



# SUMMIT LEARNING

## *Gradient Learning*

The Summit Learning program is a research-based approach to teaching and learning designed to drive student engagement, more meaningful learning, and strong student-teacher relationships that prepare students for life beyond the classroom.

Scan QR code with your phone's camera to access this content online.



## OVERVIEW

Summit Learning is a comprehensive program offered by educator-led nonprofit Gradient Learning. In Summit Learning classrooms, teachers deliver dynamic lessons to the whole class, small groups, or one-on-one. Recognizing that each child is unique, educators teach in ways that ensure each student gains knowledge and develops lifelong learning skills on the timeline and in the ways that they learn best, from small group support, to group projects, to mentoring. This comprehensive model includes a platform through which students can access hands-on, real-world tasks and activities, take assessments, monitor feedback, and track their learning progress. The model is grounded in learning science and is adaptable for grades 4 through 12 across all core disciplines.

Summit Learning is implemented in 400 schools reaching 85,000 students where they experience an increase in academic scores, cognitive skills, and relevance in learning, as well as positive personal and interpersonal skills. Gradient Learning offers resource toolkits, professional development, and one-on-one coaching and consulting to schools interested in implementing the model. [▶ Summit Learning Vision](#)



## What Makes this Model Innovative?



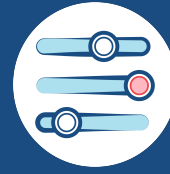
### Rigorous Learning

Summit Learning is aligned to rigorous learning standards, offers learning through modalities suited for all types of learners, and ensures learners can practice and show mastery through a competency-based approach.



### Active Self-Direction

The Self-Directed Learning Cycle engages students in long-term projects and tasks that require skills such as goal-setting, time management, collaboration, and self-reflection.



### Customization

The model's focus on learning strategies *and* mentorship leverages daily data, student ownership, and academic support to ensure every student's unique social and academic needs are met in the way that best serves them.

## DESIGN

### Goals

Summit Learning's central aim is to support students who love learning, think critically, and develop the skills and habits necessary for life before and after graduation. The primary student outcomes for this model are:

<b>Cognitive Skills</b>	Learners master 36 interdisciplinary higher-order thinking skills focused on college, career, and long-term success. <a href="#">📄 Cognitive Skills Rubric</a> ▶ <a href="#">Cognitive Skills in Action</a> .
<b>Content Knowledge</b>	Learners master content knowledge through real-world tasks and activities, small or whole-group collaboration, and self-directed independent inquiry. ▶ <a href="#">Content Knowledge in Action</a> .
<b>Habits of Success</b>	Learners master the behaviors, mindset, and dispositions that support well-being, a sense of purpose, and a stronger understanding of themselves and the world. ▶ <a href="#">Habits of Success in Action</a> .

## Experience

Summit Learning's approach prioritizes student-centered experiences through three main components: **projects**, where students can drive their learning in groups that mimic real-world collaboration; a focus on **skills and habits** that students can take with them to become lifelong learners; and a **mentorship program** that encourages students to consider short- and long-term future aspirations, set benchmarks, and evaluate progress in real-time. [▶ Program Overview](#) [▶ The Role of the Student](#)

### Lifelong Skills & Habits of Success

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Students develop a set of strategies for goal setting, planning, and demonstrating their learning, and reflection. Over the course of their learning, they are mentored and encouraged to develop the 16 Habits of Success. To do this, students engage in a Self-Directed Learning Cycle to develop these lifelong learning habits that will prepare them for school learning and beyond. In the Self-Directed Learning Cycle, learners:

1. Reflect on their progress
2. Set goals for what they want to learn
3. Plan for how they will reach their goals
4. Learn new facts, skills, or ideas
5. Show or demonstrate their learning, then reflect.

[📄 Habits of Success](#) [📄 Self-Directed Learning Cycle](#)

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### Projects

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Through inquiry-based projects, students learn how to apply lifelong skills to real-world problems in a hands-on way. This approach ensures content is relevant, engaging, and motivating.

- The Summit Learning platform provides core tasks and activities
  - Students collaborate with one another or work independently to complete mastery levels
  - Teachers provide additional instruction through small-group, whole-group, or individual instruction.
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### Mentorship

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Teachers using Summit Learning spend 1:1 time mentoring with students each week to ensure students have the support they need from a trusted adult.

