day to day lives.	"Provide opportunities for their curriculum development time. We did not really have that set aside prior to this assessment so we were able to kind of implement more time in the day."	Active Engagement Reflection
Techperts	A group of students assigned as Techperts who are the teacher's first		Adult Partners Leadership

Innovation	Description of Innovation	Impacts on teaching practice, curriculum and youth's learning experience	Alignment with PQA
Popcorn	defense when it comes to small technical problems One idea of what you reflected today. If the content is dense, the reflection strategy is more in depth.		Reflection Active Engagement
Money Matters	Money Matters-Learning about credits, understanding bank accounts, savings and checking. Part of regular school-Focused more during the summer after the assessment.	Learning about credits, understanding bank accounts, savings and checking accounts.	Active Engagement Planning Adult Partners
Learn five names	Teachers have a notebook to write at least five names of students and as they learn cross them out to learn the next five.		Warm Welcome Emotional Safety Belonging
Cahoot quiz	Students create their own quiz using class content and compete with each other.		Planning Choice Active Engagement
Legos	Students build their group Legos based on their choice and solve a problem given by the teacher in connection to what they are building.	"The YPQA process has really taken me to-out of my comfort zone as far as teaching things and doing activities that the kids tell me they enjoy even if it is not something I 'm very good at. I take the time to learn it now so I make it so I can teach it.	Active Engagement Choice Planning Collaboration Skill Building

Quality and Academic Skill Growth

According to the SLPQI theory of change, students who participate in summer settings with higher-quality instruction, as defined by PQA Form A, will gain more academic skills compared to students who participate in lower quality settings. At one of the study cities in 2015 ($n = 30$ summer classrooms) and 2016 ($n = 60$ summer classrooms), several academic skill assessments were administered to summer students at baseline and a second time point. Multiple observational ratings were also produced for each sample of classrooms, producing more reliable information about instructional practices. Findings to date for both the 2015 and 2016 summer sessions suggest that participating in high-performing summer classrooms (e.g., the High profile shown in Figure 4) results in greater skill gains for both math and literacy compared to students participating in summer classrooms in lower-performing summer classrooms (e.g., the Low profile shown in Figure 4). Detailed findings are available in two reports (see Note 7). Additional findings will follow receipt of school day achievement, grades, and behavior data for the 2016-2017 school year.

VI. Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

The *Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention* (SLPQI) is a continuous improvement intervention for summer learning systems and settings. The intervention includes: (a) standards and measures for high-quality instructional practice and student skill growth anchored by the Summer Learning PQA, (b) data products and technology that support meaningful feedback to summer managers and teachers, (c) a plan-assess-improve cycle adapted to operations at each summer site, and (d) training and technical assistance necessary to implement the prior three parts. The SLPQI and Summer Learning PQA focus on instructional practices that build student skills in summer and increase school success in subsequent school-years.

The SLPQI has been the subject of a four year design study involving 152 summer learning providers in seven cities. In the final year of the study, SLPQI was implemented in three citywide summer learning networks in Denver, CO; St. Paul, MN; and Seattle, WA ($N = 106$ sites). This final report presents final specification of the SLPQI design, supports, measures, and performance benchmarks for implementation fidelity, instructional quality, and student skill growth.

Key Findings from 2016

The SLPQI was implemented at moderate to high fidelity, at scale, in three citywide systems with local provision of training and technical assistance supports. The proportion of sites implementing the SLPQI at high fidelity (i.e., in at least three of the four planning, assessing, coaching, and training steps) was high in all three systems. In each city, partnerships of a local quality intermediary organization, the public school district, city agencies, and numerous community-based providers developed sufficient capacity to support the intervention at scale in multiple sites. School districts were sufficiently connected to private providers to supply information about students' success in the prior school year to a majority of non-school sites.

Summer program staff positively valued the SLPQI; in particular, the assessor-coach role. Participants in the SLPQI (e.g., system leaders, site managers, and assessors) felt that the Summer Learning PQA successfully differentiated between higher- and lower-quality settings and that implementation of the SLPQI was a good use of their time and a good fit with their work. In particular, staff valued the assessor-coach who observed, generated performance feedback, and provided coaching.

Performance data indicate that instructional quality and student outcomes improved as predicted by the SLPQI theory of change. Performance data from the three citywide systems indicate that instructional quality improved from 2015 to 2016. Lower-performing sites improved the most, whereas higher-performing sites sustained high quality over two years. Instructional innovations were focused on areas of low quality (e.g., student management of their own executive skills, motivation, and emotions) and, importantly, these are skills that support academic learning in all contexts. In the one city that

collected academic performance data, students in higher-quality summer settings had greater academic skill gains in both 2015 and 2016 compared to students participating in lower-quality summer settings.

Recommendations

In each city, a partnership of quality intermediary organizations, public school districts, city recreation departments, and numerous community-based providers joined to improve the quality of summer instructional services over the course of two summers. Based on this experience and the study findings, we offer the following three recommendations related to dissemination of the SLPQI:

Disseminate the SLPQI to partnerships between regional funders, OST intermediary organizations, school districts, and networks of summer program providers. The SLPQI is designed for use with public-private partnerships that include providers, a quality intermediary organization, and funders. The SLPQI can be scaled quickly and efficiently in cities that have these summer partnerships in place.

Disseminate the SLPQI as a summer system-building initiative for individual school districts. The SLPQI requires coordinated action from system-level actors, making the intervention good for building summer service systems. In each city participating in the study, the network of service providers included public schools, city agencies, community-based organizations, quality improvement organizations, funders, and students and families who used the summer services. Adopting the SLPQI successfully brought actors together around a common vision for summer instruction and coordinated action and substantial resources among all of the actors to deliver that vision. The SLPQI is a method for building summer learning systems that should be valuable for school districts interested in building a summer learning partnership as part of their ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) compliance plan.

