

BASIC's

9th summer

LEARNING ACADEMY



Report Card 2025



Program details and outcomes

Basic Assistance to Students in the Community
Borrego Springs, CA

Supporting Students at a Critical Transition

Our programs are designed specifically for students who have fallen behind and need an educational boost. All of the students we serve performed below grade level before attending the Learning Academy. We focus on critical stages in a child's learning journey, points that research identifies as pivotal for long-term academic success. By supporting students at these junctures, we help ensure they don't get left behind academically. Even incremental improvements—a few percentage points in growth—represent meaningful and lasting progress for these learners.

What are the Critical Junctures?

“Learning to Read”

K – 3rd Grade



“Reading to Learn”

4th Grade
and beyond

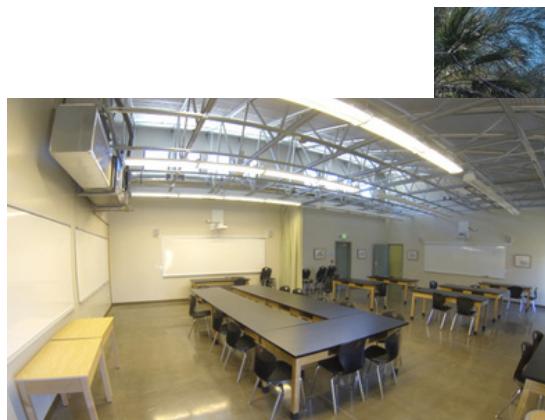
Middle school math is a
similar turning point



From Falling Behind to Moving Ahead

A Model for Engaged, Experiential Learning

The Learning Academy is a transformative, ‘school-without-walls’ summer program held each July at the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center in Borrego Springs, CA. The program provides small classes, personalized attention, hands-on enrichment activities, and over 100 hours of immersive, tuition-free instruction—complete with all academic supplies—ensuring that every student thrives in a supportive and engaging learning environment.



Classes Target these Three Areas

[Academic Improvement] 35 - 50% of students will achieve grade equivalent on standardized tests. Scores are based on pre- and post-testing

Note: Student counts reflect available data at assessment periods and may vary slightly due to attendance or testing circumstances. Percentile data are relative rankings and may not capture full mastery of skills

[Fostering a Love for Learning] Instill a passion for education, creating lifelong learners

[Promoting Regular Attendance] Prioritize over 95% attendance rates for continuous growth

Brief Description of the Struggle

Resource Accessibility

Limited Access to Educational Resources: Students often lack access to necessary educational resources, including books for personal libraries, technology for learning, and academic support outside of the regular school year.

Language Barriers

About 89% of Borrego's students come from Spanish-speaking homes where Spanish is the primary language. Many are long-term English learners who require support to build vocabulary, gain fluency, understand how composition is structured, and strengthen their overall writing skills.



Attendance Crisis

Nationally, chronic absenteeism affects about 25-30% of U.S. K-12 students (missing 10%+ of school days), exacerbated by the pandemic and linked to lower graduation rates and achievement gaps. Locally in areas like Borrego Springs and rural San Diego County, rates hover around 20-35% based on California Department of Education reports, driven by transportation barriers, family challenges, and limited engagement options.

Socioeconomic Factors

Research shows that students who do not meet these key milestones tend to face lower lifetime earnings and a higher risk of remaining in a low-income state. This issue is especially pronounced for Latinx students, who constitute nearly all of the program participants.

Educational Milestones

Many students struggle to meet critical educational milestones, such as transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn by the end of 3rd grade, and understanding foundational math concepts.

Food Insecurity

In Borrego Springs, many students face the harsh reality of food insecurity, making it difficult to focus on their studies. The lack of consistent access to nutritious meals means that these young learners often struggle to keep up academically. Addressing food insecurity is essential to ensure that every child remains focused and has the opportunity to thrive in and out of the classroom.

Key Features of Learning Academy

- Small classes of 8–12 students with 1 teacher and 1 aide, allowing for individualized attention and support.
- Door-to-Door Bus Service
- Nutritional hot breakfast and lunch, plus an afternoon snack are provided each day. Every breakfast includes eggs to help give students the protein and nutrients they need to stay focused and ready to learn.
- Books for students' personal home libraries
- T-shirts and backpacks to build identity and pride
- Hands-on enrichment activities that build skills, spark curiosity, and extend learning beyond the regular school day.
- Attendance incentive: Students who attend at least 19 of the 20 days receive a laptop and headphones.
- Closing Ceremony with program-end presentation class projects



Enrichment Programs

BASIC's Summer Learning Academy enrichment programs support the whole child, helping students build coping skills, boost self-esteem, and feel part of a strong, caring community. These experiences promote mental health and well-being, strengthen academic success, and help students grow into confident, creative, and resilient learners.