- Teachers provide individualized support, make suggestions on goals and next steps, and provide critical and thoughtful feedback as students reflect on their learning processes.
  - Teachers leverage the Lifelong Skills & Habits of Success to motivate learners into self-directed learning.
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- Students engage in reflection, academic short- and long-term planning, as well as goal-setting on Lifelong Skills and Habits of Success.

 [Mentoring](#)

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## Supporting Structures

Summit Learning has program requirements for certain school systems and structures. To learn more, click on each school structure and check out Summit Learning's commitments for participation here: [Program Requirements](#)



### CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

#### **Schools have access to Summit Learning's modifiable curriculum and mastery-based assessments.**

Summit Learning offers an extensive curriculum that includes rigorous learning objectives covering all core content areas, sample pacing guides, curated playlists of lessons that utilize various learning modalities, and assessments. [Pro-tips From a Seasoned Instructional Coach](#)

Schools implementing Summit Learning administer the NWEA MAP assessment to track student growth. [MAP Testing](#)



### SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE

#### **Summit Learning works best when faculty and families share a growth mindset, curiosity, openness, and willingness to persevere through change.**

In order to enable successful implementation, a strong school culture is essential. Change is hard; faculty should support each other and be open to ongoing learning and improvement.

During the onboarding process for new schools, Summit Learning supports school teams in developing a collective vision and building alignment across the faculty.



#### **Teachers develop facilitation, mentorship, and coaching skills to achieve the student outcomes of Summit Learning: content knowledge, cognitive skills, and habits of success.**

Summit Learning's curriculum and instruction requires teachers to become classroom and content *facilitators*—a student-centered approach that focuses on mentorship and coaching and de-prioritizes teachers acting as the sole expert in the room.

Teachers who embark on Summit Learning in their schools must be invested in personalization, gain fluency with technology and data

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## ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

management, and firmly believe that all students deserve a unique and equitable educational experience. To support this, Summit Learning delivers a series of required professional development sessions for participating schools, and offers additional coaching, professional learning experiences, resources, and tools.

Every school using the Summit Learning program receives ongoing support from a dedicated Success Manager, who provides coaching on change management, instructional leadership, and implementation. Success Managers conduct regular check-ins and help build school and district leader capacity.

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**The school schedule includes longer work blocks for students to complete projects and self-direct their learning, as well as dedicated time for mentoring sessions and check-ins.**



School communities can prioritize Mentorship, Projects, and Self-Direction within their master schedules in various ways. Most often, mentorship meetings occur bi-weekly during a designated mentorship block; some schools have these in the mornings, and others throughout the school day.

[Bell Schedule Guidance](#)

## SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME

Courses are offered in semester-long or year-long courses to best fit the suggested pacing guides. Self-directed learning time occurs during longer blocks of flexible work time, where students can engage deeply in rich, inquiry-based tasks.

Teachers should have time to meet and discuss student progress and support collaboratively.

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**Schools partner with families and caregivers to engage the community in students' academic progress—grades, feedback, and skill development are made accessible to families through a family/caregiver online portal.**



## FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Summit Learning's parent portal allows teachers to send student work directly to families and caregivers, allowing them to access their students' academic progress and tasks in real-time (like homework and assessments), and for all to maintain constant and accessible communication through the school year. This family-teacher-student communication is integral to the overall success of the model.

Check out how family partnerships sustain love of learning and accountability for students at Summit schools. [▶ Teacher and Family Partnership.](#)

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**Summit Learning offers a digital platform that can be integrated with a school's student information system, 1:1 technology, and consistent internet.**



## TECHNOLOGY & INFRASTRUCTURE

Summit Learning leverages technology to support students and teachers through its digital platform and requires 1:1 technology and consistent internet. To utilize the platform, each student needs a device with a keyboard, preferably a laptop computer. The Summit Learning program also requires access to the Google Chrome browser and G-Suite for Education (Gmail and Google Docs) or Office 365. [📄 Summit Learning Platform Demonstration ▶ Summit Learning Platform Video](#)

Summit Learning also makes explicit digital privacy commitments to ensure student safety and privacy online. [📄 Privacy Center](#)

Gradient Learning also offers digital tools, like Along, for teachers to check in with and prompt reflections from their students more authentically and throughout the school day. [🖥️ Along by Gradient Learning](#)

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# IMPLEMENTATION

## Supports Offered

Nonprofit Gradient Learning offers the following support to help you implement student-centered and mindful learning approaches. Explore their [Program Details](#) page to learn more about how Summit can support your school.