Weikart Center should continue to seek support for validation work on the Program Quality Assessment. PQA Form A observational measures are ready for widespread use to help programs identify staff training needs and develop effective program improvement plans. However, the SLPQI design study has also dovetailed with work on a PQA Form A reconfigured to address social and emotional learning (SEL). We are now in a position to validate a new version of the PQA measure that would extend from emphases on exploratory, direct skill scaffolding, and learning strategy methods present in the Summer Learning PQA to include assessment of practices for students who have had difficult SEL histories.¹³

Pursue funding for an efficacy trial. Based on the prior four year design study sequence (see footnote 1, above; IES, 2013), we have met all criteria recommended as a foundation for an efficacy trial¹⁴ design (IES, 2013). The SLPQI is ready to be tested using a randomized design, and because the

¹³ See the discussion at the end of Appendix C.

¹⁴ Efficacy Research should be justified by one or more of the following: (a) empirical evidence of the promise of the intervention from a well-designed and implemented pilot study (e.g., a study conducted as part of a design and development project); (b) empirical evidence from at least one well-designed and implemented Early-Stage or

structure of summer learning experience is much simpler than school year learning (i.e., teasing apart the different effects from afterschool and school day learning), summer programming is an ideal place to test the impact of access to high-quality instruction on academic skills and SEL skills that support academic learning.

Exploratory Research study supporting all the critical links in the intervention's theory of action; (c) evidence that the intervention is widely used, even though it has not been adequately evaluated to determine its efficacy; or (d) if the intent is to replicate an evaluation of an intervention with a different population and there is evidence of favorable impacts from a previous well-designed and implemented efficacy study and justification for studying the intervention with the new target population.

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Appendix A – 2016 SLPQI Performance Benchmarks

Tables A-1 and A-2 present performance benchmarks at the system (e.g., network) organization (e.g., site) and point of service (e.g., classroom) levels. These key indicators of performance – (1) system-level supports, (2) site level implementation of the SLPQI cycle, (3) prevalence of instructional practices at the POS level, and (4) student skill gains both during the summer session and in (5) subsequent school day classrooms – empirically represent the cascade of effects described in the SLPQI theory of change.

When aggregated to the system level, these benchmarks provide a policy-relevant perspective on regional performance and support leaders to strategize about investment and improvement. The system level of aggregation can also be used for normative comparison with summer systems in other places.

When disaggregated to the site level, the benchmarks provide within-system performance norms for implementation fidelity of SLPQI, the quality of instruction available to specific groups of students, and proportion of those students making gains in desired skills. Appendix Table A-1 summarizes the benchmarks across the three systems (at the “field” level). Table A-2 provides benchmark data for each of the three summer systems for the 2016 year.

Table A-1. Multi-level Performance Objectives, Data Source and Benchmarks

Performance Objective	Benchmark	Data Source
<i>System-Level</i>		
Rater reliability	100% of raters reliable	Project records
Report timeliness	100% of reports on time	
<i>Organization-Level</i>		
SLPQI Fidelity	Implement 3 of 4 SLPQI parts	Site manager survey
Staff Valuation	Site manager score ≥ 4.5	
School Year Connection	Site manager score ≥ 3.67	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit academic risk Review academic skill data 		
<i>Point of Service-Level</i>		
Comprehensive rating for quality of instructional setting and practices; an overall quality rating for the site	PQA ITS Score ≥ 4.1 ; Score change $\geq .33$ if in low quartile at baseline.	PQA Form A
<i>Student Skill Change</i>		
Rate student skills at two time points and describe growth	Effect size depends on skill assessment; Cohen’s <i>d</i> type effect size range: $d=.3-.7$	Summer data
<i>Student Skill Transfer</i>		
Compare students by exposure to high quality, low quality, or no summer program	Effect size depends on skill assessment; TBD	School data

Table A-2. Benchmarks for SLPQI by City

Benchmark Name	Raw Score for Whole Sample	Raw Score by City	Benchmark Definition Notes
Implementation Fidelity N=104	70%	City A – 79% City B – 79% City C – 62%	Implementation Index; percent of programs that scored a 3 or above based on the sum of 4 implementation indicators.
Instructional Quality N=425	4.12	City A – 3.56 City B – 4.01 City C – 4.26	
Staff Value SLQPI N=104	4.50	City A – 4.00 City B – 4.50 City C – 4.50	
School Connection N=104	3.67	City A – 3.67 City B – 2.50 City C – 4.25	Average of items (1) Good use of time and (2) good fit; bottom of top quartile
			Average of scale scores for Targeting Academic Risk and Student Data; bottom of top quartile;

Appendix B – Notes on the SLPQI Design Adjustments since the 2015 report

Although most of the design work on the SLPQI occurred prior to 2016 (i.e., the final year of the study), improvement of the intervention design and supports remained a goal throughout the project period. In this section, we describe adjustments that were made to the SLPQI design and supports through the 2016 cycle. Many of these updates are a continuation of more substantial changes made in 2015.

- We made critical improvements to the SLPQI design to make it more effective, including assessors serving as coaches and improving the timing and quality of performance feedback. Additional improvements were made after the 2015 cycle, including improved trainings, a revised and flexible Form B, and use of the Online Scores Reporter.
- Based on this feedback, for 2016, the training agenda was revised to focus more on the tool itself and provide participants with clear opportunities to explore the items, especially the Form B items on quality management, and make plans for the coming summer.
- We have found that training assessors in how to conduct these sessions is as important as training them in using the SLPQA. For Phase III, this training was integrated into the Quality Coaching session for the participating networks. We will continue to include this training as part of the full SLPQI suite of supports.
- In addition to the supports described for Phase II, Phase III included several improvements to training and technical assistance, including:
 - Denver and St. Paul network leaders were brought together several times by the Weikart Project Manager to share their experiences and reflections.
 - An adaptation of the Quality Instructional Coaching training for assessor-coaches was piloted in St. Paul.
 - Planning with Data workshops, which were held in September, asked program managers to use 2015 summer data to plan for the 2016 school year. The intention was to use 2015's improvement plans as a point of reference and planning for the 2016 cycle.
 - Performance report recommendations were not automated but generated by the assessor-coach with the intention of providing sites with a more personalized experience.
 - The professional learning community was formalized and expanded to include School's Out Washington and Seattle Public Schools with support from the Raikes Foundation. NSLA facilitated quarterly calls and meetings at the Forum for Youth Investment's National Meeting and NSLA's annual conference.
 - The Summer Learning Institute training underwent substantial revisions to further improve the experience for participants.

