STEAM Summer

Science · Math · Art · Reading · Technology

2026

FINAL REPORT

















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2026

REGISTRATION

Pre-Registration Totals

1,755	862	2,617
Youth	Adult	Total

June Registration Totals

6,781	2,449	9,230
Youth	Adult	Total

July Registration Totals

8,179	3,061	11,240
Youth	Adult	Total

Ending Registration Total

8,544	3,166	11,710
Youth	Adult	Total

YEARLY COMPARISON

Sign Ups	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
Youth	**8,577**	7,827	7,029	8,005	7,443
Adult	**3,166**	2,806	2,359	1,956	1,745
Total	**11,710**	10,633	9,388	9,961	9,188

2026

REGISTRATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Registration by Grade Level

Babies and Toddlers	1,056
Preschool	816
Kindergarten	540
1st Grade	**1,135**
2nd Grade	830
3rd Grade	867
4th Grade	886
5th Grade	708
6th Grade	484
7th Grade	263
8th Grade	310
9th Grade	204
10th Grade	107
11th Grade	90
12th Grade	57
No Grade Level	177

Registration by Age

0	109
1	199
2	367
3	498
4	559
5	831
6	**851**
7	800
8	818
9	808
10	777
11	467
12	446
13	348
14	224
15	154
16	96
17	101
18	90

TOP TEN LOCATIONS

Branches with Most Youth Sign Ups

Polk-Wisdom Branch Library	1,357
Arcadia Park Branch Library	1,125
Audelia Road Branch Library	1,046
Martin Luther King Branch Library	537
Fretz Park Branch Library	364
Hampton-Illinois Branch Library	339
Lancaster-Kiest Branch Library	332
Pleasant Grove Branch Library	332
Lochwood Branch Library	278
Lakewood Branch Library	271

Branches with Most Adult Sign Ups

Audelia Road Branch Library	428
Martin Luther King Branch Library	317
Polk-Wisdom Branch Library	188
Central Library	156
Fretz Park Branch Library	151
Lakewood Branch Library	137
White Rock Hills Branch Library	133
Lochwood Branch Library	124
Mountain Creek Branch Library	121
Pleasant Grove Branch Library	111

2026

PARTICIPATION

Youth

Participants: **8,577**

Participation Percentage: **83%**

Adult

Participants: **3,166**

Participation Percentage: **82%**

Participation is defined as logging any amount of reading and/or activities.

READ

Youth

Total Readers Who Logged: **4,499**
Logged Days: **125,637**
Logged Minutes: **2,512,740**

Adult

Total Readers Who Logged: **1,749**
Logged Days: **57,003**
Logged Minutes: **1,710,090**

DISCOVER/CREATE ACTIVITIES

Youth

Total Readers Who Logged: **2,594**
Total Activities Logged: **25,926**

Adult

Total Readers Who Logged: **840**
Total Activities Logged: **6,150**

READING COMPREHENSION



812 children particiapted in the new Super Reader Badge where they practiced reading comprehension skills over the summer.

2026

YOUTH DISCOVER & CREATE ACTIVITIES

"Created an I spy game"
Preschooler - Bachman Lake

"I created/designed a book cover for my ongoing book. Since my book is mainly fantasy and a subplot of romance, I intergrated aspects of my book into the cover as well."
9th grader - Vickery Park

"How to perfect my Swedish Pancakes. The pans you use for cooking really do make a difference."
10th grader - Audelia Road

"Explored College options at the University of North Texas at Dallas."
12th grader - Highland Hills

"I learned how to play the piano and violin."
3rd grader - North Oak Cliff

"I made a poster explaining my new society I would create if I had a small town of 100 people."
8th grader - Forest Green

"Learned how to play Pokemon at the library"
Kindergardner- Timberglen

"Exploring and learning Spanish. I will be taking Intro to Spanish classes for 8th grade."
7th grader - Mountain Creek

"Today I went to the Arcadia Branch Library and I built a bridge. I wanted my bridge to look like the bridge in San Francisco. I used tape, straws, card board, popsicle sticks and paper to build my bridge. My bridge held 6 bean bags."
6th grader - Arcadia Park

