

Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence

Sample Elevator Speech

I. Introduce yourself:

Hi Senator/ Representative _____, I'm _____ from _____ in _____.

II. Explain why you are here:

***We're here today to talk about the importance of afterschool and summer programs. OR
We're here today to talk about the power of summer learning.***

III. Embed the Summer Learning Talking Points and connect them to your own program:

<http://vermontafterschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Summer-Learning-Talking-Points.pdf>

- Poverty xxxxx
 - The gap between the poor and the wealthy continues to widen and low-income students in Vermont consistently perform at significantly lower levels academically.
 - Parents with the means invest more time and money than ever before in their children while lower-income families are increasingly stretched for time and resources.

We know that the gap between the poor and the wealthy continues to widen and we're concerned about the lack of resources for kids most in need.

Consider inserting specifics around poverty rates within your community.

We see this in _____ town . . .

- Equity xxxxx
 - All children and youth in Vermont deserve a summer filled with rich learning opportunities.
 - More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities.

The difference between academic performance among high and low income kids, the achievement gap, is of very real concern and much of it can be explained by what happens in the summer.

Consider inserting an example of a success seen within your program, use a data point if you have it.

In _____ program/ town _____, we know that kids who attend summer programs lose less academic ground . . .

- Access xxxxx
 - Over 30,000 children and youth in Vermont do not have access to summer learning programs.
 - It is important for every child to learn during the summer to avoid losing skills they have gained during the school year.

The lack of access to enriching summer programs is a real problem for over 30,000 kids in Vermont.

Consider inserting local information about students in need.

We currently serve _____ students through our summer program, but know there is considerable unmet need.

- Solution xxxxx
 - All communities in Vermont need high-quality summer learning programs to ensure that our children and youth thrive.

We need to ensure that all kids have access to high-quality summer learning program.

IV. Closing

We're looking for support as we move forward in building and expanding summer programs and improving quality across the state. AND/ OR

We'd love for you to come visit our program and see first-hand how afterschool and summer programs are making an impact.

Elevator Speech 1 (51 sec.):

Hi Senator, I'm Barb Russ. I'm an afterschool program director in Winooski. And we're all here today representing afterschool and summer programs that happen across the state. And some of the information we wanted to share with you is [the fact that] over 30,000 kids don't have access to learning programs over the summer, which we know is a huge issue in terms of the loss and the gains that they make with the skills that they've learned during the school year. So, one of the things that we're here for is to talk about the inequity and really looking to provide high-quality, summer learning programs for all kids across the state. We're really looking for your support as we move forward with that agenda.

Elevator Speech 2 (1 min. 26 sec.):

Hi Senator, I'm Jeff Fournier from Burlington; so glad to see you this morning. We're here this morning to talk about the power of summer learning for our students. You may have heard of the achievement gap, the difference between more affluent kids doing better in school than are poorer kids. And research indicates that that's primarily, or two-thirds of that, comes from what happens over the summer. In Burlington, we've got a plan to address that. With hands-on learning and high-quality staff, we've created programs that really support students across the whole summer. We have preliminary data that shows that our low-income students are making gains over the summer, and it's helping to close that gap. The problem, of course, is that even with a program that serves 200 kids, we know there are 200 more low-income kids in Burlington that would benefit from these programs. In fact, there are about 30,000 students in Vermont that are losing ground over the summer and are falling behind. It's about two months of learning that kids lose over the summer. Essentially that says to me that we're spending two months of teacher time, and bussing, and all those things that we're just giving away in the summer. 30,000 kids is a lot. I'd love to have you come see the program.