# SUMMIT LEARNING™
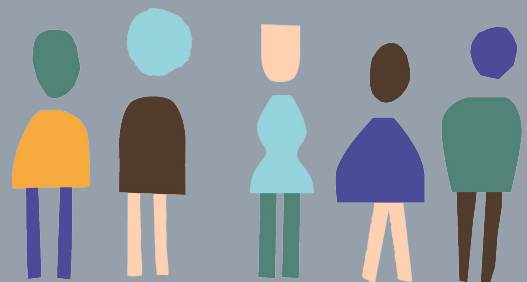
# Research Roundup
# September 2017

## Produced by
## Summit's R&D Team

# Research Roundup
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# Purpose of Research Roundup

The purpose of Research Roundup is to provide up-to-date information about what our R&D team is learning about the design and implementation of Summit Learning. We encourage your feedback, questions, and ideas, and have included contact information for the highlighted projects in this volume..

## COLLABORATIONS WITH RESEARCH PARTNERS

Summit collaborates with many of the country's most renowned research organizations and learning and evaluation partners. Our partners help to push our thinking, test our hypotheses, and co-create insights and learning resources. While we owe our ongoing gratitude to more organizations and individuals than can be included on this page, Summit's R&D research partners and influencers include:
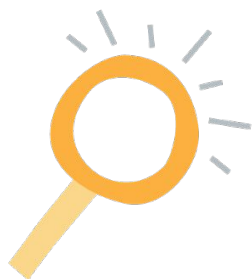
# Summit's R&D Mission:

To identify and cultivate transformational opportunities and drive systematic improvement across Summit Learning schools in order to deliver on our vision to equip every student to lead a fulfilled life.

# To move toward our team mission, we:

## IdENTiFY aNd EXPLORE

Identify and explore opportunities that move us closer to our vision of equipping all students to lead fulfilled lives.

## IMPROVE SUMMIT LEARNING

Improve Summit Learning in collaboration with the Summit community, external research partners, and thought leaders across fields.

## IMPACT tHE EDUCATION FIELD

Impact the education field by sharing our research and engaging schools and communities in rigorous problem solving and systematic learning.

# Research Agenda for the 2017–18 School Year

**Summit R&D organizes its work between long-term and mid-term projects:**

## Long-Term Projects

**Long-Term Projects** focus on opportunity exploration and fulfillment of the Summit Learning vision — to equip every student to lead a fulfilled life.

## Mid-Term Projects

**Mid-Term Projects** focus on continual improvement and evaluation of the Summit Learning Program.
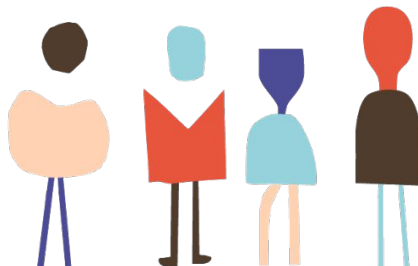
# Long-Term Projects

Opportunity exploration and vision fulfillment

**Summit Learning Teacher Residency**

In collaboration with the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, this project focuses on developing and sustainably scaling a teacher credentialing program — through a one-year residency model — that brings a diverse cohort of educators into the profession and equips them to excel in personalized learning classrooms. The first cohort of residents began in August 2017.

**Summit Learning Diploma**

In collaboration with university admissions counselors, the Learning Policy Institute, the California Performance Assessments Collaborative (CPAC), the California College of the Arts, Dr. Brooke Stafford-Brizard, and Stanford University, this project focuses on building out a diploma-granting process for Summit Learning that ensures that students have met rigorous commencement-level outcomes, making the Summit Learning Diploma meaningful for colleges, employers, and students themselves.

# Mid-Term Projects

## Continual improvement and evaluation

**Habits of Success**

In collaboration with leading researchers at SRI, the Chicago Consortium for School Research, and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, and with practitioners such as Valor Academy, this project focuses on implementing habits-building activities and exercises throughout the school day, as well as creating a more formal plan of action for embedding Habits of Success at every stage of a student's Summit Learning experience.

**Cognitive Skills**

In collaboration with the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE), this project seeks to increase the validity and reliability of Cognitive Skills scoring across Summit Learning classrooms, while examining best practices for helping students develop these skills through feedback, facilitated projects, and curriculum alignment.

**Content Knowledge**

In collaboration with learning scientists at Alder University and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, this project focuses on strengthening Summit's approach to helping students build and apply Content Knowledge in each discipline, resulting in comprehensive improvements to the curriculum.