Kids Ready 2 Help

In partnership with the Borrego Springs Library, developed by San Diego County Fire's Community Risk Reduction team, this one-hour interactive session used FEMA's Ready 2 Help card game to teach students five simple steps to stay safe and help others in emergencies. It's a hands-on way to build confidence, awareness, and a sense of responsibility.



Art with OLAC (Oak Lake Art Center), led by Ed and Joan White, brings the belief that "art is medicine" to life for Summer Learning Academy students. Since 1992, OLAC has brought creative experiences into the community, helping young people use painting to explore history, express emotions, and experience the healing, inspiring power of art.

Anime Class with Carlos

In partnership with the Borrego Springs Library, this class offers a creative space where students explore storytelling, character design, and visual expression through anime and graphic art. It nurtures imagination while building both narrative and artistic skills.



The Outcomes

See the Results

Quantitative Data

Total Students



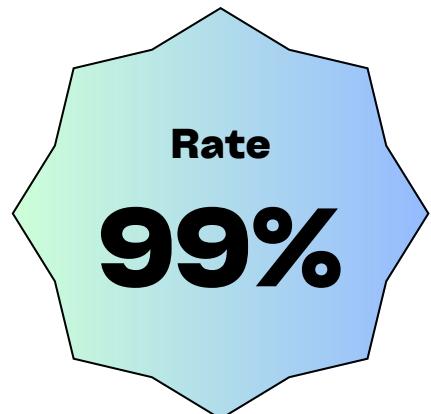
Female: 19 students (51%)

Male: 18 students (49%)



Attendance

Only 1 absence total
among 37 students



Comprehensive Support

Laptops
& headphones

Meals

Books

Backpacks
& Waterbottles

37

1480

111

37

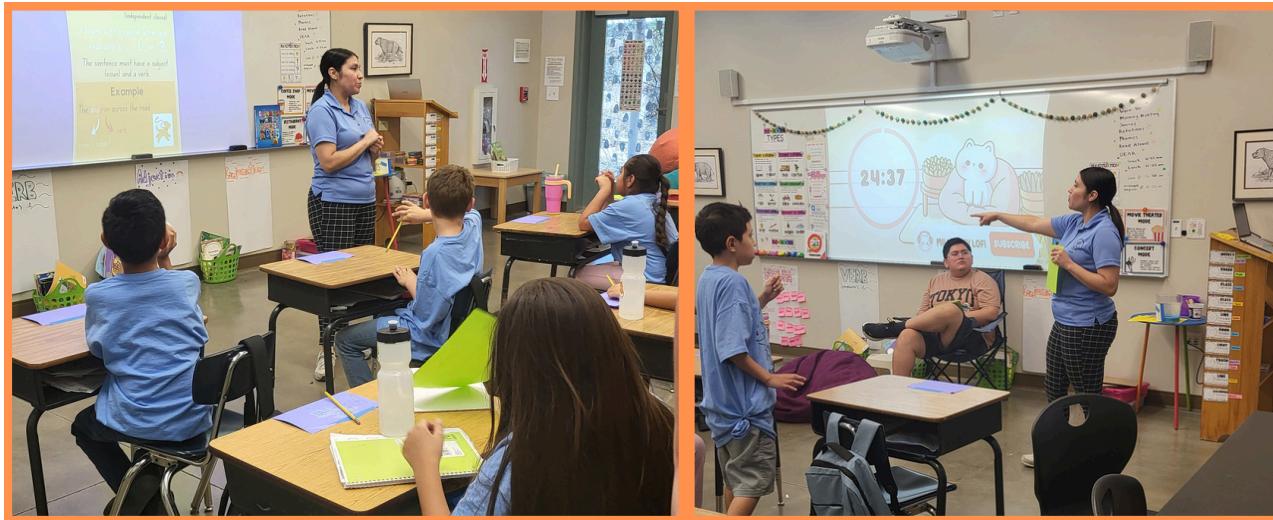
REPORT CARD

ELEMENTARY READING CLASS

Grade level: 2nd and 3rd grade

Teacher: Tania Fuerte

Teaching Aide: Joselynn Troncoso



SUBJECT

OUTCOMES

WORD FLUENCY

BEST GROWTH IMPROVEMENT IN A STUDENT
WAS WITH 39 WORDS PER MINUTE

100 % GROWTH

PASSAGE FLUENCY

BEST IMPROVEMENT GROWTH WAS A STUDENT
WITH 63 WORDS PER MINUTE

100 % GROWTH

READING COMPREHENSION

70 % GROWTH

OVERAL PERFORMANCE

50% of students completed the class at grade level

REPORT CARD

ELEMENTARY MATH CLASS

Grade level: 4th and 5th grade

Teacher: Meg Hanna

Teaching Aide: Mariana Torres



SUBJECT

OUTCOMES

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS
ASSESSMENT

55% GROWTH

MULTIPLICATION FACTS
(BEST IMPROVEMENT: 34 MORE CORRECT)

