

BOARD BRIEF

Date: July 12, 2019

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X_____

Board Agenda: Yes ___

No X___

FROM: Terri H. Mozingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer
Gerald R. Mann, Jr., Ed.D., Executive Director of Secondary Schools

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Summer Learning First Week

BACKGROUND:

July 8, 2019, kicked off the start of summer learning for all students from kindergarten through 12th grade. ACPS this summer offers over 20 programs in 9 schools, serving approximately 2800 students on the first day. This brief describes some of the high quality, experiential summer learning activities, including field trips, project-based learning experiences, and rigorous and exciting opportunities.

SUMMARY:

Summer Learning: First Week Brief to the School Board

Camp Invention During this first week of summer learning approximately 325 third and fourth graders have been engaged in the Summer Enrichment programs located at Charles Barrett and Ferdinand T. Day have been participating in Camp Invention. Throughout this program, students will engage in a variety of modules that provide students with a strong foundation in English Language Arts, Mathematics and STEM. Through these modules, our students will take on six exciting challenges, meet innovative superheroes, and bring home newfound confidence. The Modules include Innovation Force, Deep Sea Mystery, Farm Tech, DIY Orbot, Fair Games and Plot Coasters. In addition to participating in these engaging and meaningful modules, our students also went on a field trip to *Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria*. This park connects visitors to treasured homes and habitats. The park is home to a nationally significant historic house, majestic forests, wildflower-speckled meadows and vast wetlands bursting with life.

English Learner (EL) Summer Learning Program is designed to support language development through English language arts (ELA) and math content. Over 800 students are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8 and receive instruction in both content areas daily. **LitCamp** lessons in ELA are framed around seven key strengths that prepare children for challenges they

will encounter in their educational lives, careers, and communities. The 7 Strengths are belonging, friendship, kindness, curiosity, confidence, courage, and hope. *The Local Motion Project* (www.localmotionproject.org) will facilitate dance workshops for the elementary students that will enhance the LitCamp program by helping the children acquire a deeper understanding of the seven strengths and how they apply to their identity as a reader.

Secondary Extended School Year Program which serves approximately 50 students, is Exploring Our Worlds- Geology. For our first week of ESY, students have had the opportunity to learn more about geology by doing a hands-on science experiment on salt crystals and using a rock tumbler to simulate how a river or sea ‘tumbles’ the rocks over time making the edges smooth. Students also participated in a *nature scavenger hunt* with their magnifying glasses to explore the physical structures that surround them. To encourage reading, writing and social skills, students had the opportunity to engage with a *therapy dog*. Whether it was reading a book to a dog, sharing a written and illustrated essay to a dog, or just sitting quietly and talking with a dog, our students had a great time interacting with these amazing dogs.

Middle School Summer Enrichment will embark on several field trips throughout the summer learning program. The 6th-grade students will participate in a *Discovery Cart Tour, LAWN Exhibition, and Hoops Exhibition at the National Building Museum*. The 7th-grade students will explore the *National Portrait Gallery*. Through analysis of the visual elements of portraiture, students will explore biography, art, and the American experience. The 8th-grade students will engage in interactive exhibits at the *Newseum*. Students will unlock a deeper understanding of history, media, and current events as they explore a variety of galleries, theaters, and interactive spaces. Finally, all middle school students will attend a performance at *Discovery Theater*, as an entertaining human beatbox will introduce them to the most powerful musical instrument ever: their own body. With lots of audience participation and exciting on-the-spot improvisations, themes such as hip-hop culture, language, math, and music will be incorporated.

Summer Language Academy The Summer Language Academy is hosted by Mount Vernon for Dual Language students from Mount Vernon and John Adams. This year, the Academy is being held at Lyles-Crouch. We are serving approximately 300 students. All our students continue to learn half a day in English and half of their day in Spanish. The program is designed around enriching students' global understanding through integrated units based thematically around different Latin American countries. Each day, students learn content in geography, literacy, science, and math while learning about life in various countries such as Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and El Salvador. This week, students engaged in creating flags, showing the characteristics of the reptiles of Peru through integrative art projects, sculpted 3D maps, wrote books in Spanish about the animal kingdom and learned songs about different countries. Due to our location change, Mount Vernon is not having any field trips this summer.