**Ensuring All Students are on Grade Level in Literacy & Numeracy**

In collaboration with the National Equity Project, Billions Institute, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, leading math and literacy experts, and data scientists, this project coordinates a Networked Improvement Community (NIC) of educators and experts across the country to identify and implement ways to better support students who start the year out more than a grade level behind in literacy or numeracy.

**Summit Learning Environment & Outcomes**

In collaboration with FSG, this project focuses on better understanding the ways in which a Summit Learning environment (real-world projects, individualized pathways, 1:1 mentoring) helps students achieve key learning outcomes (Cognitive Skills, Content Knowledge, Habits of Success, Sense of Purpose), what contextual factors account for variation in this linkage, and how to make this linkage stronger and more consistent.

**Summit Learning Program Support**

In collaboration with FSG, this project focuses on better understanding the key factors underlying schools' effectiveness after their first year of adopting Summit Learning, as well as key scaling decisions, in order to better provide targeted support.

**Summit Learning Alumni**

In collaboration with ACT Research, this project focuses on better understanding the experiences of Summit Learning students after they leave high school, with a focus on fall college enrollment and persistence through the first and second years of college. We will use these lessons to improve supports for Summit Learning students and alumni.

**Family Engagement**

In collaboration with the Harvard Student Social Support R&D Lab and behavioral economist Todd Rogers, this project focuses on improving student outcomes and strengthening partnership with families by enabling supportive text messages and emails to Summit Learning families about their student's coursework and progress. The project builds off of several recent studies that show the high impact of such communications to families.

**Highlighting & Spreading Best Practices**

This project focuses on identifying best practices across the Summit Learning network and building systematic ways to capture, spread, and celebrate these practices. One form this process of best practice sharing and celebration will take is a formal Summit Learning Awards program.

**Educator Development & Enabling Conditions for Summit Learning**

In collaboration with the Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University, Lindsay Unified School District, and Transcend Education, this project focuses on building out research-backed, actionable tools for educators and leaders to create and maintain effective personalized learning environments in their schools. Tools will include classroom-level look-fors and a site-level playbook.
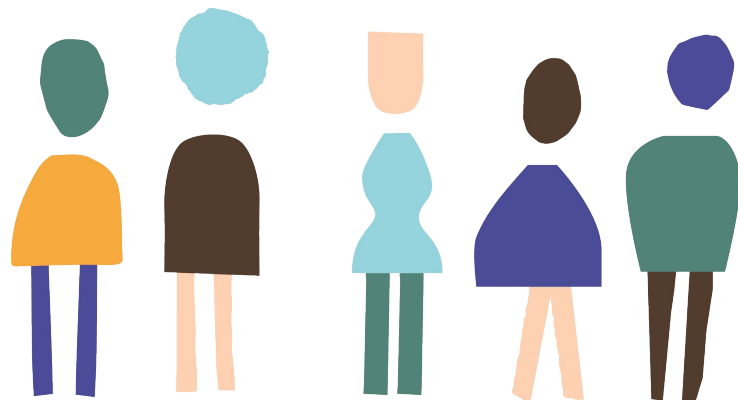
# Mid-Term Projects

# Cognitive Skills: Developing Cognitive Skills Resources and Support for Summit Learning Educators

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The R&D team is working with multiple Summit teams to develop professional development (PD) and training recommendations and tools that provide all Summit Learning educators with:

- A common understanding of the meaning of each Cognitive Skill and the expectations for student performance at each score level (0-8) of the rubric
- The resources needed to ensure that Cognitive Skills scores are a true representation of student knowledge and performance
- A framework for providing feedback that helps students progress towards achieving their academic goals

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION

***How can we make assessing Cognitive Skills as reliable and valid as possible, and establish systems that support developing Cognitive Skills and encourage feedback to students?***

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Cognitive Skills rubric — developed over several years in partnership with hundreds of educators and validated by SCALE — details 36 inter-disciplinary skills across seven domains (on the outside of the wheel in the visual below) that students develop through project-based learning. Summit's emphasis on Cognitive Skills, which account for 70 percent of a student's final grade in a given subject, is based on a comprehensive research base that points to these skills as essential for students' college and career readiness and success.

## COGNITIVE SKILLS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

The **Summit Learning Cognitive Skills Rubric** is an assessment and instruction tool that outlines the continuum of 36 interdisciplinary, higher-order thinking skills (pictured here) that are necessary for college and career readiness.

Developed in collaboration with the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning & Equity, May, 2017.