"I learned where the kids non-fiction section is at my local branch library and I found that the section with books on World War 1 is 940.3."
3rd grader - Lakewood

2026

ADULT DISCOVER & CREATE ACTIVITIES

"Attended Nature Expo"
Central Library

"Checked out the seed library at Lakewood Branch"
Lakewood

"At my kids' dentist appointment, I discovered how a child's teeth look in an x-ray, amazed how you can see how the adult teeth pushing are up right behind the baby teeth."
Timberglen

"Created a kitchen floor plan - relaxing and now I want to learn how to demo"
Forest Green

"Created a new hairstyle to wear. It's cute, protective, and fashionable!"
Polk-Wisdom

"I attended a Death Cafe and learned about Buddist Philiosphy."
Preston Royal

"Created a fabric covered box for Tarot card deck at the Audelia Road Library
Audelia Road

Discover Perle Beads at the kid's craft program. I made a red, white, and blue heart. It is cute!
Lochwood

"Made a new recipe from the book, Learned that avocados can be used in desserts"
Grauwyler Park

"Learned violin at the Dallas library"
MLK Branch

2026

REWARDS

Youth

Total Completions: **1,270**

Total Earned Rewards: **14,635**

Total Redeemed Rewards: **10,890**

Adult

Total Completions: **372**

Total Earned Rewards: **4,478**

Total Redeemed Rewards: **2,883**

GRAND PRIZES

Youth

Total Grand Prizes Redeemed: **12**

Total Branch Prizes Redeemed: **29**

Adult

Total Grand Prizes Redeemed: **8**



Ryder - Lakewood

Thank you so much again! Ryder is so happy!!! I'm so proud of him for staying focus this summer and reading so many books! He really challenged himself!

Chevon D.
Ryder's mom

2026

PROGRAMMING

Youth Programming

2026 Program Attendance: **46,280***
2025 Program Attendance: 46,971*

2026 Total Programs: **1,445**
2025 Total Programs: 1,731

**Includes all programs with the Event Type=Out of School Time as well as storytime and other regular programs for an under 18 audience held between June and August*

Adult Programming

2026 Program Attendance: **8,742***
2025 Program Attendance: 8,413*

2026 Total Programs: **1,230**
2025 Total Programs: 758

**Includes all programs with the Event labeled Adult and Seniors*



SUMMER MEALS



2026 Total Meals Served: **17,527**
2025 Total Meals Served: 13,158

2026 Total Locations: **18 sites**
2025 Total Locations: 15 sites

Site Locations:

- Arcadia Park
- Bachman Lake
- Central Library
- Dallas West Branch
- Forest Green Branch
- Fretz Park
- Grauwyler Park Branch
- Hampton-Illinois Branch
- Highland Hills Branch
- Lancaster Kiest Branch
- Martin Luther King Branch
- Pleasant Grove Branch
- Polk-Wisdom Branch
- Prairie Creek Branch
- Skyline Branch
- Timberglen Branch
- Vickery Park Branch
- White Rock Hills Branch

2026

SUMMER SATURDAYS AT CENTRAL



Discovery Fair
Attendance = 85



Rainbow Connections
Attendance = 181



French Voices in Art
Attendance = 190



K-Poppin at Central
Attendance = 203



Nature Expo
Attendance = 286



Canvas of Freedom
Attendance = 150



Liberty and Lace Ball
Attendance = 274

2026

PARTNERSHIPS

Dallas Park & Recreation

Summer Camps

Dallas Public Library hosted 11 camp locations this summer. Each camp received a dedicated “library hour” where campers experienced the library, checked out books, and engaged with SMART Summer.

Camp locations included:

- Arcadia Park
- Dallas West
- Forest Green
- Grauwyler Park
- Hampton Illinois
- Plesant Grove
- Polk Wisdom
- Prairie Creek
- Skyline
- Vickery Park
- White Rock Hills

Teen All Access Pass

Dallas Public Library partnered with Dallas Parks and Recreation’s Teen All Access Pass, a program included in the Mayor’s Summer of Safety program. In this program, teens visited any Dallas Public Library location with their pass and received a free Teen Kit that included a bedazzle kit, crochet kit, scrap bookmark kit, or watercolor kit. This year’s participation increased by 20%.