100 % GROWTH

DIVISION FACTS
(BEST IMPROVEMENT: 43 MORE CORRECT)

100% GROWTH

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

11% of students completed the class at
Approaching grade level

REPORT CARD

MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH CLASS

Grade level: 7th and 8th grade

Teacher: Armando Banuelos

Teaching Aide: Veronica Villafana



SUBJECT

OUTCOMES

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS
ASSESSMENT

66 % GROWTH

MULTIPLICATION FACTS
(BEST IMPROVEMENT: 39 MORE CORRECT)

100 % GROWTH

DIVISION FACTS
(BEST IMPROVEMENT: 54 MORE CORRECT)

100% GROWTH

OVERAL PERFORMANCE:

16% of students completed the class at or above grade level!

REPORT CARD

MIDDLE SCHOOL READING CLASS

Grade level: 6th and 8th grade

Teacher: Heidi Schlotfeldt

Teaching Aide: Melanie Urquidez



SUBJECT

OUTCOMES

WRITING

100% GROWTH

ORAL READING FLUENCY

77% GROWTH

READING COMPREHENSION

100% GROWTH

OVERAL PERFORMANCE:

82% of students completed the class at or above grade level!

Qualitative Data

"Addressing our learners challenges requires a comprehensive and supportive approach, which is why programs like BASIC's Learning Academy are so crucial in providing the necessary resources, attention, and support to help students succeed."

- Ken Collard (Dean of Students)

"Teachers tell me they can spot Learning Academy students almost immediately. They come back raising their hands more often, answering questions, and showing a level of confidence that sets a positive tone for the whole class."

- Victoria Baay (BSUSD Principal)



"One of the parents was very complimentary because his son had taken to reading in a way that he had not done before. He was reading very challenging material and doing it just out of his own interest...his own curiosity."

- Heidi (Writing Teacher)

"In the Learning Academy environment I feel that when students come in in the morning, and when they leave at the end of the day, they have been working on math the whole day, and their brains are just set in math. So, during the school year, in any given day, their brain is pulled from ELA to math to science and history, but in the Learning Academy, they are in the brain for math from start to finish. I feel like getting them in that zone really helps them grow at an accelerated rate."

- Meg Hanna (Math Teacher)



"When I read I was nervous but now I'm comfortable reading in front of people."

- **Anonymous (Student)**

"It was my child's first year there, and he really enjoyed it. It was a very positive experience for him"

- **Dora (Parent)**

"Everything went very well. It was very helpful because they started their classes very well prepared. Much of the content they're just now learning at school, they had already learned in LA"

- **Anonymous (Parent)**

"I really like BASIC because it helps people with their reading skills and helps the community"

- **Amy (Student)**

"My favorite moments are when students gain confidence in their reading and start to come out of their shell. It's so beautiful to see students who once struggled begin to believe in themselves and make real academic progress"

- **Tania (English Teacher)**

Explore More from Learning Academy

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Scan these QR codes to view photo galleries, watch YouTube videos about Summer Learning Academy, and visit our Learning Academy webpage for more stories, data, and updates.



[Google Drive]

Photo galleries

*Access Request Required



[Video]

Discover BASIC: Webinar Series - Learning Academy



[Video]