**SCALE**
Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity
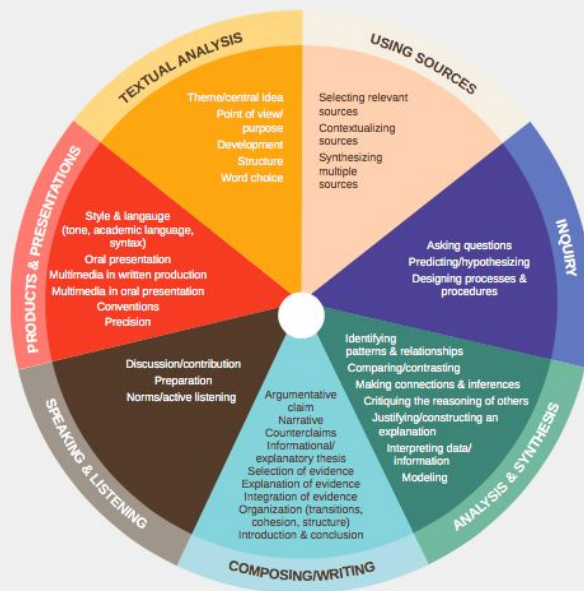
# RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS AND APPLICATIONS

Summit teachers are excited to teach Cognitive Skills and need appropriate resources and support to do so effectively. When teachers know how to score student work consistently and accurately, their resulting feedback is more targeted, and students have more clear guidance on developing Cognitive Skills. The R&D team has developed a 2017-2018 research project plan with a focus on helping teachers achieve consistent, accurate scoring on the rubric — across grade levels and subjects.

> **"Our students see huge value in Summit's approach, especially when you're talking with kids about their competency levels. When the kids look at the Cognitive Skills rubric and the standards that they're meeting, they're able to have really good conversations about it with their teachers."**
>
> *— ED of Instruction and Strategic Initiatives, a Summit Learning School*

> **"By surfacing the cognitive work that allows students to develop content understandings and perform complex academic tasks, Summit breaks the traditional schooling pattern of presenting content and expecting students to bring the relevant skills to the table—a model that is still prevalent in many colleges and universities and for which Summit students are more likely to be prepared because of the work Summit does with teaching cognitive skills."**
>
> *— SCALE Curriculum Audit, December 2015*

## LOOKING FORWARD

R&D is working this year with the Curriculum & Assessment (C&A), Professional Development (PD) and Summit Learning Platform teams to explore opportunities for increasing Cognitive Skills-related PD and scoring experiences for Summit Learning teachers. This project seeks to increase teacher understanding of the Cognitive Skills Rubric and score levels in order to:

- **Make it easy to accurately and reliably score student work on the Cognitive Skills Rubric.** The R&D and Platform teams are exploring options for including educator access to scoring calibration modules in the Platform.
- **Assist teachers in providing effective, actionable feedback to students**. In partnership with the C&A and PD teams, we are working to identify educator best practices for providing formative and summative feedback that encourage student growth over the course of the school year, as well as across grades and subjects.

## FURTHER LEARNING REFERENCES

1. **The Science of Summit:** Summit's first research-based white paper provides a detailed outline of the research behind the development of Cognitive Skills, as well as the evidence-based principles and design choices related to Cognitive Skills.
2. **Cognitive Skills Rubric:** The assessment and instruction tool, created in collaboration with SCALE, that outlines the continuum of 36 interdisciplinary, higher-order thinking skills.
3. **[Article] Projects & Cognitive Skills Grading:** Available via the Platform's Learning Space, this article is a helpful resource in understanding how Cognitive Skills are incorporated into a student's grade within Summit Learning.

If you would like additional information on this research project, or are an educator interested in learning about opportunities to try out developing resources (such as Cognitive Skills PD sessions), please contact Katie Wilczak at **kwilczak@summitps.org**. It is likely we will engage in several mini-pilots and teacher engagement sessions throughout the 2017-18 school year.

# Habits of Success: Equipping Students with Tools to Build Habits of Success for School and Life

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The current focus of the Habits of Success project is on how to most effectively support students — through curricula, assessments, the Platform, and instruction — in developing Habits that are transferable across grades and subject levels.

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION

*How should Habits-building be embedded throughout Summit Learning so that all students graduate from high school with commencement-level Habits of Success?*

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

Last year, Summit underwent an extensive process to vet and adopt a research-based framework for Habits of Success. In the spring of 2017, we chose the **Building Blocks for Learning framework**, designed by **Dr. Brooke Stafford-Brizard** and the **TurnAround for Children** organization.