- The assessor-coach module piloted in 2015 was integrated into the Quality Coaching trainings in Denver and Seattle.
- All data collection and reporting was done in the Online Scores Reporter.

Appendix C – Summer Learning PQA Measures

This appendix provides descriptive information for the Summer Learning PQA Forms A and B, as well as reliability and validity information for the Form A data. The Summer Learning PQA Form A consists of 74 items nested within 18 scales nested within eight domains (Safety, Supportive Environment, Interaction, Planning-Choice-Reflection, Learning Strategies, Higher Order Thinking, Math and Literacy). Table C-1 provides item, scale, and domain level descriptive information for 269 completed ratings in 106 sites during 2016.

Assessors also completed a checklist related to basic best practices for three transition periods in the program day, greetings, transitions and departures. Table C-2 presents the percent of sites demonstrating each of seventeen transition practices (e.g., children are greeted by staff).

The Summer Learning PQA Form B consists of 13 items nested within four domains (Planning, Staff Training, Family Connections, and Individualization). Table C-3 provides descriptive information for the 106 sites at the item and domain levels and an overall Total Score (average across all four domain scores).

Table C-1. Descriptive Statistics for Summer Learning PQA Form A

	2016 (N = 269)		
	Range	Mean	SD
Safe Environment	1.93	4.55	0.33
<i>Psychological and emotional safety is promoted.</i>	4.00	4.67	0.65
Positive emotional climate	4.00	4.51	0.96
Lack of bias	4.00	4.72	0.85
Removal of Exclusive Behavior	4.00	4.78	0.71
<i>Healthy Environment: The physical environment is safe and free of health hazards.</i>	2.67	4.80	0.47
Free of health and safety hazards	4.00	4.75	0.77
Clean and sanitary	4.00	4.75	0.71
Suitable for all activities	2.00	4.92	0.40
<i>Emergency Procedures: Appropriate emergency procedures and supplies are present.</i>	3.00	4.24	0.66
Posted emergency procedures	4.00	4.34	1.20
Fire extinguisher	4.00	3.76	1.23
First-aid kit	4.00	3.89	1.33
Other safety equipment	4.00	4.78	0.92
Supervised entrances	4.00	4.64	0.90
Supervised access to outdoor space	4.00	4.59	0.97

	2016 (N = 269)		
	Range	Mean	SD
<i>Health and Nutrition: Healthy food and physical activity are provided.</i>	3.00	4.48	0.60
Available drinking water	4.00	4.81	0.62
Plentiful food and drinks	4.00	4.90	0.54
Nutritious food and drink	4.00	4.44	1.00
Dedicated physical activity	4.00	3.80	1.47
Supportive Environment	3.27	4.29	0.55
<i>Warm Welcome: Staff provides a welcoming atmosphere.</i>	3.33	4.60	0.63
Youth Greeted	4.00	4.20	1.32
Staff warm and respectful	4.00	4.76	0.69
Positive staff body language	4.00	4.82	0.60
<i>Program Flow: Session flow is planned, presented and paced for youth.</i>	2.80	4.56	0.53
Sufficient materials	4.00	4.68	0.81
Explains activities clearly	4.00	4.70	0.77
Appropriate time for activities	4.00	4.49	0.98
Multiple types of activities	4.00	4.31	1.14
Consistent routines and guidelines	4.00	4.58	0.95
<i>Active Learning: Activities support active engagement.</i>	4.00	4.10	0.75
Youth engage with materials or ideas	4.00	4.68	0.81
Youth talk about activities	4.00	4.09	1.34
Balance of concrete and abstract	4.00	4.43	1.02
Tangible products or performances	4.00	3.20	1.82
<i>Skill Building and Encouragement: Staff encourages and supports youth in building skills.</i>	4.00	4.09	0.95
Learning focus link to activity	4.00	3.59	1.80
Staff encourages youth to try new skills	4.00	4.21	1.26
Staff model skills	4.00	4.27	1.38
Staff breaks down tasks	4.00	4.30	1.28
Staff monitors difficulty	4.00	4.08	1.32
Staff guide initiative in learning	4.00	4.08	1.37
<i>Reframing Conflict: The staff uses youth-centered approaches to reframe conflict.</i>	4.00	3.13	1.41
Staff approaches calmly	4.00	4.09	1.64
Staff seeks youth input	4.00	2.64	1.75
Youth examine actions and consequences	4.00	2.11	1.45
Staff acknowledges and follows up	4.00	2.75	1.67
<i>Managing Feelings: The staff encourages children to manage feelings and resolve conflicts appropriately.</i>	4.00	3.12	1.51
Staff acknowledges feelings	4.00	3.24	1.76

	2016 (N = 269)		
	Range	Mean	SD
SA Staff asks children to explain situation	4.00	3.39	1.72
SA Helps children respond appropriately	4.00	3.39	1.67
SA Children suggest solutions	4.00	2.16	1.59
	3.50	3.54	0.70
Interaction			
<i>Belonging: Youth have opportunities to develop a sense of belonging.</i>	4.00	3.56	1.17
Opportunities for children to get to know each other	4.00	3.73	1.26
Values communicated and integrated	4.00	3.39	1.70
<i>Collaboration and Leadership: Youth have opportunity to collaborate and work cooperatively with others.</i>	4.00	3.04	0.99
Interdependent roles	4.00	3.39	1.74
Practice group process skills	4.00	4.03	1.39
Opportunities to demonstrate, explain	4.00	2.95	1.54
All youth lead group	4.00	1.75	1.14
<i>Adult Partners: Youth have opportunities to partner with adults.</i>	3.00	4.03	0.77
Staff shares control with youth	4.00	3.32	1.62
Staff actively involved with youth	4.00	4.79	0.64
Staff and youth accountable to expectations	4.00	3.47	1.37
Positive behavior management style	4.00	4.30	1.09
Engagement	3.64	3.48	0.78
<i>Planning, Choice, and Reflection: Youth have opportunity to direct their own learning.</i>	4.00	3.10	0.93
Opportunities to make plans	4.00	2.64	1.68
Content alternatives	4.00	3.36	1.59
Process alternatives	4.00	3.57	1.65
Intentional reflection	4.00	3.26	1.78
Structured opportunities to provide feedback	4.00	2.70	1.70
<i>Learning how to learn: Youth are supported developing learning initiative and persistence.</i>	4.00	3.51	1.04
Problem-solve for improvement	4.00	4.00	1.43
Identify learning strategies	4.00	2.69	1.60
Effort-achievement beliefs	4.00	3.85	1.17
<i>Higher Order Thinking: Youth are supported in developing higher order thinking skills.</i>	4.00	3.82	1.14
Staff encourages youth to deepen knowledge	4.00	3.81	1.59
Connecting activity and other knowledge	4.00	3.60	1.64
Encourage use of creativity, curiosity, or imagination	4.00	4.08	1.24
Total Score	4.00	3.26	1.57
Instructional Total Score	4.00	3.70	1.73
<i>Math: Youth are supported in mathematical problem solving.</i>	4.00	3.58	1.73
Participate in problem solving	4.00	2.86	1.79
Opportunities to apply knowledge and skills	4.00	2.85	1.75
Use reasoning to evaluate	4.00	3.33	1.85
Linking concrete examples	3.00	4.03	0.77