SummerTREK SummerTREK (Tackling Real-world Experiences for Knowledge) is engaging 200 middle school students as community problem-solvers. *SummerTrek* invites participating youth to select and address a significant community issue or challenge. Our summer program theme –

“Advancing Alexandria: Leading our Communities” –guides our students as they investigate, discover their leadership potential, and implement projects to respond to the community's needs related to economic equity/opportunity, environmental concerns, and health and wellness, including mental health and school climate. During Week 1, students developed personal mission statements, explored the concept of community and developed team working agreements, began reading a graphic novel, identified community issues they would like to address, and enjoyed a field trip visit to the *National Museum of African American History and Culture* to further explore the themes of change-makers and communities.

Title I Primary Preparatory Program (3P) This is an invite-only program, intended to prepare rising 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-grade students for the rigors of the upcoming school year. Students who attend Title I schools, who may benefit from additional learning time during the summer, are invited to attend. The program is now in its third year, and rising 3rd graders have been invited to participate for the first time. Engaging learning experiences, designed by ACPS staff currently working in Title I schools, utilize materials and resources staff and students are already familiar with. This curriculum is intended to fill gaps and reinforce key concepts in foundational literacy and numeracy skills for children in these grades. There are approximately 180 students enrolled in 3P this summer, located at Patrick Henry. Students will participate in two experiential learning opportunities, including attending *Tudor Place in Washington, DC*.

Transition to Algebra Transition to Algebra is designed to ensure all students are well prepared to be successful in Algebra by approaching algebra instruction differently. Instead of reteaching the same algebra curriculum in the same way to struggling students, Transition to Algebra uses logic puzzles, problems, and explorations to help teachers uniquely build students' mathematical ways of thinking. During Week 1, approximately 25 students are learning to use algebra as a language for expressing patterns and relationships. Students also use mobile puzzles to learn about equivalence and to visualize the common sense behind solving equations.

Where in the World Are We? In this interactive and creative summer program, approximately 70 rising 6th-grade students embark on a virtual trip around the world to explore world cultures and geography from the vantage points of world language, visual and performing arts, and sports and physical movement. Throughout this journey, students will engage in investigative, project-based activities to discover how geography, culture and language influence how we live and interact with people around us and from other countries. Also, students learn about several major languages (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Latin, and Spanish), art, music, and sports of these far-off destinations. Throughout the program, students compare and contrast the languages, fine arts, and athletics of countries "visited" with their own. Every week a field trip to e.g., *a local landmark, theater and/or music performances*, as well as *museums*, will complement these rich experiences.

During the first week of the program, students explored their community and the North American continent. For this week's field trip students traveled to *Chinquapin Recreation Center in Alexandria* where they participated in physical activities typical for North America, such as swimming, Kickball, and a modified Dodge/Racquetball game.

Young Scholars The Young Scholars program is off to a great start. With 292 enrolled summer students, we are learning a lot about the environmental sciences and having fun doing so! This week our first graders visited *Glen Echo Park*. Students learned all about wetlands through the lens of systems during their time there. They saw a wide variety of plants and animals that are found in a *wetland habitat*. The students held clams, oysters, horseshoe crabs and more with the park's "touch tank" experience. Second-grade students participated in a field experience with the *Smithsonian National Zoo*. As a result, students gained a better understanding of the similarities and differences in growth and animal development. Our fifth and eighth-graders are learning all about our watershed and run off respectively. They participated in two different field experiences with *Alexandria Renew/Four Mile Run Pump Station*. While visiting the site, they participated in hands-on activities to develop their understanding of the importance of our water.

IMPACT: The ultimate goal of the summer learning programs are two-fold to stop summer learning loss and offer high school students opportunities for advancement.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the School Board review the information provided in the brief.

ATTACHMENTS: List of all the summer learning locations

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