In the 2017-2018 school year, the R&D team is piloting four initiatives related to the development and measurement of Habits of Success:

1. Supports for creating an **effective, consistent learning environment** that helps foster essential skills and mindsets in all learners.
2. Tools for effective, habits-building **1:1 mentor check-ins** each week.
3. **Curriculum and PD** to support a Habits-focused group class each week in Summit Schools that helps students build social awareness and relationship skills, secure attachments and a sense of belonging, and develop a strong Sense of Purpose.
4. A process for measuring students' **Self Direction** based on their activity in the Platform, to inform personalized interventions and ongoing mentorship.

## RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS AND APPLICATIONS

While the above four projects are still in their early stages, we're excited to share early insights focused on the Self Direction initiative. We welcome feedback from readers as we aim to improve the measures for this important Habit over time.

**What Does a Self-Directed Learner Look Like?**

In our ongoing work with SRI, we've identified **independence** (students can do a task without scaffolds) and **transfer** (students can apply a skill in different contexts) as indicators of a successful Self-Directed learner. These key criteria are skills and behaviors that we believe all students should have achieved by high-school graduation.

While every student does not show Self-Direction in exactly the same way, we also find that good **Self-Direction process** (such as clear goal-setting or adjusting an academic or personal goal) is critical for independence and transfer of this key habit.
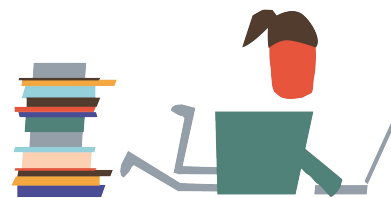
Effective and timely performance of these goals, or **Self-Direction outcomes**, is also critical for independence and transfer, as these show a student can successfully apply Self Direction in varying contexts, something that process measures alone do not show.

**How Can We Assess Students' Growth in Self-Direction?**

Research and practice provide significant evidence that strong Self Direction is required for students to be successful in college, career, and life. Over the past three years, Summit has worked with SRI to develop a formative assessment tool that will allow teachers and students to identify opportunities for growth in students' development of Self Direction, and to track growth in self direction over time.

This tool requires no additional effort by teachers or students as an authentic measure of performance that avoids some of the flaws and biases of more traditional surveys. The assessment tool measures the following criteria using student data already available via the Platform:

| SELF-DIRECTION CRITERIA | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|
| **Goal Setting, Planning, Reflecting** | Students demonstrate Self Direction by setting SMART goals, making plans for achieving those goals, and reflecting on what worked or didn't work after they complete or miss a goal. |
| **Goal Completion** | Students demonstrate Self Direction by completing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound) goals that are self identified. |
| **Pace of Performance** | Students demonstrate Self Direction by staying on-track academically. |
| **Learning and Showing** | Students demonstrate Self Direction by executing plans, adjusting plans based on circumstances, and appropriately preparing for and executing performance tasks. |

# LOOKING FORWARD

- Over the next few months, SRI and Summit are working together to: a) identify the specific platform data that we'll use as a formal measure of students' Self Direction, b) interview participating students and their teachers to assess accuracy of the measure, c) evaluate effectiveness of this measure in the classroom, noting any differences in student's Self-Directedness across courses, and d) identify ways to best capture instances of Self-Directedness that happen outside of the Platform, such as in project work or small groups.
- We'll use these measures to help create interventions in the Platform, such as highlighting for a student when they seem to be underutilizing resources, or highlighting for teachers when a student has requested a content assessment before studying within a playlist.

# FURTHER LEARNING REFERENCES

1. ***The Science of Summit***: Summit Public Schools' seminal white paper that details the research base behind Summit Learning's student outcomes and design choices.
2. **Building Blocks for Learning:** Dr. Brooke Stafford-Brizard's Building Blocks for Learning framework, published with TurnAround for Children and adopted by Summit.
3. **CASEL Guide for Secondary Schools:** The 2015 guide identifies school-based programs that have been evaluated with middle- and high-school students and that promote students' social and emotional competence.
4. **Measurement Matters:** A 2015 academic article, published by Angela L. Duckworth and David S. Yeager, discusses different measures for assessing personal qualities other than cognitive ability; the limitations and advantage of each; and situations in which each is useful as an assessment tool.

If you would like additional information or are interested in providing feedback on this research project, please contact Ross Lescano Lipstein at **rlipstein@summitps.org**.

# Ensuring All Students are College- and Career-Ready: Sharing What Works for Students Behind Grade Level with Summit Learning Community

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. We want to help educators — specifically those working to bring students who start behind closer to grade-level — to better collaborate with peers, build on each others' successes, and problem-solve around challenges through Networked Improvement Communities (NICs).
2. We want to provide avenues for educators to share their knowledge with the Summit Learning community around how they've been successful in accelerating learning for individuals and groups who start the year behind grade level.