	2016 (N = 269)		
	Range	Mean	SD
Support the conveying of concepts	4.00	3.32	1.62
<i>Literacy: Youth are supported in reading and writing.</i>	4.00	3.80	1.04
Participate in literacy activities	4.00	4.32	1.28
Opportunities to read in multiple settings	4.00	3.98	1.37
Staff encourage expression in writing	4.00	2.69	1.86
Vocabulary discussed	4.00	3.73	1.69
Available materials and reading environment	4.00	3.91	1.45
Multiple reading and writing activities	4.00	4.16	1.41

During the study, checklist data were assembled on a critical aspect of quality: greetings, transitions, and departures. Although time did not allow for further analyses, the data suggest that summer programs in the study were overall quite planful about all transitions into, during, and exiting from the program. However, practices to assure student experiences of a “safe space” and “clarity of expectations” are absent during transitions in 40% or more of summer settings. Also, one third of programs left children unattended during the departure period. Item-level descriptive information is provided in Appendix Table C-2.

Table C-2. Descriptive Statistics for Summer Learning PQA Transition Checklists

	2016 (N = 269)		
	Range	Mean	SD
<i>Greetings - Opening and arrival time</i>	1.00	0.74	0.26
Children greeted by staff	1.00	0.85	0.36
Session starts within 10 minutes of scheduled time	1.00	0.98	0.15
Welcoming activity or icebreaker	1.00	0.61	0.49
Incorporates themes or aspects of program culture	1.00	0.52	0.50
<i>Transitions: Group moves to new activity</i>	1.00	0.68	0.30
Smooth and quick transition times	1.00	0.69	0.46
Clear transition communication	1.00	0.85	0.36
On task and ready for transition	1.00	0.52	0.50
Activity choices clearly communicated	1.00	0.46	0.50
Program lessons incorporated	1.00	0.88	0.32
<i>Departure: When children leave for the day</i>	1.00	0.75	0.21
Organized process	1.00	0.89	0.32
Smooth process	1.00	0.90	0.31
Constructive activities while waiting	1.00	0.85	0.36
Children left unattended	1.00	0.33	0.47
Utilizes parent engagement opportunity	1.00	0.91	0.29
Verification system	1.00	0.91	0.28
Program incorporated	1.00	0.57	0.50

Table C-3. Descriptive Statistics for the 2016 Summer Learning PQA Form B (N = 110 Interviews)

Scale/Item	Range	Mean	SD
<i>Organizational planning</i>	3.27	3.90	0.75
Mission Alignment	4.00	4.33	1.16
Strategic Plan	4.00	3.44	1.70
Strategic Plan Reviewed	4.00	3.06	1.70
Proactive Planning	4.00	3.62	1.41
Goals	4.00	4.15	1.25
Staff Input	4.00	4.42	1.16
Youth Input	4.00	3.33	1.73
Lesson Plan Framework	4.00	3.84	1.40
Data Collection Methods	4.00	4.49	0.99
Stakeholder Groups	4.00	4.11	1.26
Improvement Planning	4.00	3.97	1.32
<i>Staff Training</i>	3.36	3.69	0.78
Staff Retention	4.00	3.46	1.30
Adult - Youth Ratio	4.00	4.15	1.10
Defined Competencies	4.00	3.51	1.69
Training Based On Competencies	4.00	3.50	1.69
Year Around PD	4.00	4.04	1.24
Staff Training	4.00	4.00	1.50
Support for Non-Certified Teachers	4.00	3.42	1.68
Certified Teacher Available	4.00	3.64	1.73
Staff Collaboration	4.00	3.84	1.44
Staff Observation and Feedback	4.00	3.38	1.68
<i>Family Connections</i>	2.86	4.03	0.74
Year-round Contact with Families	4.00	3.59	1.47
Relationship-Building with Families	4.00	3.31	1.56
Family Participation Opportunities	4.00	2.98	1.32
<i>Individualization</i>	4.00	3.29	0.99
Youth Assessment	4.00	3.71	1.70
Individualized, Tailored Instruction	4.00	3.62	1.69
Curriculum Implementation	4.00	4.31	1.25
Average Attendance	4.00	4.36	1.05
Year-Year Retention	4.00	3.56	1.24
Recruitment Criteria	4.00	4.81	0.65
Number of Programming Hours	4.00	3.76	1.33
Interview total average score	2.79	3.73	0.61

Reliability and Validity of the Summer Learning PQA

Evaluating reliability and validity of data from observation-based measures of settings requires cautious application of standard psychometric concepts and tools (Cronbach, Nageswari, & Gleser, 1963; Raudenbush & Sampson, 1999; Seidman, 2012) and careful alignment between (a) the different purposes for which scores will be used and (b) the different methods to determine score reliability and validity. For these reasons, our approach to the assessment of the reliability and validity of Summer Learning PQA consisted of a set of steps, following the Weikart Center's approach to the development of observational measures (Smith, Hallman, et al., 2012), which were designed to maximize our understanding of these complex issues within the limitations imposed by the project budget.