Inside BASIC's Learning Academy: Growing Future Leaders



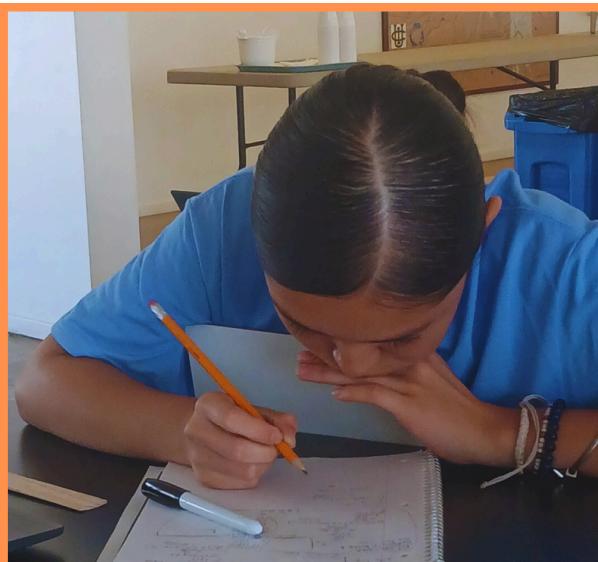
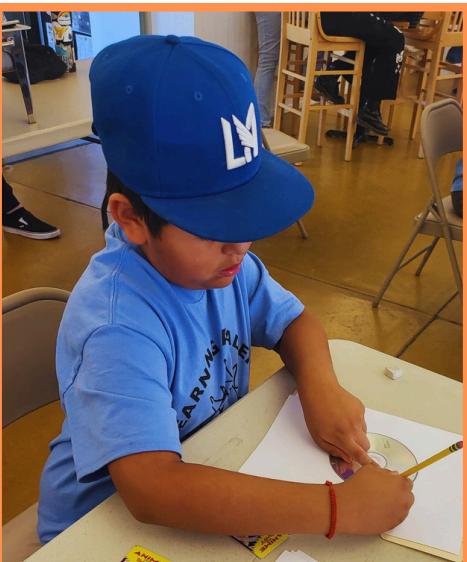
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Learning Academy



[Video]

Unlocking Success: How the BASIC summer Learning Academy Boosts Student Achievement



BASIC's Learning Academy Team

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Thank you to all our dedicated participants for your unwavering commitment and hard work; your efforts are the backbone of our success and deeply appreciated

Dean of Students

Ken Collard



Teachers and Teachers Assistants

as noted on class report cards

Program Assistance

Victoria Baay, Testing Facilitator

Julian Taylor_PhD candidate in Education, Analysis

Taylor Michelle Wycoff_PhD candidate in Education, Analysis

Mariana Lizeth Gomez_PhD candidate in Education, Analysis

Martha Daniels, Custodian

Nidia Meza, Operations Assistant

Julio Medina, Marketing

Flor Gomez, Reporting

Mary Watkins, HR & Payroll



Learning Academy Committee

Joann Stang, Program Director

Joanne Ingwall, Finance Director

A Special “Thank You”

Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center

Kirsten Dutcher

Sicco H. Rood

Desert Lovers & Company - Cristina Serrentino

Kendall’s Café - Lorena Valdez and team

Sanjiv Nanda and Urmi Ray

Jim and Roberta Wall

Barbara Coates

Mateo Mamea

Ty White



Learning Academy 2025

Donor Honor Roll

Insight Investors

\$40,000+



David C. Copley Foundation

Knowledge Keepers

\$10,000–\$39,999



Borrego Valley Endowment Fund



Eric Mustonen and Amelia Wood



Joann Stang



The Thomas C. Ackerman Foundation



Walter J. & Betty C. Zable Foundation

Mastery Makers

\$5,000–\$9,999



Borrego Springs Civic Foundation

BSE Foundation



County of San Diego



Henry and Carole Hunte



Multi-year supprter

Learning Academy 2025 Donor Honor Roll

Wisdom Warriors

\$1,000-\$4,999

- ★ American Legion Post 853
- ★ Borrego Ministers Association
- ★ Borrego Springs Rotary Foundation
- ★ Caterpillar Foundation
- Christine A. Huntsman
- ★ Don Irwin
- ★ Duane and Patricia Ebbert
- ★ Gail Schreiber
- ★ Jim and Kathy Dice
- ★ Martha Deichler
- Rams Hill Golf Course
- ★ Rebecca Lent
- Richard Cory
- ★ Richard Helvig and Sheryl Harapat
- ★ Sanjiv Nanda and Urmil Ray
- Sandra Hansberger Foundation
- ★ The San Diego County Employees' Charitable Organization (CECO)
- ★ Tom and Angela Cassidy
- ★ Yaws Family Fund

Community Champions

Gifts under \$1,000

Hundreds of dedicated supporters forging a legacy of future leaders with their foundational gifts.



Multi-year supprter

Learning Academy 2025

Donor Honor Roll

Academy Allies Gift-in-Kind

Book Buddies

Carol Haller

Covington School, Kathleen Kearns

Linda Stanley

Words Alive



Borrego Springs Unified School District

Jessica Gillespie

Mark Stevens

Victoria Baay

Enrichment Programs

Anime Class with Carlos

Art with OLAC, Ed and Joan White

Kids Ready 2 Help

“My daughter actually looked forward to going every day. She only missed one day—and that was because she was sick.”

— Ana Villafanta, parent

San Diego County Library, Borrego Springs

Cristin McVey

Friends of the Library

Donor Honor Roll



Thank You!