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION

*How might we help Summit schools apply principles and practices of improvement science to set clear, ambitious, realistic goals, and then prioritize work on the drivers and change ideas toward those aims?*

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2014-15, Summit joined **Student Agency Improvement Community (SAIC)**, an improvement community led by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. As we built capacity with the principles and practices of improvement science through SAIC, we began applying them internally. In 2016-17, Summit organized and ran its first internal network focused on improving outcomes for English Learners.

By the end of the year, we had reduced the gap in the percentage of incomplete grades between ELs and non-ELs by 50%. Encouraged by this result, we decided to expand our efforts to include all Summit schools willing to engage in applying improvement to our population of students behind grade-level in literacy and numeracy.

# RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS & APPLICATIONS

Many teachers have students who enter the classroom significantly behind grade-level in basic skills, due to a variety of factors that include language or learning differences, transitions between schools, and gaps in previous schooling. We are working to better address these students' needs.

This research project brings together teachers across the Summit Learning network to identify and try out various strategies and interventions, and to then make resulting best practices accessible to all Summit Learning educators.

By the 2018-19 school year, our goal is to identify a set of best practices and student interventions — those that produce better results than in places not using them — and to share these results members of our literacy- and numeracy-focused NICs. We want to know what strategies and practices are working for which students and under what kinds of conditions, so that we can recommend specific actions to schools based on their school profile and context.

A **Networked Improvement Community (NIC)** is a group organized for collective impact around a common aim.

# LOOKING FORWARD

This project is designed to turn best practice into standard practice across the Summit Learning network. To that end, we are forming two NICs — teams of teachers whose literacy and numeracy practices show evidence of accelerating learning for all students, particularly those who enter school furthest behind in these foundational skills.

As these two NICs form over the coming months — one centered on literacy and the other on numeracy — we will be focused on exploring the following:
- Training and supporting participating teachers to use Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA), a process for short-cycle testing and iteration that yields improvement in teaching and learning practices over time.
- Finding the most effective avenues for best sharing evidence-based practices with the entire Summit Learning community, such as teacher PD and trainings.
- Developing data tools that allow us to identify focal populations of students, for any school or classroom, that are behind grade level in literacy and numeracy; assess how far each student is behind; and track growth of these students over time.

# FURTHER LEARNING REFERENCES

1. **Improvement Principles**: The Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching identifies 6 core principles of improvement for schools, including the use of networked communities.
2. **Accelerating How We Learn to Improve**: An article from *Educational Researcher* that describes the value and advantages of a networked improvement approach to school improvement.
3. **Continuous Improvement in Education**: Through a series of case studies, this white paper from the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching identifies key patterns of organizations focused on continuous improvement.

If you would like to join Summit's Networked Improvement Community, or would like further information on the project, please contact Kyle Moyer at **kmoyer@summitps.org**. Our team is specifically interested in working with teachers who are willing to apply a disciplined process to their teaching practice and an openness to collaborating with other educators across the network.

# Family Engagement: Improving Student Outcomes Through Automated Communications to Parents and Guardians

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Automated communications embedded within the Platform have the potential to be a powerful tool in enabling families to better support their students by informing families about what students are learning, how they are progressing in school, and what actions they can take to support them.
2. This year, Summit will conduct an automated communications pilot across Summit Schools, followed by a small sample of Summit Learning Schools (pending initial results). A randomized group of families will receive text messages and e-mails about their student's coursework and academic progress, as well as tips to support their student academically.
3. We aim to offer the program to all Summit Schools' families by fall 2018.

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION

***How might Summit Learning schools better partner with parents to accelerate student outcomes and ensure Summit Learning is community-embedded and culturally responsive?***

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

External research has proven that automated communications to parents can improve both student academic and behavioral outcomes. For example:

- **Harvard University's Student Social Support (S3) Lab** conducted a study with 7,000 students in a large, urban district, in which parents received texts about missing assignments. Study results showed a 1/3 increase in letter grade (i.e., C+ to B-) on average across subjects.
- Another **Harvard study** showed that weekly texts to families with a one-sentence message about student schoolwork or behavior helped reduce the number of students who failed to earn course credit by 41%.
- A **Columbia University study** proved the value of the text message intervention at LAUSD. The effects of this low cost intervention were on par with results from the **Harlem Children's Zone**, according to the study's author.