Reliability and validity of the PQA Form A data was addressed more fully in the year-two report for the SLPQI design study (Smith et al 2015). These analyses included 44 unique session ratings collected at 32 programs sites by 18 assessors, with a subsample of paired raters. In that report, findings for reliability and validity of instructional quality data were characterized in the following way:

Precision and meaningfulness of Summer Learning PQA data is promising. The Summer Learning PQA Form A was endorsed by program managers and assessors as effectively describing high-quality instructional practices and differentiating between programs of high and low quality. The results of several reliability analyses indicated that, where multiple ratings from the same site are combined as a composite score, the Form A Instructional Total Score demonstrated adequate consistency across raters and short time periods; that is, there is sufficient consistency within organizations to produce a program-level quality rating. Validity evidence suggested that the Form A scores are associated in the expected direction with several important characteristics of summer learning programs (Smith et al 2015, p. 32).

In Table C-4 we present descriptive statistics for the SLPQA domain and scale scores using the combined total sample of 245 offerings summarized in Figure 3. The final column presents Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for all domain and scale scores. Table C-5 shows the bivariate correlations among the four domains and academic practices scales.

Table C-4. Descriptive and Reliability Statistics for the SLPQA Domain and Scale Scores

Level	Name	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Range	Cronbach's Alpha
Domain	Safe Environment	4.53	0.35	-1.08	1.62	2.03	.53
	Supportive Environment	4.25	0.57	-1.06	1.17	3.27	.92
	Interaction	3.42	0.73	-0.14	-0.61	3.67	.72
	Engagement	3.34	0.80	-0.20	-0.60	4.00	.67
	Math	3.22	1.51	-0.39	-1.41	4.00	.91
	Literacy	3.72	1.06	-1.01	0.44	4.00	.77
Scale	Emotional Safety	4.69	0.65	-2.74	8.88	4.00	.66

Level	Name	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Range	Cronbach's Alpha
	Healthy Environment	4.77	0.49	-3.09	13.15	4.00	.54
	Emergency Procedures	4.20	0.66	-0.97	1.37	4.00	.65
	Health and Nutrition	4.46	0.62	-1.31	1.85	3.00	.29
	Warm Welcome	4.55	0.68	-1.62	2.36	3.33	.49
	Program Flow	4.54	0.53	-1.47	2.31	2.80	.46
	Active Learning	4.07	0.77	-0.85	0.89	4.00	.36
	Skill Building	4.03	0.99	-1.09	0.52	4.00	.77
	Reframing Conflict	2.79	1.33	0.50	-0.90	4.00	.82
	Managing Feelings	2.97	1.45	-0.04	-1.40	4.00	.85
	Belong	3.44	1.18	-0.18	-1.06	4.00	.39
	Collaboration and leadership	2.88	0.98	-0.05	-0.78	4.00	.56
	Adult Partners	3.93	0.78	-0.51	-0.10	4.00	.48
	Planning, Choice, Reflection	2.91	0.98	-0.05	-0.67	4.00	.51
	Learning How to Learn	3.41	1.13	-0.34	-0.76	4.00	.63
	High Order Thinking	3.69	1.13	-0.50	-0.76	4.00	.60

Table C-5. Correlations among SLPQA Domain Scores

Domain	Safe Environment	Supportive Environment	Interaction	Engagement	Math	Literacy
Safe Environment	1	.38	.26	.23	.14	.16
Supportive Environment	.38	1	.59	.65	.48	.38
Interaction	.26	.58	1	.61	.35	.28
Engagement	.23	.65	.61	1	.58	.46
Math	.14	.48	.35	.58	1	.63
Literacy	.16	.38	.28	.46	.63	1

Note: All correlations are significant at the $p < .01$ level (2-tailed)

Note on Recommendation to Continue Validation of the PQA, Form A.

Reliability coefficients for many of the PQA scales and domains are lower than would be preferred. This is due to a measurement challenge that we describe below for clarification. Weikart Center's near-unique position to advance the field of instructional performance assessment is reflected in the third recommendation in the Discussion section of this report – to continue validation work on the PQA Form A. The paragraphs that follow describe the measurement problem and our pending efforts to improve the precision of measurement for instructional practices. We believe that improvements of this sort are critically valuable, as it will facilitate evaluation of specific types of instructional practices for specific subgroups of students, in particular students whose successful learning requires greater supports

due to exposure to stressors during childhood. By introducing more objectivity into the assessment of instructional practices, our ability verify instructional theory will be greatly enhanced. By way of further explanation:

For the PQA Form A, domain and scale scores were created using a standard measurement process: combining responses to construct-specific subsets of items into scale scores (e.g., by calculating means across items) and then combining construct scores into composite scores (e.g., by calculating means across scale scores). This standard measurement process works best where the items and scales function in a *reflective* manner; reflective items each “reflect” the underlying unidimensional construct, such that scores assigned to any given reflective item within a construct scale correspond to similar scores assigned to any other reflective item within a scale.

However, close observation and analysis of PQA items suggests that many PQA items function in a *formative* manner, such that a high score on any of several formative items within a multidimensional scale indicates the presence of a high-quality instructional practice for that scale and does not necessarily require a high score on every formative item (e.g., there are often several different ways to convey a message, and any of these ways is often sufficient without the others).

If PQA items function in both formative and reflective manners, then we may be able to substantially improve the precision of the PQA and its composite scores by explicitly taking these formative and reflective properties into account where creating scale and composite scores (Bollen & Davis, 2009; Coltman et al., 2008; Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006). In addition, properly integrating such multidimensional constructs into more extensive structural equation models (e.g., models containing other predictor and criterion variables) requires specifying measurement models that take such formative and reflective indicators explicitly into account.

For example, one way to ensure that the measurement model for a multidimensional construct is “identified” (i.e., specified in a way that allows for a unique mathematical solution to each of the implied parameters) is to include at least two reflective indicators together with one or more formative indicators (Bollen & Davis, 2009). This criterion calls for a re-assessment of each PQA scale by reference to the formative and reflective properties of the corresponding items composing the original and, in some case, re-conceptualized PQA scales. Consequently, in an effort to increase the precision and validity of both scale and composite scores, we are in the process of examining and revising the PQA scoring system by conducting theoretical, descriptive, predictive validity, and model testing analyses.

Appendix D – SLPQI Implementation by Sites

In this Appendix, we provide SLPQI implementation data by site for the three city networks. A “1” indicates that the implementation element was implemented. This information is summarized in the Implementation Results section of this report.