### Summit Learning Partnership

Free



A comprehensive approach to learning and teaching that includes:

- Project-based curriculum, instructional materials, and assessment supports. [📄 Curriculum](#)
- Access to the Summit Learning platform, an online tool that supports what teachers and students do in class each day. [📄 Platform Demo ▶ Summit Learning Platform Video](#)
- In-person professional development training at key points in their implementation journey.
- One-on-one coaching and ongoing implementation support from a dedicated Success Manager, an expert in guiding schools hands-on toward effective implementation of Summit Learning.

[Learn More](#)

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# Reach

300+

Schools

39

States

75,000+

Students Served

74%

District

## Impact

Numerous studies provide evidence of positive outcomes for students and teachers who participate in the Summit Learning Model.

### Students who participate in Summit Learning demonstrate improved math and ELA achievement and report an increase in key cognitive thinking skills.

- Research and case studies suggest that students **increased their math and ELA test scores** over a two-year implementation period. [CEDER, 2019](#)
- Students and teachers report an **increase in students' cognitive skills**, including the ability to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and effectively navigate complex information. [CEDER, 2019](#) [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#)

### Students who participate in Summit Learning also tend to report feeling more confident, invested in their learning, and connected with others.

- Students, teachers, and school leaders report an **increase in students' positive personal and interpersonal skills** such as collaboration, confidence, awareness of learning needs, and asking for help. [CEDER, 2019](#) [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#) [Magnolia Consulting, 2021](#)
- Teachers and school leaders report **stronger student-teacher relationships from mentorship**. [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#) [Magnolia Consulting, 2021](#)
- Some students report **feeling more accepted** in school. [CEDER, 2019](#)
- Students report feeling that **content is more relevant to their lives**. [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#)
- Summit teachers and leaders report that **students become more invested in their own learning**. [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#) [Magnolia Consulting, 2021](#)

### Teachers who use Summit Learning report that they tend to feel like better instructors who can use data-driven practices, develop stronger relationships with their students, and mentor them toward improved academic performance.

- Of 1,418 Summit teachers surveyed nationwide, **65% report that they believe they improved their instruction because of Summit Learning**. [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#)
- Over 80% of teachers report that Summit Learning's **mentorship programming leads to improved academic performance in their students**. [Project Tomorrow, 2021](#)

- Summit leaders also report that **mentorship improves and supports student-teacher relationships**. [📄 Magnolia Consulting, 2021](#)
- Summit Learning teachers and leaders report **more comfortability with technology-enabled instruction** and **improved data-driven practices**. [📄 Project Tomorrow, 2021](#) [📄 Magnolia Consulting, 2021](#)

## Contact

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# RESOURCES



### [Our Vision for Summit Learning](#)

Watch this video to learn more about why and how Summit Learning works in schools across the nation.



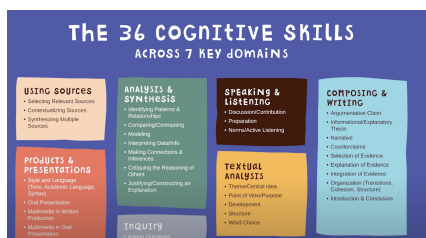
### [Summit Learning Blog - Research](#)

This blog is a centralized hub where Summit documents its research on curriculum, implementing schools, and student outcomes.



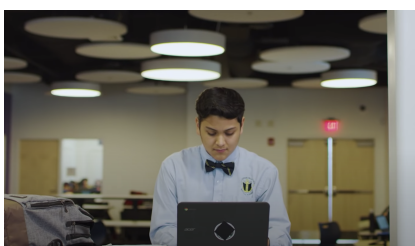
### [Summit Learning Program: An Overview](#)

Watch this video summarizing what Summit Learning is and how it supports student learning.



