The BellXcel Impact

BellXcel is a nationally-recognized leader in summer and afterschool education. For three decades, BellXcel has been committed to excellence in out-of-school-time education, yielding significant results for youth, their parents, and educators. Through a culture of continuous improvement, BellXcel strives to learn more about what works to ensure that our programs evolve to meet the needs of scholars, partners, and communities.

BellXcel has built a robust evidence-base through rigorous internal and third-party evaluations that is aligned with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence standards. Taken together, this evidence-base illuminates the power and potential of BellXcel-powered summer and afterschool programs to narrow the achievement gap, increase school engagement, develop stronger educators, and meet family and community needs.

Externally-Validated to Meet ESSA Evidence Standards

Third-party reviews confirm that BellXcel Summer and Afterschool meet ESSA evidence standards.

BellXcel Summer: The RAND Corporation’s independent review of summer programs nationwide confirms BellXcel meets the highest levels of evidence – one of only 43 summer programs in the U.S. with that distinction.

BellXcel Afterschool: Independent review conducted by Research for Action found that BellXcel meets the highest levels of evidence – one of only 16 academically-focused programs nationwide.

Evidence of Scholar Success

Rigorous internal and external third-party evaluations confirm that BellXcel’s summer and afterschool models have strong, positive impacts on the academic and social emotional skills of scholars:

• Provides continued academic progress during the summer months. Scholars on average experience 2 months of academic gains in literacy and 2.5 months in math during the summer months.1,2

• Improves performance on school-year standardized assessments. Scholars perform higher on fall administered national standardized tests such as Dibels, NWEA MAP, and iReady.3,4,5,9

• Improves performance on spring school-year achievement tests. Scholars perform higher* on end-of-grade math achievement tests.6,7

• Improves school year attendance. Scholars who participate in BellXcel’s summer model have higher fall school attendance than their peers*.2,7,8

• Reduces school year behavioral referrals. Scholars who participate in BellXcel’s summer model have fewer school year behavioral referrals.2,8

• Improves school year academic performance among student sub-groups. Scholars in key subgroups gain literacy and math skills and/or perform higher on school year assessments*:
  - Pre-kindergarten
  - Elementary grades K–4
  - Middle school grades 5–8
  - Special education needs
  - Hispanic/Latino students
  - Dual language learners
  - Students receiving free and reduced price meals 3,4,5,8,9,10

• Increases engagement and interest in learning. Scholars who participate in BellXcel’s summer model enter the school year with improved attitudes toward learning and increased eagerness to learn.1 Additionally, scholars* watch fewer hours of television and play fewer hours of video games.9

• Strengthens key social emotional skills. Scholars experience growth in key social emotional competencies such as growth mindset, self-regulation, self-awareness, responsible decision making and self-confidence.1,17,18
Evidence of Effective Remote Learning in Summer

Rigorous internal evaluation of the 2020 BellXcel Remote Summer learning program implemented during COVID-19 school closures confirm the model has strong positive impacts on scholar and family engagement and social emotional skills of scholars:

- **Engaged scholar, staff, and families.** Scholars, families, and staff report high levels of remote learning engagement in the BellXcel Remote Summer program.\(^{15}\)

- **Enhanced confidence and skills using remote learning technology.** Scholars, families, and staff report increased confidence and improved skills using remote learning technology in the BellXcel Remote Summer Program.\(^{16}\)

- **Strengthened key social emotional skills.** Scholars experienced growth in key social emotional competencies necessary for remote learning such as relationships, self-confidence, growth mindset, self-regulation, and routines and schedules.\(^{18}\)

Evidence of Family Engagement

BellXcel’s summer and afterschool solutions are intentionally designed to engage families in their child’s learning and have been shown to:

- **Increase family engagement in child’s learning.** Parents/guardians increase their involvement in their child’s education, including reading more frequently\(^*\) to their children at home and encouraging their child to read.\(^{1,9}\)

Evidence of Improved Educator Practice

Educators participate in BellXcel’s professional development while gaining real world learning experiences through ongoing coaching and reflection that positively impacts their school-year teaching.

BellXcel’s professional development has been shown to positively impact teacher practice:

- **Enhance school year teacher practices and confidence.** Educators start the school year with new and enhanced approaches to teaching and increased confidence implementing new practices, particularly in the areas of growth mindset and positive behavior management.\(^{11,12}\)

- **Increase energy and passion for teaching.** Educators start the school year with increased energy and passion for teaching.\(^{10,11,14}\)

- **Improve use of student-centered practices.** BellXcel summer educators are more likely than teachers not employed in a summer program to improve their use of student-centered practices.\(^{14}\)

- **Increase in opportunities for coaching and feedback.** BellXcel summer educators receive important developmental feedback and coaching about how to improve instruction and classroom practices.\(^{14}\)

Evidence of Program Quality & Implementation

A key factor influencing strong positive findings for scholars, families, and educators is comprehensive staff professional development and high-quality program implementation.

Internal quality assurance and external third-party studies confirm that BellXcel’s model:

- **Implements with high quality and strong fidelity according to national standards.** BellXcel’s summer model is implemented with strong fidelity and with high quality relative to national program quality standards developed by the RAND Corporation and National Summer Learning Association (NSLA).\(^{2,5,13}\)

- **Implements strong and comprehensive staff development.** BellXcel’s professional development model and activities are recognized for strengthening staff professional skills and supporting educator growth.\(^{5,10,11}\)
Citations


* Compared to a comparison group of similar students who did not participate in a summer or afterschool program. See each individual study for more details on the comparison group.