



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**To:** District 97 Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent

**From:** Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer  
Dr. Helen Wei, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

**Re:** **Summer Launch Update**

**Date:** July 13, 2017

**Type of Report:** Informational

**Purpose of the Report:** The purpose of this informational report is to provide the Board of Education with an update on Summer Launch.

## **K-2 Summer Launch/Reading and Writing Workshop**

### *Attendance*

The K-2 Summer Launch/Reading and Writing Workshop began on June 19, 2017 at Lincoln School. Out of 73 students enrolled in the program, all 73 students began the program. While we are still in our final days of the program at the time of the writing of this report, we are forecasted to have 69 students who will complete the program, at a 95% completion rate. Four students were dropped during the program, due to attendance issues. Our final day of the four-week program will be on July 14, 2017.

### *Summer Coaching Support*

Rachel Dahl, one of our external coaches for *Reading and Writing Units of Study*, provided support to teachers and the coordinator during the Summer Launch program, spending five days on site throughout the four weeks. During her visits, Ms. Dahl visited classrooms to model instruction, coach and give feedback to teachers, and to provide leadership support to Jessica Bretl, our Summer Launch Coordinator. Ms. Dahl also developed the summer reading and writing units being implemented during the program, as well as trained our Summer Launch teachers in June, prior to the program.

### *Summer Learning Lab*

During the K-2 Summer Launch program, teachers welcomed their colleagues into their summer classrooms for professional learning and peer observation. The session was designed to facilitate reflection and conversation between teachers participating in the learning, and to build our knowledge and capacity to support teaching practices. These learning lab sessions were facilitated by Clare Donovan-Scane, one of our external coaches for *Reading and Writing Units of Study*. We ran three sessions during the program (June 28, July 5, and July 13), with a total of 25 teachers participating.

### *Community Partnerships*

During the K-2 Summer Launch program, we had the opportunity to partner with the Park District of Oak Park (PDOP), to offer the opportunity for full-day programming to families. We have 11 students who have been remaining at Lincoln for the PDOP Day Camp (11:30 am -3:00 pm) and six students who have been remaining for Day Camp/Extended Camp (11:30 am -6:00 pm).

We have also had the opportunity to partner with the Oak Park Public Library (OPPL), who has provided support to the program by sending OPPL librarians to promote the Summer Reading Program with students and to give out beads and prizes. OPPL has also supported the program by purchasing books to be used in the classrooms, including titles and authors specifically identified by D97 to support implementation of our summer reading and writing units. OPPL plans to join us for our final celebration day of Summer Launch, by bringing the Book Bike (weather permitting) to pass out a free book to each student to bring home.

### *End-of-Program Reports*

On July 14th, we will send home with students the End-of-Program Student Report, which will provide families with information on:

- Student instructional reading level (beginning and end of program)
- Phonics
- Sight words
- On-demand Writing with rubric scores (beginning and end of program)

- Reading and writing behaviors (e.g. engagement, reading stamina, and writing stamina)
- Behaviors that Support Learning

*Photos from K-2 Summer Launch/ Reading and Writing Workshop*



### **3-8 Summer Launch/ BASE Camp with Oak Park Education Foundation**

#### *Attendance*

The 3-5 Summer Launch/BASE Camp and the 6-8 Summer Launch/BASE Camp began on June 19, 2017 at Longfellow School and Brooks Middle School, respectively. A total of 115 students were enrolled in the 3rd-8th Summer Launch/ BASE Camp by the April 15 deadline (65 for 3rd-5th; 50 for 6-8th). Due to last-minute cancellations, we began the camp with a total of 64 3rd-5th grade students and 49 6th-8th grade students enrolled at the beginning of the camp.

Of the 64 3rd-5th graders who were enrolled, 57 students began the camp. Two students withdrew after camp began, and five have missed 5 or more days of camp as of July 12.

Of the 49 6th-8th grader who were enrolled, 46 students began the camp. Two students withdrew after camp began, and six have missed 5 or more days of camp as of July 12.

#### *Family Outreach*

Oak Park Education Foundation (OPEF) has focused a great deal of time and energy to connect with families during the registration process and camp through the following methods:

- Emails sent and packets mailed home to all families to outline program, each child's individual schedule, and remaining forms to be completed
- Phone calls made to more than 60 families who did not complete the enrollment steps online on their own
- Calls/emails made daily to check on student absences and to contact all Summer Launch families who were no-shows
- Connected families to Strive for Success (TASC Inc), who offered to assist in transportation in at least four cases

#### *Initial Successes/Opportunities*

In both the 3th-5th and 6th-8th grade camps, many students have been engaged in challenging projects and working with their peers to learn and solve problems. Summer Launch/BASE Camp has been successful in providing students with a full-day of enrichment opportunities.

We received feedback from our board member, and a Title I specialist with D97, Nora Flynn:

*"I've been clicking through pictures of students of mine in the Title 1 program at Brooks participating in BASE Camp and I am so thrilled to see them working, thinking, doing with HUGE smiles on their faces. ... The kids we really are rooting for are learning in new and important ways. Your work is making a difference for really great kids who don't always get this kind of opportunity."*

#### *Initial Challenges*

Some of the initial challenges we have encountered include:

- Phone calls to families uncovered challenges families were experiencing to understand the program, get their children to the program without buses offered, or commit to the four-week window.
- Some parents did not understand the purpose or value of the program we delivered. They wanted a remediation program to deal with their students' specific academic needs and didn't understand

why Summer Launch was not delivering it. There was also misunderstandings about whether Summer Launch was mandatory or required for promotion to the next grade.

- Some students, notably at the 6th-8th program, viewed the camp as “punishment” and struggled to embrace the content of the classes.
- The teachers spent more time dealing with discipline issues than in previous years, as some students struggled to stay on-task and engaged in the lessons, independent work, and small-group work.
- A power outage at Longfellow on July 10 forced the cancellation of one day of BASE Camp/Summer Launch for grades 3-5.

### *Solutions*

- After camp started, OPEF spent a fair amount of time adjusting camp schedules, working closely with students and sometimes parents, to ensure the student was in a camp that would better meet their needs and interests.
- OPEF increased on-site presence and support by all members of the BASE Camp/OPEF team to work with students, reach out to parents, and help supervise lunch.
- The district provided additional social work support and lunch supervision at the 6th-8th program, upon OPEF’s request, after behavioral and classroom support concerns surfaced. Additional district support came from D97 social workers, district administrators, and school administrators.
- OPEF organized peace circles through the E-Team (Oak Park’s community organization focused on equity issues), both at the staff training prior to the camp and during camp. Two peace circles were done with students to improve climate and build trust.
- OPEF facilitated a teacher support session to brainstorm mid-camp adjustments to better accommodate all campers.

*Photos from 3rd-8th Grade Summer Launch/BASE Camp*





### **Conclusion**

Tomorrow, July 14th, will mark the final day of our Summer Launch programs at Lincoln, Longfellow, and Brooks. Following the conclusion of the program, we will analyze our collected data (as outlined in the June 13th Summer Launch Board Update) in order to have a more comprehensive evaluation and reflection on this summer's programs.