



Annual Evaluation Report

2007–2008 School Year

Nebraska
21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS



Purpose and History of Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) is a federally funded, competitive grant program designed to support the establishment of community learning centers serving students attending high-need schools. The Nebraska Department of Education administers these grants for projects to offer students a broad array of services, programs, and activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before- and after-school or during summer recess).

In 1998 the 21st CCLC initiative was authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 amended the initiative and transferred the administration to state departments of education.

The three goals of this grant program are: 1) improve student learning performance in one or more core academic areas; 2) increase social benefits and positive behavioral changes; and 3) increase family and community engagement in supporting students' education. Centers may provide a variety of services to

achieve these goals, including remedial education and academic enrichment learning programs, tutoring and mentoring services, services for English language learning students, technology education programs, programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy, drug and violence prevention programs, and counseling programs, among other services.

Further information on 21st Century Community Learning Centers is available through the United States Department of Education at

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>.

For more information about the Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program, call the office at 402-471-0876 or visit the web site at

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/21stcclc>.



Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the 21st CCLC program evaluation is to provide: (a) descriptive information regarding these programs, (b) process data that will assist the project staff in continually improving the quality of services to the students and their families, (c) outcome data that will assist the programs in determining the extent to which the program achieved its anticipated outcomes, and (d) required data to meet the federal NCLB Title IVB program requirements. The evaluation was and will continue to be accomplished by collecting data across multiple sources and forms using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The evaluation design utilizes the same continuous improvement model developed by the Nebraska Department of Education for school improvement planning.

[\(http://www.nde.state.ne.us/CIPToolkit/\)](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/CIPToolkit/).

Continuous Improvement Process

The overall design of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program calls for targeted academic and social/behavioral supports in before-school, after-school, full days when

school is not in session, and summer school offerings. Local programs develop their own models to suit local needs, but fall within the parameters established in the grant application from NDE.



Programs must base their model on local needs assessment data, must describe curricular and evaluation approaches, and participate in a comprehensive, continuous improvement evaluation process. Programs select a local evaluator to support their evaluation and continuous improvement process efforts. Programs are required to develop a core local management team, with recommended membership to include the project director, building principal, local evaluator, and other key stakeholders.



The evaluation plan and observation tool for the NDE's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program were developed by the external evaluator. Local grantees develop academic and social/behavioral objectives for students, and a family/community engagement objective. Goals are refined as data suggest changes. In 2006 the NDE 21st CCLC Management team identified the elements of a quality after-school program and began to incorporate them into the continuous improvement process (CIP) for local programs.

Evaluation data is submitted annually by June 15, after which the external statewide evaluator provides "Continuous Improvement Process Data Snapshots" for each program. These snapshots include site level outcomes, grant program level outcomes, district level outcomes, and state level outcomes. The state management team for Nebraska's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program—which includes the Project Director, Grants Manager, Program Support Consultant, and Statewide Evaluator—met with representatives of every grantee across Nebraska in August 2007. The purpose of these meetings was to review the CIP Data Snapshots with their local management team and to facilitate discussions on local plans to improve programs.

The state management team and each of the local management teams implement the plans made to improve programs across Nebraska. Data are then collected in the subsequent year to measure program improvement.

Technical assistance and professional development. NDE provided technical assistance and professional development activities to grantees in order to facilitate their continuous improvement. An ongoing technical assistance plan was developed based on the review of research on best practice for after-school programs, the statewide evaluation findings, and discussions at each project's continuous improvement process meeting. When requested, resources were provided and some follow-up site visits were made for program support in areas identified. Discussion forums were provided on topics of serving middle/high school students, project based learning, embedding academics into after-school programming, using peer visits and support, grant management, family engagement in student's learning, and discussion of the statewide evaluation report. Grantees are also strongly encouraged to participate in one national conference annually.