Dallas Aquatics

Dallas Public Library partnered with Dallas Aquatics to provide storytime to aquatic centers and community pools.

Locations included:

- Kidd Springs - Presented by North Oak Branch Staff
- Harry Stone - Presented by Lochwood Branch Staff
- Samuel Grand - Presented by Martin Luther King Branch Staff
- Exline Aquatic Center - Presented by Martin Luther King Branch Staff
- Fretz Park Spray Ground - Presented by Fretz Park Branch Staff
- Bahama Beach - Presented by Hampton-Illinois Branch Staff
- Tommie Allen Pool - Presented by Lancaster-Kiest Branch Staff
- Timberglen Spray Ground - Presented by Timberglen Branch Staff

2026

PARTNERSHIPS

Perot Museum of Nature and Science

The Perot Museum of Nature and Science provided free summer programming to many Dallas Public Library locations. Programs included STEM Clubs and Community Science Meetups.

Locations included:

- Arcadia Park
- Audelia Road
- Dallas West
- Forest Green
- Fretz Park
- Hampton-Illinois
- Kleberg Rylie
- Lochwood
- Martin Luther King
- Mountain Creek
- North Oak Cliff
- Pleasant Grove
- Polk-Wisdom
- Preston Royal
- White Rock Hills

Dallas Arboretum

The Dallas Arboretum provided free summer STEM Stops to 24 branch locations. Topics included fossils, life cycle of a pepper, seed dispersal, and pollinators.

Locations included:

- Arcadia Park
- Audelia Road
- Bachman Lake
- Dallas West
- Forest Green
- Fretz Park
- Grauwyler Park
- Hampton-Illinois
- Highland Hills
- Kleberg Rylie
- Lancaster Kiest
- Lochwood
- Martin Luther King
- North Oak Cliff
- Oak Lawn
- Park Forest
- Pleasant Grove
- Prairie Creek
- Preston Royal
- Rennder Frankford
- Skyline
- Timberglen
- Vickery Park
- White Rock Hills

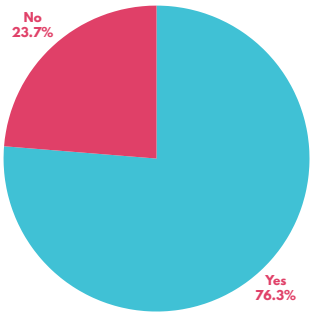
2026

PARENT SMART SUMMER SURVEY

Responses: 156

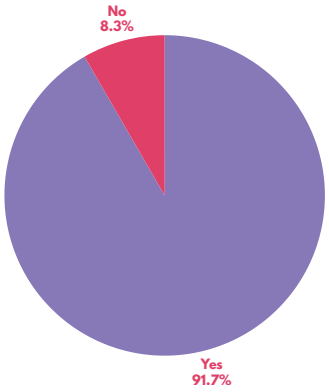
My child/ children attended library programs frequently (at least once a week) during the summer.

Yes = 119
No = 37



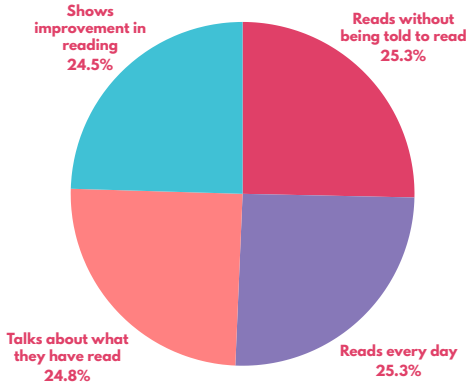
As a result of attending library programs, my child/ children had educational experiences they otherwise would not have during the summer.