Because of the effectiveness and efficiency of this type of family engagement, Summit Public Schools launched a small pilot in 2016-17, in which families at some Summit Schools received text messages and emails (automated communications) about their student's academic progress and upcoming projects. This pilot led to greater parent engagement with students and the school, and parents were also highly satisfied with the increased level of communications:

- 100% of families reported that the communications were "extremely" or "very helpful," and that they were checking in with their students more often on academics.
- Mentors reported that students were more focused during Personalized Learning Time, with many monitoring how many Power Focus Areas they needed to pass to stay on track.
- The pilot was well-received by families; however, because there was no control group, we could not determine the impact on student outcomes.

## RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS & APPLICATIONS

Because of our successful small pilot last year, as well as demand from parents and teachers, we are working this year with the Platform team to pilot an automated communication (text and email) feature that is embedded within the Platform. The primary goals of the automated communication program are to:
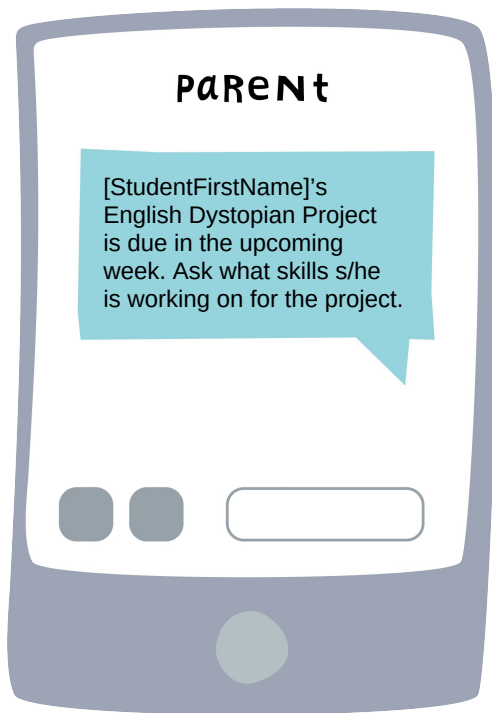
- Improve student academic performance and outcomes
- Inform families and support their understanding of how a student is progressing academically, what he or she is learning, and how to support their student in ongoing school work and activities
- Automate communications to families of basic academic and coursework information in the Platform for teachers and mentors

## LOOKING FORWARD

Almost every Summit School will be participating in the Family Engagement pilot this year! Summit will also be collaborating on this effort with **Harvard's S3 Lab**, leading researchers in the field of school-to-family communications.

In the automated communications pilot, a group of Summit Schools' families will be chosen at random to receive text messages and e-mails about their student's coursework and academic progress, as well as tips on how to support their student academically. Messages will be sent from the Summit Learning Platform, with directions to reach out to a student's mentor with additional questions. Families can opt out of receiving communications at any time.

The pilot will run from November 2017 to June 2018; pending initial results, we plan to expand the program to a small sample of Summit Learning Schools.

PARENT

[StudentFirstName]'s English Dystopian Project is due in the upcoming week. Ask what skills s/he is working on for the project.

While external research and our small pilot has indicated the potential positive impact of this program, conducting a controlled pilot is the only way to determine whether this program improves student academic outcomes. This is necessary because:

- Summit's unique school model and environment may impact expected student outcomes.
- We want to learn which messages are effective or not, so that we can optimize communications with families.
- Positive proof points that the program works will inform when and how we expand this feature and and other programs for families at Summit Learning Schools.

## FURTHER LEARNING REFERENCES

1. **Parental Involvement Overrated? Don't buy it:** A summary of various research studies showing the significant impact that brief teacher/school communications with parents can have on student performance.
2. **Texting Parents Timely Actionable Information Increases Student Performance**: This is a summary of Harvard's S3 Lab study on how sending text messages on missing assignments improved grades.
3. **Is this Technology Useless? How Seemingly Irrelevant Factors Affect Adoption and Efficacy**: This publication out of the Harvard's S3 Lab demonstrates how simple changes to the implementation of new technologies can lead to very different results on whether new technologies are valuable for parents and are effective in helping reduce achievement gaps.
4. **Helping the Poor in Education: The Power of a Simple Nudge**: A 2015 *New York Times* article makes reference to a Columbia University study that saw positive effects on student academic achievement when personalized text messages were sent to parents.

If you would like additional information on this research project, please contact Betty Chen Rojas at **bchenrojas@summitps.org**.