Table D-1. 2016 SLPQI Implementation Elements by Site as Reported on the Manager Survey

Organization	Site	Summer Institute	Assessor Visit	Coach Staff	Improvement Plan
<u>Denver</u>					
BGCMD	Arthur Johnson Club	1	1	1	1
BGCMD	Broncos	1	1	1	1
BGCMD	FoJoGo	1	1	1	1
BGCMD	Cole Beacons		1	1	1
BGCMD	Boettcher Club	1	1	1	
BGCMD	Cope Club	1	1	1	
DELCS DPS	Summer Slam	1	1	1	1
DELCS DPS	High Tech		1	1	1
DELCS DPS	Kaiser Neighborhood Center	1	1	1	1
DELCS DPS	Southmoor	1	1	1	1
DELCS DPS	Swigert Neighborhood Center	1	1	1	1
Denver Parks and Rec	City Park		1	1	
Denver Parks and Rec	Sloan's Lake		1	1	
DU Bridge Project	Westwood	1	1		
DU Bridge Project	Quigg Newton		1	1	1
DU Bridge Project	Columbine	1	1	1	1
DU Bridge Project	Lincoln Park	1	1	1	1
Mi Casa	Mi Casa Lake Campus	1	1	1	1
OpenWorld Learning	OWL Eagleton		1	1	1
Summer Scholars	SS Ashley	1	1		
Summer Scholars	SS Stedman	1	1	1	1
Summer Scholars	SS Florida Pitt Waller		1	1	1
YMCA	Omar D Blair	1	1		1
YMCA	Wyatt Academy	1	1	1	
<u>St. Paul</u>					
SPPS OST	21st Century	1	1	1	
Operation Neighborhood	Ames Lake		1		1
Breakthrough Saint Paul	Breakthrough Saint Paul Site	1	1		
Sabo Center for	Center for Democracy	1	1		

Organization	Site	Summer Institute	Assessor Visit	Coach Staff	Improvement Plan
Democracy and Citizenship	and Citizenship Site				
ComMUSICation	ComMUSICation Site		1	1	1
Conservation Corps	Conservation Corps Site	1	1	1	1
Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul	Department of Indian Work	1	1	1	
The Sanneh Foundation	Dreamline	1	1	1	1
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation	East	1	1	1	
Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center	FWTEC	1	1	1	1
Good Neighbor Center	Good Neighbor Center Site	1	1		1
YWCA of Minneapolis	Mpls (YMCA)	1	1	1	1
YMCA of Minneapolis	Mpls (YWCA)	1	1	1	1
Roseville Area Schools	Roseville	1	1	1	1
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation	South	1	1	1	1
Saint Paul Urban Tennis	SPUT				
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation	West	1	1	1	1
<u>Seattle</u>					
Community - Pierce	Baker Middle School		1	1	
SLPQA DEEL (City of Seattle)	CISC Afterschool	1	1	1	
SLPQA DEEL (City of Seattle)	CISC Afterschool		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (City of Seattle)	CISC Afterschool	1	1	1	1
Community - Pierce	Communities In Schools of Lakewood	1	1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL	Denise Louie - Beacon Hill	1	1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL	Denise Louie - International District		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (Community)	Denny Middle School		1		
SLPQA RoadMap	EACS - New Holly - Classroom 2 SSCC				
Community - Pierce (Raikes Pierce County)	Fab 5	1	1	1	1
Community - Pierce	FCMS Eagle Center - Summer Learning and Enrichment Academy	1		1	1
Community - Pierce	Hilltop Artists	1	1		

Organization	Site	Summer Institute	Assessor Visit	Coach Staff	Improvement Plan
Community - Pierce	Hilltop Artists		1	1	
SLPQA RoadMap	Neighborhood House - Burndale	1	1	1	1
SLPQA RoadMap	Neighborhood House - Seola Gardens		1	1	1
Community - Pierce (Raikes Pierce County)	Northwest Leadership Foundation	1	1	1	1
Community - Pierce	Parents and Students in Action - The Youth Connection		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (Community)	Seattle Parks and Recreation - Aki Kurose Middle School	1	1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (Community)	Seattle Parks and Recreation - North Hub at McClure	1	1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (Community)	Seattle Parks and Recreation - South Hub at Mercer		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL	Sound Child Care - RIFC		1	1	
SLPQA DEEL	Sound Child Care - RIFC		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL	SPS - HS Credit Retrieval Program - Roosevelt HS	1	1		
SLPQA RoadMap (Boys and Girls Club of King County)	SRV Childcare		1	1	
SLPQA RoadMap	SWYFS - Arbor Heights	1	1	1	
SLPQA RoadMap	SWYFS - Windsor Heights		1		
SLPQA RoadMap	SWYFS - Woodridge Park	1	1	1	
SLPQA DEEL	UW - Native Youth Enrichment Program	1	1		
SLPQA DEEL (Community)	Washington Middle School		1	1	1
SLPQA DEEL (Raikes King County)	Woodland Park Zoo	1	1		
SLPQA DEEL	YMCA - Y.U. Learn Jams Nathan Hale H.S.			1	
SLPQA RoadMap	YMCA of Greater Seattle - Beacon Hill Elementary		1		
SLPQA RoadMap	YMCA of Greater Seattle - Summer Language Journey	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools					

Organization	Site	Summer Institute	Assessor Visit	Coach Staff	Improvement Plan
Seattle Public Schools	Roxhill Site	1	1		
Seattle Public Schools	West Seattle Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	BF Day Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	John Rogers Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Sand Point Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Graham Hill/South Shore Site				
Seattle Public Schools	Viewlands Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Olympic Hills Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Highland Park Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Dearborn Park Site	1	1		
Seattle Public Schools	John Muir Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	MLK Jr. Elementary Site	1	1	1	1
Seattle Public Schools	Northgate Site	1	1		
Seattle Public Schools	Hawthorn Elementary	1	1	1	

Appendix E – Site Manager Responses to Open-Ended Questions

In this appendix we provide text responses to two questions “What aspect of your experience with the SLPQI was most valuable?” and “Please share any additional thoughts you may have about any aspect of your experience with the Summer Learning PQI” (see Tables E-1 and E-2).