Yes = 143
No = 13



Since attending summer programs at the library, my child has shown signs of the following behaviors:

Reads without being told to read = 94
Reads everyday = 94
Talks about what they have read = 92
Shows improvement in reading = 91



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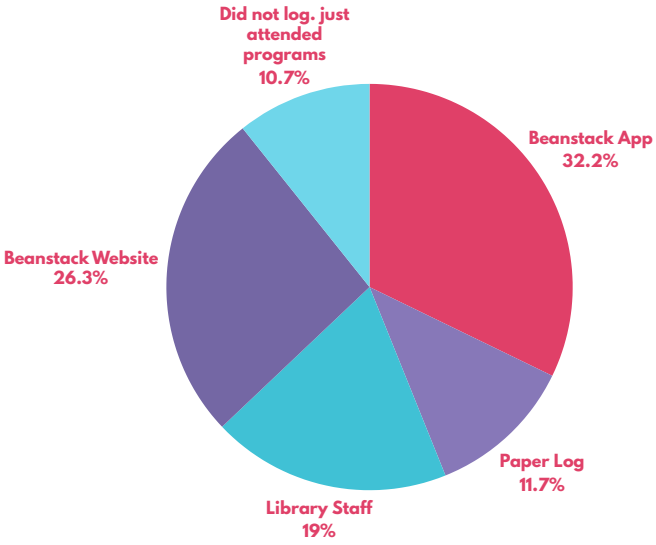
PARENT SMART SUMMER SURVEY

Continued...

I logged my child/ children's summer reading through the:

Beanstack App = 66
Paper Log = 24
Library Staff = 39
Beanstack Website = 54
Attended events only = 22



Overall SMART Summer Experience

4.89

Average Rating

Based on a 5 star rating scale



"The library has opened so many doors for us, from new books to add to our house, from social skills, and finding community. We are so glad we found our library. We truly cherish it. "

2026

IMPACT

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- My kids are motivated to choose their books and read them. Reading more at home without me asking. Learned new skills with the library activities. They talked about how fun the activities were. My kids got to meet new friends at the library.
- It helps encourage my kids to keep reading over the summer
- My daughter (3yo) loves coming to story telling, she keeps singing the song she learns there and talking about it the whole week.
- My child understands the stories and spells out certain words
- They gave our boys the opportunity to engage with other kids in our community.
- She enjoys reading so much more.
- My children enjoy coming to the library and ask to participate in the reading programs. They have an interest in reading and interacting with staff and other children. My child's vocabulary has increased.
- I think the programs are great and very educational. They have helped my son to be confident in his abilities and to create ideas with his hands. I bring him every year. Thank you.
- The Smart summer programs have helped us to keep learning new things and improve our reading skills.
- We have made friends and my son has become more happy and social.
- It was wonderful. We read different books and it was a learning experience for my son and me
- This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to get closer to reading. My daughters have learned so much from the books—they've started using new vocabulary to express their ideas, and they've even come up with new games and creative ideas. They're more interested in continuing to learn and love visiting the library.
- Attending programs helped my kids with interactions with other kids. Also cool events that they might not of seen anywhere else.

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IMPACT

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- Participating has showed my toddler how to interact with other kids and socialize and her favorite part is the color song and story time
- The library smart summer challenge has open many doors for us. From receiving bilingual books to add to our home library, to social skills and most importantly finding community with people and staff. We are so happy we found our library and will continue to support it.
- My child loves to go to the Library everyday. She has learned so much.
- Attending the programs has given my child something to look forward to. She loves to interact with the staff and other children.
- The activities gave my son additional social opportunities. He loved picking out book rewards and it got him into a new chapter book series. He also loved the opportunity to learn more about animals and the ability to touch them.
- My youngest is reading more independently
- Both of my kids now love to read even more and they are reading everyday.
- He reads more and reading has improved
- It was very nice to bring the progress of each day by learning something new. We discovered beautiful books that otherwise we would not have done. Both my son and I loved it and it helped us develop a more beautiful relationship between mother and son.
- SMART made my child excited about reading, and made reading fun and rewarding!
- Improved performance in learning knowledge skills an speech
- They are able to read better and recognize words
- We couldn’t afford summer camps this year and the library events helped kept my daughter busy with things to do and books to read.