# Teacher Residency Program: Summit Begins Training Teachers for Personalized Learning

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Summit Learning's Teacher Residency is the first in the nation to train teachers specifically for personalized learning classrooms
2. Primary objectives of the residency program include building a high-quality pipeline of personalized learning teachers and increasing the diversity of the teaching force.

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTION

*How do we maintain a high quality residency program, aligned to our program vision, values, and beliefs, while ensuring the program is sustainable in the long-term?*

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

Summit started designing a credentialing program in June 2015. We applied for accreditation from the **California Commission on Teacher Credentialing** (CTC) in June 2016, and we received accreditation in March 2017. The program was designed in partnership with the **Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity** (SCALE).

Initially, Summit began its own teacher induction program, a requirement for all first and second year teachers in California to support ongoing development. We integrated this new teacher support program into the structures already in place at Summit to ensure a more coherent learning experience for new teachers, in which they could move fluidly from their pre-service learning through their second year of teaching. We also used this time to explore the processes that would need to be in place to run our own credentialing program.

We designed Summit Learning's Teacher Residency using a residency model, where Residents spend 4 full days each week working alongside an experienced Cooperating Teacher and 1 day on coursework that is personalized and self-paced.

*Summit Learning's first cohort of teacher residents learning with the program's facilitators*

We believe this model offers **four key benefits**:

1. We expect Residents to enter their first year teaching with **strong skills and a clear understanding of personalized learning**, having spent a year in a personalized learning classroom. An increase in teacher preparedness will lead to better outcomes for students.
2. Research shows that **residency models lead to better retention**, with greater satisfaction, preparation, and desire to commit to the teaching profession.
3. Cooperating Teachers, the experienced teachers who work alongside our Residents, gain professional development through their role. We hope to see **increased satisfaction and retention of Cooperating Teachers** as they grow their mentorship skills in the classroom.
4. The program intentionally mirrors the design of Summit's student model, such that Residents engage in **personalized learning that is project-based, skills-focused, and self-paced.**

# RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS & APPLICATIONS

- Accredited by the California Teaching Commission — one of a small group of school systems in California to receive this accreditation.
- Recruiting Residents for Cohort 2! Please share **our website** with potential applicants to our program, where they can sign up to receive updates on the program. **Applications for the 2018-19 school year will open on November 1, 2017.**

# LOOKING FORWARD

During the 2017-18 school year, the residency program work will focus on:

- Implementing the program and learning from Residents' data about the effectiveness of the playlists and projects that make up the coursework.
- Determining the most effective structures to support Residents in their learning, while also maximizing the efficiency of the team's resources.
- Setting up a partnership with a university to offer a Master's degree to Residents as part of the program.

# FURTHER LEARNING REFERENCES

1.  ***LA School Report* article:** In partnership with news site *The 74*, the *LA School Report* covered the launch of Summit's teacher residency program in August 2017.
2.  ***Business Inside*r article:** *Business Inside*r publicized Summit's Teacher Residency Program in September 2017.
3.  ***The Mercury News* article:** The Bay area's *The Mercury News* announced the first personalized education residency through Summit.
4.  **Summit's Teacher Residency Program:** Visit Summit's website for the Teacher Residency Program, where applicants can sign up to receive updates and apply for the 2018-19 school year on November 1, 2017.

We intend to support schools throughout the Summit Learning Program in the future, so if you are a school leader or a network administrator interested in bringing this program to your school/district, please reach out to Pam Lamcke at **plamcke@summitps.org**.

# Summit Learning Diploma: Creating a High School Diploma that Represents the Value of Summit Learning

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Diploma Project is a long-term research project that aims to answer the question: How can we design a Summit Learning Diploma that represents our graduates' skills, knowledge, habits, and purpose?

## GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- *How might we develop structures and processes for a summative capstone and ongoing portfolio for all Summit Learning students, to ensure they leave 12th grade with all four Summit Learning outcomes?*
- *How might we define, assess, and help students build "Sense of Purpose" so that all students graduate demonstrating purpose at a commencement level?*

## RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUND

Why did Summit decide to develop its own Diploma?

1. Throughout their Summit Learning experience, students are developing Cognitive Skills, acquiring Content Knowledge, building their Habits of Success, and discovering a Sense of Purpose; however, we have yet to determine clear criteria to assess these four Summit Learning outcomes at the commencement level.  A Summit Learning Diploma will help us further clarify what achievement of all four student outcomes looks like upon graduation from high school.
2. The Summit Learning Diploma will serve as a signal to colleges and employers that our students graduate having achieved all four student outcomes — including Sense of Purpose — and thus are top-tier candidates for college and a diverse set of careers.