Table E-1. “What aspect of your experience with the SLPQI was most valuable?”

Open-Ended Responses
City A
Speaking with my external assessor to look at our report and discussing next steps.
Coaching conversations with assessor.
Seeing staff and students grow in areas that needed to be.
It Is hard in such a short time and for a first year program to establish goals and implement them.
It allowed us to focus on some of the higher level aspects of the pyramid, and tie it in to our program when applicable.
The SLPQI process makes the work with the youth intentional.
Coaching.
Assessors’ observations and feedback were very useful in validating a few of my own observations and pointing out a few different ones. He was very supportive and offered to help in way he could which I really appreciated.
Visiting with the Assessor.
Seeing an outside perspective of how to improve the programming.
The summary and feedback.
Meeting with the observer after.
The coaching training.
Planning with Data prior to summer.
Working with my assessor was incredibly helpful. I really appreciated her support and having the designated time to speak with her about the goals we had at the site.
Feedback from EA.
The report you get after and that it gets to you much faster.
Having Yvette come out and see what the program was about and getting the feedback.
It was very helpful to sit down the assessor and the data. During this time we were able to have a conversation about the strengths and areas of improvement of the programming. I appreciated the time to dialogue and brainstorm ways to strengthen the program offerings.
Meeting with the SLPQI coach and receiving the outside observations report.
City B
Coaching session, going over our data, summary report was the most valuable in my mind because it breaks down the strength, improvement actions, and reflection in each domain.
I think just having time to reflect with coworkers on what could be improved and getting an outside "unbiased" observation.
Observation and coaching conversation.
Meeting w/ external assessor
The immediate feedback and coaching session. I was able to implement changes before the session ended.
Sitting down and talking with my assessor while we went over the Summary Report was the most helpful. While much of the report did make sense, it made a difference to be able to talk it over with her. The few suggestions that she did make in response to some of our scores on the report were very helpful and we have already used some of them in our program this summer.

I enjoyed being able to talk through the results with my assessor following the observation and interview.
The overall conclusion was the most helpful for my team to see where we were hitting our mark and where we could build from.
Seeing our program through the eyes of another program coordinator. It was really helpful to hear some things a neutral party noticed--both good and bad--and to be able to use this feedback to help our staff hear alternative ways to do things.
Scores helped us build some intentional reflective and choice based activities. Reviewing our scores and our struggles helped us improve our work with youth, specifically in regards to higher order thinking.
I like the reflection and the way it looks at the program and the interactions.
The added learning community
Assessment results and summary along with coaching, planning, and implementing next steps.
Seeing which areas our program could improve the most in
Having the assessor come to the site and speak with staff who do not attend trainings. I believe that their explanation of the benefits of using this tool helped them understand the importance of quality.
Purposeful reflection time to try and improve our program in a non-stressful context.
The framework of SLPQI was very helpful when we planned the program.
Having an outside assessor come in to assess our work
Giving the participants choices throughout the course of the program
Last year the coaching was extremely valuable, as was the comparison data between our morning and afternoon programming. We realized where some of our gaps were!
Feedback session with our assessor
City C
I expect the coaching session to be valuable, but have not yet had it.
It was nice to have a "check list" of sorts to ensure we were consistently doing what is best for kids.
student engagement, choice, and voice
It is always nice to get feedback.
Meeting with assessor.
The training just reaffirmed my philosophy of teaching and learning. It was nice to get the reports after each observation. The reports provided an honest lens from an outside source that has no idea about how we run our program. We were able to adjust as needed.
Looking at strengths and then finding places where growth was most needed and helpful.
Having time to connect with students in a more relaxed environment.
This assessment was a great jumping point regarding what to implement in the program. It confirmed the things we should be doing. I appreciated the quick feedback I received right after observations.
Outside perspective
Training in descriptors of what quality summer learning looks like. Feedback from assessors.
The feedback observation forms and the coaching session.
My conversations with my assessor were extremely helpful. This summer was my site's first time being involved with SLPQI. My assessor broke everything down for me and took time to explain what exactly SLPQI is, what they are observing, and the feedback given was helpful. With my assessors' assistance, I begin to think / plan for what I could be doing differently for next year's summer program and what changes need to be made to make the program more successful.
The one on one coaching.
The visit and review with the site assessor was extremely valuable to our site. As a team, we were able to ask clarifying questions and receive detailed descriptions on how we could improve our practices.
The training offered to teachers and program staff
The evaluation asks good interview questions. Most of those questions were things that I was able to work on ahead of time (training for staff and planning).
I appreciated to meeting with the evaluator after the results were available.

Feedback on our program is always helpful.
I feel that when we participate in the SLPQI the feedback and help and training myself and my staff receive make us better able to provide a stronger program for all the youth in our community. If at any point in time I need to talk to my coach he would have been available. The support we receive is invaluable and could never be replaced.
It helped us with the overall structure of our program. It provided guidance and enabled us to improve how we managed our students to ensure that they are engaged and feel safe.
Learning Communities.
To receive coaching tied to a grant that is less about compliance that quality improvement is a gift and should be replicated elsewhere.
Those areas which were applicable to our age group - preschool.
The strengths observed during the SLPQI was spot on with my observation of the classroom as well. I thought it was helpful to know the areas we as a program need to improve on.
It's difficult to answer this question because our assessment hasn't been completed.
The training was very informative.
Receiving the report and sharing the information with the staff.
Receiving objective feedback from a neutral observer.
Getting feedback from the lens and perspective from an outside neutral source that could only enhance and make the program better.
The coaching and the assessment have helped us with program implementation.
Common language tool.
Consistent feedback that can be compared from year-to-year.
I enjoy the observation from the assessors, I use then in my personal development and ability to lead a team.
Feedback from evaluator.
Having an outside evaluator look at our program from a fresh set of eyes and provide useful feedback for improvements is something the staff and myself really look forward too.
Getting feedback from someone who can view the program without bias. An outside perspective.
Receiving feedback on specific items where our program could improve. It provided a start for conversation with staff and gave direction on what to tackle first in terms of support/training.
Having someone from outside is really good, sometimes we are not able to see things that another person can see. And having the report is very important because we can see in what part of our program we need to improve.
Giving common language and data to discuss with my team members for coaching opportunities.
Accountability and additional ideas to make the program even better.
Thinking about structure and common language about quality to implement in summer program. Beginning to think about ways to work math into program.
Thinking about structure and common language about quality to implement in summer program. Beginning to think about ways to work math into program.