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SUGGESTIONS

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- Better advertising
- They were really excited to participate in the offered programs, the only thing that I think could e improved is to have a stage so everyone can see because some times it was difficult to see and listen to the activities. Bookmarks in NorthPark Center
- Better visualization of the programs offered
- I love this library and all its programs. This staff is always so welcoming to my kids and me. My one complaint is the rec center being here. The library staff does their best to be sure there are enough supplies and meals for everyone, but the camp takes up alot of resources. When my kids and I did come in for crafts and meals, sometimes the materials would be out or there were no more seats or tables. This camp really should be help at an actual rec center, not the library.
- The quality of book prizes at our local branch was very poor, and the kids were sad about how few prizes there were (only 3 this year) and no food coupons for reading. Even in recent years it was much better. I also understand the move to digital but having paper logs motivates kids more because they can see their own progress.
- Promoting the adventure in advance
- Shorter increments to prizes based on age
- My Children's school requires logging reading minutes in beanstack app but it would not link to the public library beanstack account. I didn't want to double log the minutes for 3 kids so they didn't participate in the library challenge although they read all summer. Please find a fix to the beanstack system
- Encourages daily reading. Getting prizes gave us a reason to go to the library and check out more books from the library. Teen activity packs from the teen access pass were a fun new addition. Miss having the Pizza Hut reward and Rangers game reward that we've had in past years.
- Due to our schedule, my child only attended a couple of the programs but loved both! We are thankful for evening events (such as the drive-in movie at the Southwestern branch). A lot of the toddler programs are during our work hours so if possible, add more toddler programs in the evening.
- Please have more events at Fretz Park library.
- I would like more group activities.

2026

SUGGESTIONS

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- We loved the activities and the book prizes. Something was wrong with the website and even though we logged every single day, we only got book prizes 3x (should have been 5).
- It would be wonderful if the library staff could be more engaging with the children. They always seem bothered by helping.
- My child will enter kindergarten as a reader. Her confidence with reading has exploded. Could we ask Beanstack to allow date changes for activities and creations? I forget to log on the same day a lot because I want to be in the moment with my daughter.
- It was too many discover/create things for us. We read nearly every day but those were hard to fulfill with our traveling our schedule.
- Participating in the SMART Summer challenge and library programs helped my child enjoy reading more and learn new things in a fun way. He was excited to visit the library. It also gave us a good reason to spend time together as a family. For next year, it would be great to have more hands-on activities or small prizes to keep kids motivated. Maybe include more programs for baby too. Thank you for organizing such a helpful and fun experience!
- Our kids really enjoyed the program. I love taking them out when they were bored at Home. It is extremely hard to limit Screen Time nowadays. This program was very helpful. I only wish there was notifications on being stuck up to remind me to log the reading days. Overall, a great experience.
- My kids were eager to earn and pick out their book prizes. However, we preferred the previous program (of 50 days for 5 books) over this year's max of 3 books each.
- My children get excited about selecting the prizes earned at the library. They selected new books to read - so we expanded our home library. Next year, I encourage the library to promote the library even more in advance, including through our local schools, and have some level of kickoff party at every branch library. Also, having as many programs as possible for children offered at the branches on weekends is ideal.
- Have food coupons for healthier places? Or maybe vouchers for books from somewhere - by the time my kids picked their free books they were all Spanish books which we aren’t fluent to read.

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GENERAL FEEDBACK

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- My child attended D&D youth campaign. This gave my child the opportunity to socialize with others and she researched D&D through books.
- Great program
- It just makes learning fun. I think it was great, felt like the right amount.
- More interaction with my son and he's thrilled to come the library on his own
- It was great!
- My kids enjoyed the Lego challenges and we really liked coming to check out new books every week. They were very motivated to read/log their reading with the beanstack app so they can earn badges/prizes
- They loved it!!
- Literacy. Avoid summer slump
- The programs were so much fun this summer. They always are! Thank you Pleasant Grove library!
- It keeps them motivated and eager to read
- Kids enjoyed logging their reading.
- Gives the child something to do and learning experiences.
- Hands on activities and science experiments. Calendar should show activities and location on same page. Sometimes it's hard to calculate the drive between activities.
- My kids love reading and learning!
- Reading with the thought of earning a prize motivated me tremendously!
- He loved everything they did this summer.
- It has been amazing! We loved it and can’t wait until next summer! Thank you for helping us enrich our reading this summer!
- Gave us things to look forward to during the week during summer break.
- Encouraged daily reading
- It was our first time for this Summer to attend to the Library. It was great coming to the library my child love it no changes we loved everything y'all did for us.
- Summer Reading Program

