

# Summer Learning Toolkit - Domain 3: Program Structure

*A guide to leading your team in an evidence-based discussion about:*

Determining the **class size** and  
program **duration** that best  
meets student needs.

# Domain 3: Program Structure

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## Design Principles:

5. Duration
6. Class Size

## Domain 3: Program Structure

**About This Domain:** Creating the right structure for your summer learning program is crucial. Determining the length of programs and appropriate class size can be challenging, but both factors influence program impact. Domain 3 will examine how to best structure the duration of your program and create ideal class sizes.

Use the discussion questions at the conclusion of this slide deck to generate conversation, ideas, and next steps. Examine the tools provided and see how they can help streamline your planning process.

### Domain 3 Goal:

Determine the class size and program duration that best meet student needs.

### Domain 3 Tools from SCORE and TNTP:

1. Planning for Summer School
2. Summer Learning Acceleration

### Next Steps:

1. Identify key dates and timing for your summer program
2. Create a plan for maintaining target class size

# Keys Summer Program Duration

✔ Programs that last **3 weeks** or fewer have **not resulted** in academic benefits

✔ Programs of **5+ weeks** (5 meetings per week) have found **lasting benefits**

✔ **1-2 hours** of instruction for each academic subject

✔ Ideally offered for **multiple** summers

To see significant benefits for the most students, construct programs that get the majority of participants to experience:

**20**

Days of  
Academic  
Instruction



**25**

Hours of  
Math  
Instruction



**34**

Hours of  
ELA  
Instruction

# Maintain small class sizes

Small academic classes allow teachers to better: know **students' needs**, establish **norms**, give **instruction** on a compressed schedule

Small class sizes during enrichment programming **improves the quality** of the enrichment experience

# Classes with fewer than **15 students**

per teacher support stronger individualized instruction and help build relationships.

Class size should remain small, but can **vary slightly** by age group

Potentially **fewer than 15 students** per class for younger students

Potentially **more than 15 students** per class for older students

# Woonsocket Summer Program Structure

*Specifics differed across the schools, but shared the following structure:*

- 1) **Five days** per week for **2-week sessions**
- 2) **Three** 2-week sessions offered
- 3) Students received **lunch every day**
- 4) District **provided busing** from school sites to CBO sites
- 5) Typical **schedule**:
  - a) 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
    - *Experiential Learning at school sites*
  - b) 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
    - Enrichment at CBO Partner sites

# Domain 3: Program Structure - Discussion & Reflection

**Instructions:** Spend time individually, or as a team, thinking through the following questions regarding program structure.

## To Discuss:

- How do you plan to structure the timing of your summer program?
- How do you plan to maintain academic and enrichment class size?
- What are the biggest barriers to maintaining small class size?
- What is the ideal duration of your summer program? Will you have multiple sessions?
- What is the best way to structure your daily scheduling? How will you balance enrichment and academic activities?

## Next Steps:

1. Identify key dates and timing for your summer program
2. Create a plan for maintaining target class size

Dive deeper into *Domain 3: Program Structure* with [tools from TNTP and TN SCORE](#).