To assist projects in their continuous improvement process, the 21st CCLC





state management team developed *The Elements of Quality in 21st CCLC Programs*, aligning the elements and indicators with the observation tool used by evaluators. To strengthen capacity to partner with families in support of their students' learning, coordination of efforts with the Nebraska State Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC) program continues. The Nebraska State PIRC implemented School Based PIRCs in 37 Title I schools which also have 21st Century Community Learning Center programs.

New grantee orientations and new grantee staff development included assistance in program planning and implementation, operating an effective program, collaborating with families and community partners, and particular focus on linkages to school day learning objectives, administrators, and staff.

Summary of data collection systems

Data were collected in Microsoft® Access databases developed for each grantee and disseminated by the statewide evaluator. Data were also collected in the federal web-based data collection system (PPICS) and in annual narrative reports submitted by grantees. With their annual reports, grantees

submitted copies of their Microsoft® Access databases and entered federally-mandated annual performance report data into PPICS.

Program Evaluation Findings

Program evaluation of the 21st CCLC programs includes examining progress on four outcomes. These outcomes include measured quality of these programs, student achievement, observed changes in student social or behavioral patterns, and changes in family or community support of student learning. First, we begin with a summary of who was served in the 21st CCLC programs.

Description of Grantees, Sites, and Students Served

Project Demographics

In 2007-2008, the fifth year of funding for state-administered 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs), the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) awarded five new grants. NDE continued funding eight





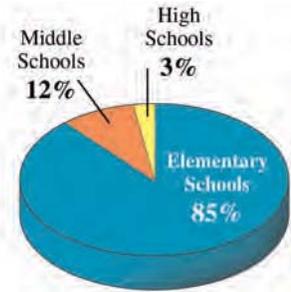
grants awarded in 2006, nine grants awarded in 2005, five grants awarded in 2004, and seven grants awarded in 2003. This brought the total number of 21st CCLC grantees to 34. These 34 grantees provided programming at 88 school sites in 24 communities across Nebraska. The original grant awards to these five cohorts totaled \$7,081,113.

Student Demographics

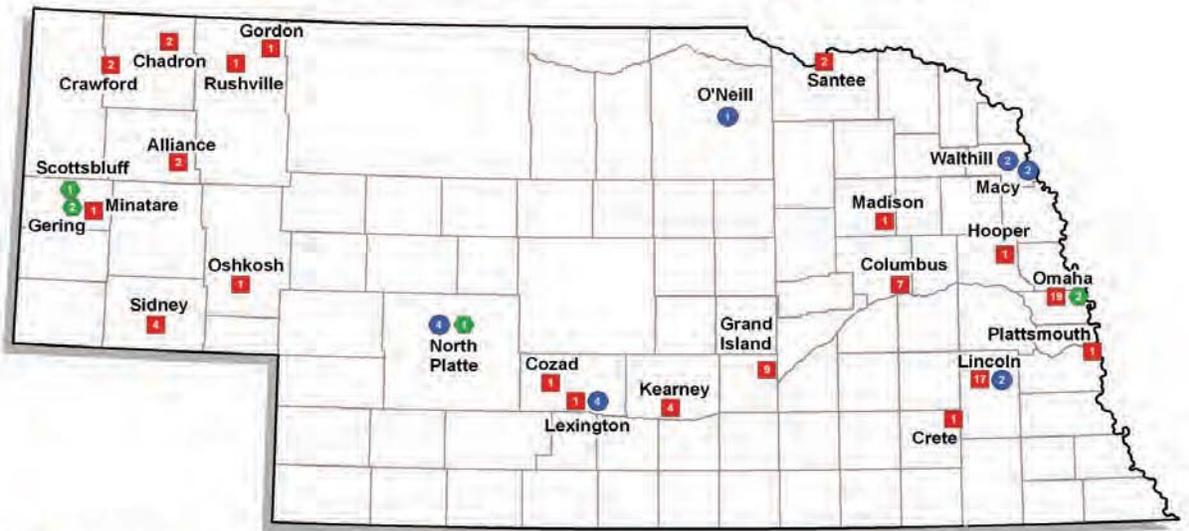
While a total of 10,601 students were served in before-, after-, out-of-school days during the year, or summer school sessions by 21st Century Community Learning Center sites, demographic

information will be reported only for students who were regularly served, referred to as Regular Attendees.