2026

GENERAL FEEDBACK

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- My son loves the actives provided my SMART Summer and helped him keep track of his reading.
- My family is thankful for the SMART program as it gave us the opportunity to learn and discover different things. This summer we would have not been the same without it. I wish more people in the community (especially Dallas West Brach) knew about be program. Sometimes the events at the West Dallas library were empty and my family was the only ones who attended.
- We weren't able to attend any library programs, but we spent a lot of time reading and learning about new things through podcasts, books, travel. We enjoy participating every year!
- My son loves to enter his reading every day and see that he has completed it for MANY days in a row!
- Excited about reading
- I loved that you didn't specify a time to read each day. It made it much less stressful and fun to just read!
- No challenges.
- Reading
- Fun and educational
- She loves read and she feels a special moment with mom and dad
- Crafternoon and STEM afternoon were new programs for us and we enjoyed them as an addition to our regular library visits
- My grandchildren had experiences through books since we were inside do to my hospitalization
- My two daughters learned to READ because of this program and now LOVE reading books all due to this program! They look forward to it EVERY year!! Please don't end it ever!
- Help them experience new things
- Motivated kids to read over the summer
- The kids love the books!
- Having access to learning materials

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GENERAL FEEDBACK

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- My children were encouraged to try different types of creative projects during the summer. They were motivated by the possibility of the grand prize drawing. They read on their own more than previous summers and asked to get new books from the library regularly.
- My child asks me to read to him while he's in the tub.
- He really enjoyed reading at times that weren't just bedtime.
- Gave us enriching fun experiences and motivation to keep up with reading over summer
- We always enjoy participating in the SMART Summer challenge - it encourages our children to read more frequently and the free books often help us discover new authors and genres. We love the summer programming as well!
- We continue our educational stride thru the summer break months
- We were not able to attend, but we did the online challenge. This encouraged my daughter to go to the library once a week to get new books. She reread every book we got numerous times. I love the online ability for her to participate. The prizes and “my own book” were a big hit!! Please keep that again next year.
- Definitely got us to more events at the library!
- We enjoy participating in the reading program and since my kids are home for most of the summer. We enjoy the library events to help enrich them over the summer.
- My kids already enjoy reading, but they really enjoyed participating in this summer's events! Also, my daughter was so excited to win a prize from the grand prize drawing! Thank you for providing a program which gives kids such a positive experience.
- Programs were great and age appropriate.
- They love the programs, events, the recognition, and positive praise from staff, parents and they absolutely enjoy picking out free books.
- Got the kids excited to read and try new activities that they otherwise wouldn’t have done

2026

GENERAL FEEDBACK

FROM PARENT SURVEY

- My kids already enjoy reading, but they really enjoyed participating in this summer's events! Also, my daughter was so excited to win a prize from the grand prize drawing! Thank you for providing a program which gives kids such a positive experience.
- Programs were great and age appropriate.
- They love the programs, events, the recognition, and positive praise from staff, parents and they absolutely enjoy picking out free books.
- Got the kids excited to read and try new activities that they otherwise wouldn't have done
- My kids are more interested in reading. They're motivated to continue visiting the library and select the books they want to read. Also they enjoyed the activities like crafts and coding.
- We love the library and the staff they are amazing and helpful especially floors 2,4, and 1
- My children look forward and enjoy our time at the Library. The Pleasant Grove Branch has awsome staff. I have visited other branches, but the staff here is so welcoming.
- We thought it was awesome and are excited about next summer
- The kids enjoyed attendign the library summer programming. The reading challenge was a fun way to engage them and promote reading. They also enjoyed the free books they won as part of the challenge prizes.

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