

North Carolina designated ESSER funds to support K–12 summer programming from 2021 through 2024.

The Education Policy Initiative at Carolina, in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, studied summer program implementation and impacts. **Although limited in academic impacts, summer programming positively impacted student engagement in school across several measures.**

Summer Recovery Programs Offered



Academic Recovery (2021)

Instruction in core subjects for 'at-risk' students to support post-pandemic academic growth.



Summer Bridge (2022–2024)

Programming targeted at rising K, 6th, and 9th grade students to facilitate academic and social transitions into new schools; supports extended to all at-risk students.



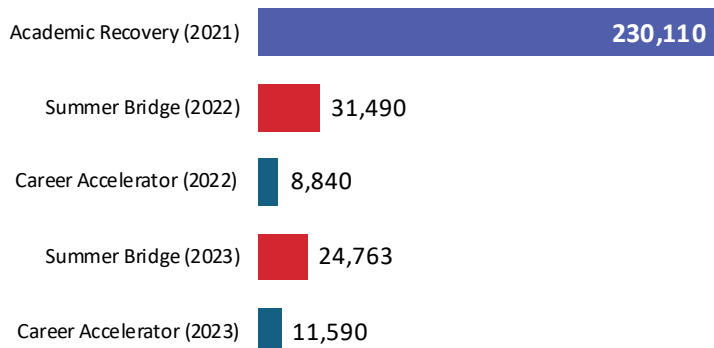
Career Accelerator (2022–2024)

Career and technology education (CTE) developed to expose middle and high school students to different careers and to provide students with hands-on experiences and real-world skills.

Students Served by Summer Recovery Programs

Enrollment by Program/Year

Number of students statewide*



* Totals may represent undercounts because of missing data from some districts. There are approximately 1.5 million students in North Carolina public schools.

Student Engagement Findings Across Programs

Students who attended summer programming were:

- 1–5 percentage points less likely to be chronically absent in the next school year.

Staff identified several positive impacts of summer programs, including:

- Positive student/staff relationships
- Smoother transitions to new schools
- Skill acquisition

Successful design elements included:

- Hands-on learning opportunities
- Community partnerships
- Small class sizes
- Student-family-staff support systems

Spotlight on High School Outcomes



13%

of high schoolers participating in academic recovery programs in 2021 **recovered at least one course credit.**



2%

fewer students dropped out after academic recovery programs in 2021, about **1,000 fewer dropouts.**



4%

increase in the number of high schoolers **taking CTE courses** after Career Accelerator programs.

Recommendations



To meaningfully address impacts of the pandemic, state and local officials need to **ensure that more students attend summer programming.**



Define success for summer programming based on student engagement outcomes.



Help districts and schools **leverage community partnerships** to facilitate summer programming, especially in career exposure/training.



Continue funding for engagement-oriented summer programs.