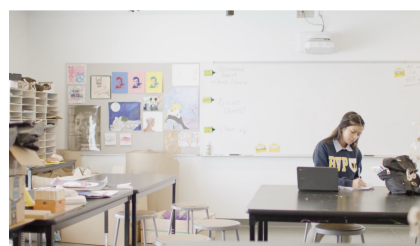
### [Student Outcomes: Cognitive Skills in Action](#)

Watch students and teachers discuss how Cognitive Skills are prioritized and come alive



### [Student Outcome: Content Knowledge in Action](#)

Watch how students and teachers describe and reflect



### [Student Outcomes: Habits of Success in Action](#)

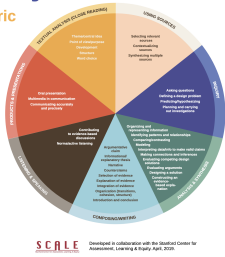
Watch students describe their experiences developing and



in a Summit classroom.

### **SUMMIT Learning** Cognitive Skills Rubric

The Summit Learning Cognitive Skills Rubric is an assessment and instruction tool that outlines the continuum of skills that are necessary for college and career readiness. Cognitive Skills are interdisciplinary skills that require higher-order thinking and application, such as Making Connections and Inferences and Evaluating Arguments. The rubric includes the skills and 3 score levels applicable to students in grades 3 through 12.



### Cognitive Skills Rubric

Read about Summit's assessment and instruction tool that outlines the continuum of skills that are necessary for college and career readiness.

on improved content knowledge from Summit Learning lessons.



### Habits of Success

These 16 Habits of Success are pillars for mentorship, self-reflection, and goal-setting. Students develop these as they engage in self-directed and more personalized learning.

being mentored around Habits of Success.

### The Self-Directed Learning Cycle



### Self-Directed Learning Cycle

Explore the Summit website and discover how this five-step process encourages students to self-reflect and set and achieve their goals.



GRACE CORRIGAN  
Summit 8th Grader at Columbus Middle School

### The Role of the Student in Summit Learning

Listen to Summit students describe the way they experience self-direction, projects, and other forms of personalized, relevant learning.



### 4 Key Elements for Achieving Content Knowledge Mastery

Read reflections from teachers and students on positive academic outcomes from Summit Learning.



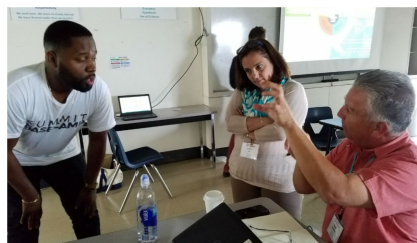
### Learning Through Projects

Explore the Summit Learning website and discover how learning comes alive for students and teachers.



### Mentoring

This website describes how Summit Learning approaches



### Focus On Self-Direction and Other Pro-tips From a Seasoned Instructional Coach

### MAP Testing

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth Reading and Math assessments are important, computer-adaptive tests given twice to measure our students' reading and math skills. MAP has a high degree of validity and reliability, and has been nationally-normed with thousands of students across the country--allowing performance comparisons with same-age peers.

Summit Learning asks for the MAP Growth Assessment to be taken at least twice a year, ideally in the fall and spring. The potential testing windows as dictated by NWEA MAP can be found below:

- Fall: 8/15 through 11/30
- Winter: 12/01 through 2/28 (2/29 on leap years)
- Spring: 3/1 through 6/15
- Summer: 6/16 through 8/14

### MAP Testing - Summit Learning

This website describes

mentoring.

This blog post from a seasoned Summit instructional coach describes lessons learned from two years of implementation.

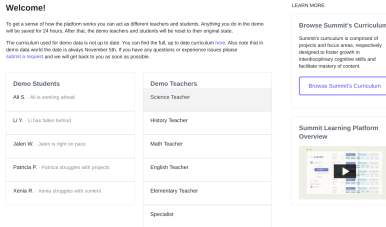
Summit's reasoning for using NWEA MAP Assessments in Reading and Math and the steps schools can take to administer them.