# SUMMIT LEARNING STUDENT OUTCOMES

| **Cognitive Skills** | **Content Knowledge** | **Habits of Success** | **Sense of Purpose** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Essential and transferable lifelong skills | Understanding and application of fundamental content | Mindsets and behaviors that support well-being | Self-awareness and pursuit of interests and goals |

## LOOKING FORWARD

Like the Summit Learning Teacher Residency, the Diploma is a long-term project. Unlike the Teacher Residency, which was formed over three years before its launch in August 2017, the Diploma project is still in its infancy.

This year, the Diploma project work will focus on:

1. Building relationships with universities and external partners who will recognize a Summit Diploma
2. Developing a capstone experience to celebrate a student's achievement and assess proficiency in all for Summit Learning outcomes
3. Building and testing curriculum on Sense of Purpose

During the 2017-18 pilot, seniors will have the opportunity to take an **Expeditions course** that is focused on exploring their Sense of Purpose. This course will also offer students the opportunity to complete and give feedback on our proposed four components of a summative capstone:

- **Portfolio:** Students will develop portfolios of work that represent all four student outcomes. The portfolio will also include student reflections on growth.
- **Oral Defense:** Students will present a 15-minute oral defense about key components of their portfolios, including their identity as individuals and in relation to their communities, as well as long-term goals after high school and their credible paths forward.
- **Personal Advisory Board:** Students will assemble a group of trusted advisors, from whom they can seek guidance and support during and after their high school experience.
- **Next Step Ceremony:** Students will present evidence of their next step after graduation, and celebrate the next step in their lives with their personal advisory board.

Through emerging partnerships with the California Performance Assessment Collaborative (CPAC) at Stanford, researchers at Harvard and Stanford Universities, the California College of the Arts, Dr. Brooke Stafford-Brizard at the Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative, and a growing network of college admissions officers, we will continue to pursue the development of a meaningful Diploma that will support all students as they pursue lives of meaning and purpose.

Amy Sandoz and Katie Goddard lead the Summit Learning Diploma work, and are working closely with Lucretia Witte on the Summit Expeditions team and the entire Shasta community — including Executive Director Wren Maletsky, Assistant Director Ava Petrash, and the Summit Schools 12th grade mentor team — to develop an experience that is meaningful and enlightening for all Summit Learning students.

If you would like additional information on this research project, please contact Amy Sandoz at **asandoz@summitps.org**.
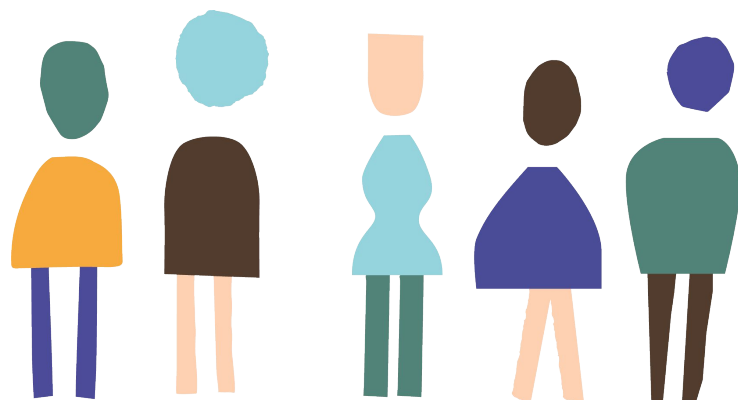
# The R&D Team

# Meet Summit's R&D Team



*Summit's R&D Team at The Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg, California, August 2017*

**Top row, left to right:**
- Mark Rizkallah, Summit Learning Teacher Residency Mentor
- Pilar Strutin-Belinoff, Director of UX Researcher
- Pam Lamcke, Director of Summit Learning Teacher Residency
- Emily Richey, Summit Learning Teacher Residency Mentor
- Katie Wilczak, Director of Research Projects
- Kyle Moyer, Director of Improvement
- Ross Lescano Lipstein, Senior Director of Research
- Sazan Ghafur, Site-Based Research Manager
- Adam Carter, Chief Academic Officer
- Alie Kelly, Site-Based Research Manager

**Bottom row, left to right:**
- Molly Posner, Credentialing Manager
- Betty Chen-Rojas, Director of Research Projects
- Amy Sandoz, Director of Diploma
- Lisa Goochee, Executive Assistant
- Katie Goddard, Site-Based Research Manager

**Not Pictured:**
- Meilani Clay-Solomon, Manager of Design Research
- Taylor Garland, UX Research Manager

SUMMIT LEARNING