Table E-2. 2016 Site Manager Responses to “Please share any additional thoughts you may have about any aspect of your experience with the Summer Learning PQI.”

Open-Ended Responses
<p>City A</p> <p>I think that it is silly to have math and reading tied into every program that is done, while it is important to tie it in to the summer program, it shouldn't be tied into all. I also think that it is ridiculous that a certified teacher should be on staff or consulted when doing programming, especially when many teachers are failing the youth that we currently serve. I also think there should be more of a focus on fun within the tool, the program can be high quality, but if fun isn't infused there won't be many youth choosing to be in the program and then it becomes forced participation. Some staff will tie the fun in, but if it isn't emphasized by the tool then some staff will lose sight of this and the overall program suffers.</p> <p>Too small a window to do it right, and we have other forms of evaluation.</p> <p>With the short period of time it makes it hard to implement in the summer. I think it would be a better fit during an extended period of time to properly put together improvement plan.</p> <p>As a completely new staff member and Site Director, I wish I had been better versed in what this process looked like earlier on. By the time that Andrea and I were able to meet, it was a bit challenging to change things since we were already midway through the summer. Still, the second half of our summer was much better than the first and I attribute that in part to this SLPQI process.</p> <p>If assessment and feedback could happen earlier I believe it could help us make it positively impact our programming.</p> <p>The feedback was very helpful. However, I feel most of the questions did not apply to the outdoor parks and rec youth program.</p>
<p>City B</p> <p>It would be nice to add a summary report to the reg, YPQA/ YPQI so when Supervisor meets with their team everyone can see firsthand.</p> <p>Incredibly well-organized and helpful.</p> <p>The trainings and the coaching session was the most beneficial. I am looking forward to follow up trainings this fall.</p> <p>Our assessor went out of town right after she observed at my site, so I didn't receive the Summary Report until a couple weeks later. This was the only downside to the experience. We received the Summary Report with plenty of time left in the summer to implement changes; however, we would have appreciated a more timely report.</p> <p>I really appreciate a dialogue component in this process.</p> <p>My observer was very helpful and hands on. She gave great concrete feedback.</p> <p>A lot of the SLPQI does not apply to our program. We are the same year round. We have talked about changing summer programing and have done different things in the past (and that always gets suggested in the two years we have participated in this) it doesn't fit/work with the needs of our program in relation to what we have. We are a drop in tutoring program that serves dinner to everyone. We have one staff person and the rest are volunteers that are under no contract/obligation. So we are quite different than a lot of programs.</p> <p>As a participant our coach was well versed and prepared. In the future we would appreciate a more in depth coaching session.</p> <p>As a recreation center, we do not look at grades or have access to educational & testing information. I could not answer the first set of questions as they truly did not apply to this summer program. If Summer PQI could be modified to more social, recreation & leisure based youth programming we would be more successful in our implementation.</p> <p>Was great to have the same assessor for 2 years in a row. Gave us consistent feedback from year to year with a perspective of our improvement from year to year.</p> <p>I think that SLPQI is serve better traditional after school program and I would like to see how we can</p>

change/modify the tool that will serve programs in Community centers better.

This summer our external assessor was not easy to reach through email and missed several appointments, including the date of our evaluation. This contributed to the data not being helpful for improvement during the summer, even though we are looking forward to looking at it now, after the summer.

Some of the questions were not applicable at our site or on the day of observation. It would be great to see some questions about physical activity as that is our program focus.

City C

Our assessment was completed in one hour of academic work and did not reflect our program day. I feel like such a short snapshot does not give us accurate feedback about the entire program.

Thank you for all your time and effort that was put in to helping us make our program stronger and better for each youth that comes through our doors. It is the best thing i have ever been through with P.S.I.A. and it has really made a huge impact on our future programs.

Super helpful, provides great opportunities to bolster programs in seasons of higher need. Grateful to be able to connect with best practice leaders and other local programs working on similar program goals.

This assessment is more youth oriented in general and less helpful than some other assessments we have participated in. Our assessor was fantastic in explaining this and pulling out learning opportunities that do still apply for our teachers.

It was an overall positive experience. The assessor was understanding and flexible. I thought he led a very pleasant feedback session in which the teachers came out with a positive outlook.

I appreciated the training opportunity and instruction guide.

If possible do observation and assessment in the first two weeks which allows coordinators to make necessary adjustments to learning environment.

I am feeling a little discouraged, as additional staff training was conducted to promote emotional safety at camp, but we are still seeing significant bias and conflict.

I would enjoy the observation happening and results coming back sooner so implementation of systemic strategies to improve can begin during the session.

A wonderful program-our only difficulty is finding the time to really take advantage of all it offers.

Useful and worthwhile. Hoping to have improvements for next year.

I hope you were able to do more observations, I felt one sometime is not enough.

We had a great experience with Summer PQI. I know the timing is so short but a post test would have been very helpful.

The process felt rushed in just 6 weeks of summer program. We were able to complete the assessments and coaching, but it didn't feel like we had enough time to make changes based on the feedback (our coaching sessions happened in the week of program). In theory, the coaching session was great (and very interesting to speak to the person who actually assessed us), but I felt our time with the coaches could have been more substantive. They told us their observations and had specific suggestions, but in general they didn't have broader ideas to coach us to higher quality.

Questions in the site manager interview that focused on data and reporting felt repetitive.

In response to the interview's questions about planning for summer: it's important for funders and other supporters in the field to understand that our ability to plan depends in large part on staffing and money. Much of that information (including SLPQI training and support) comes to us in May or later, making it difficult to plan much further ahead. We would love to be able to get everything worked out much earlier in the spring, and I hope the field as a whole can work to respond to this need.

The summer is such a fast moving train, that even when the SLPQA was done in the 2nd week of program the results and coaching were not available to the 4th or 5th week of program and the program was finished after the 6th week. I think we will see the value in using those results to influence our school year planning and the planning for next summer, but we were not really able to make changes in the moment.