#### Elementary School Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00-7:30	Universal Breakfast	Universal Breakfast	Universal Breakfast	Universal Breakfast	Universal Breakfast
7:30-7:45	7:30 Tides On Duty	7:30 Tides On Duty	7:30 Tides On Duty	7:30 Tides On Duty	7:30 Tides On Duty
7:45-8:45	7:35 Class Pick-up Announcements Self-Direction Mentoring (60 min)	7:35 Class Pick-up Announcements Self-Direction Mentoring (60 min)	7:35 Class Pick-up Announcements Self-Direction Mentoring (60 min)	7:35 Class Pick-up Announcements Self-Direction Mentoring (60 min)	7:35 Class Pick-up Announcements Self-Direction Mentoring (60 min)
8:45-10:15	Math & Science (90 min)	ELA & SS (90 min)	Math & Science (90 min)	ELA & SS (90 min)	Math & Science (90 min)
10:15-11:45	ELA & SS (90 min)	Math & Science (90 min)	ELA & SS (90 min)	Math & Science (90 min)	ELA & SS (90 min)
11:45-12:45	11:50-12:45	11:50-12:45	11:50-12:45	11:50-12:45	11:50-12:45

#### [Summit Bell Schedule Guidance](#)

Explore various ways to integrate Summit Learning into a master schedule and calendar.



#### [Platform Demo - Summit Learning](#)

Explore the Summit Learning platform and demo some of its key features.



#### [Teachers and Parents Partner for Learning](#)

This video shows how Summit Learning engages teachers, students, and parents in a collaborative partnership.

#### Privacy Center



#### [Privacy Center - Summit Learning](#)

This website describes Summit Learning's technology terms and agreements, as well as their commitment to student safety and privacy.



#### [Gradient Learning's "Along"](#)

Explore another offering by Gradient Learning: Along leverages technology to provide authentic opportunities for teachers to check in with students throughout the day.

#### Join Summit Learning



#### [Join Summit Learning](#)

Click on this website to apply for a partnership with Summit Learning.

English	History	Math	Science	World Language
<b>3rd Grade</b>				
ENGL004 (2022) English 4	HIST004 (2022) CA History 4	MATH (2022) Math 4 (M)	SCIE003 (2022) Integrated Science	
ENGL001 (2022) English 4 (EL Ed...)	HIST001 (2022) History 4		SCIE008 (2022) STEM 4 (Program...	
<b>4th Grade</b>				
ENGL004 (2022) English 5	HIST004 (2022) CA History 5	MATH (2022) Math 5 (M)	SCIE003 (2022) Integrated Science	
ENGL001 (2022) English 5 (EL Ed...)	HIST001 (2022) History 5		SCIE008 (2022) STEM 5 (Program...	

### [Explore the Curriculum](#)

Explore Summit's curriculum by grade level and content area.



### [Summit Learning Teacher Feedback Study](#)

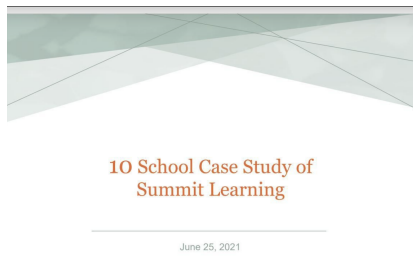
Read Project Tomorrow's report on teachers' lived experiences implementing Summit Learning mentoring, projects, and learning skills and habits.

### **EVALUATION REPORT** Summit Learning Program Dexter Community Schools



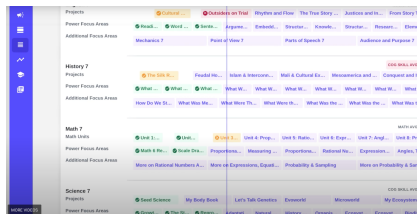
### [Summit Learning Program – Evaluation Report](#)

Read Michigan's Center for Education Design, Evaluation, & Research report on Summit Learning Schools.



### [10 School Case Study of Summit Learning](#)

This report by Magnolia Consulting studies the school leadership perception of improvement after implementing Summit.



### [Summit Learning Platform Video](#)

This video demonstrates Summit Learning's online platform that houses student playlists and projects, and where students can take assessments and engage with goal-setting and feedback.