The definition of a regular attendee is a student attending 30 days or more during the school year. These programs served 6,195 regularly attending students during the 2007-2008 school year. These programs were funded to serve 4,263 regularly attending students during this program year. These programs, therefore, served 145% of the students for which they requested funding this program year.



Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers



- Currently Funded by 21st CCLC First-Time Grant
- Currently Funded by 21st CCLC Continuation Grant
- Sustaining Programs Formerly Funded by 21st CCLC

Number in symbol indicates the number of sites

Information Source: Nebraska 21st CCLC Office (Updated 04/08)



Grade levels. The majority of students regularly served in 21st CCLC programs across Nebraska were in elementary school buildings.

Ethnicity. The 21st CCLC programs served a diverse group of children and youth. The majority of students served (53.56%) were from an ethnic minority category.

Grade Levels for Total 21st CCLC Regular Student Attendees for the 2007–08 School Year		
Grade Level	# of Regular Student Attendees for Nebraska	% of Regular Student Attendees for Nebraska
Kindergarten Students	784	12.66%
First-grade Students	872	14.08%
Second-grade Students	988	15.95%
Third-grade Students	960	15.50%
Fourth-grade Students	815	13.16%
Fifth-grade Students	711	11.48%
Sixth-grade Students	530	8.56%
Seventh-grade Students	238	3.84%
Eighth-grade Students	174	2.81%
Ninth-grade Students	30	0.48%
Tenth-grade Students	31	0.50%
Eleventh-grade Students	30	0.48%
Twelfth-grade Students	32	0.52%
Total	6,195	100.00%

Ethnicity for Total 21st CCLC Regular Student Attendees for the 2007–08 School Year		
Ethnicity	# of Regular Student Attendees for Nebraska	% of Regular Student Attendees for Nebraska
American Indian/Alaska Native	562	9.07%
Asian/Pacific Islander	97	1.57%
Black/African American	1,303	21.03%
Hispanic/Latino	1,356	21.89%
White	2,877	46.44%
Total	6,195	100.00%





Gender. Of the regularly attending students in the 2007-2008 school year, 50.77% were female and 49.23% were male.

Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch. Of the regularly attending students in this school year, 70.23% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The most recent year for which state report data are available is 2006-2007. In that year, the Nebraska State of the Schools Report (report card) indicates that 36.42% of students in Nebraska's schools were eligible for free/reduced lunch.

Eligibility for Other School Services. Of the students served regularly this year, 14.01% were English language learners. State report card data indicate that 6.49% of students in Nebraska's schools were identified as English language learners (2006-07 state report card data). For regularly attending students, 17.77% were verified for special education, compared to 14.95% (2006-07 state report card data).

These data suggest that 21st CCLC school-based sites serve a much greater percentage of students at academic risk than are generally found in the Nebraska student population.

Outcome 1: Quality of 21st CCLC Programs

Quality programs have been linked to immediate, positive developmental outcomes, as well as long-term positive academic performance (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Bryant, and Clifford, 2000).

Observations of Program Quality. The *Observations for Quality School-Age Care & Programming* tool was developed by the statewide evaluator and used for program observations for the past three grant years. In the very first year of grant programs (2003-04) the National School Age Care Association Standards were utilized but were found to be inconsistent with the mission of school-based after-school programs, particularly in the areas of supporting student learning and measuring program content. Each year, the statewide evaluator observes all Year 1 grant programs and any programs for which a new local evaluator is retained. Local evaluators are trained on utilizing the observation tool and inter-rater reliability is ensured through a process of comparing scores post-observation. Local evaluators are deemed reliable when they match within the prescribed intervals 85% or more of the time.



A typical afternoon in a 21st Century Community Learning Center...

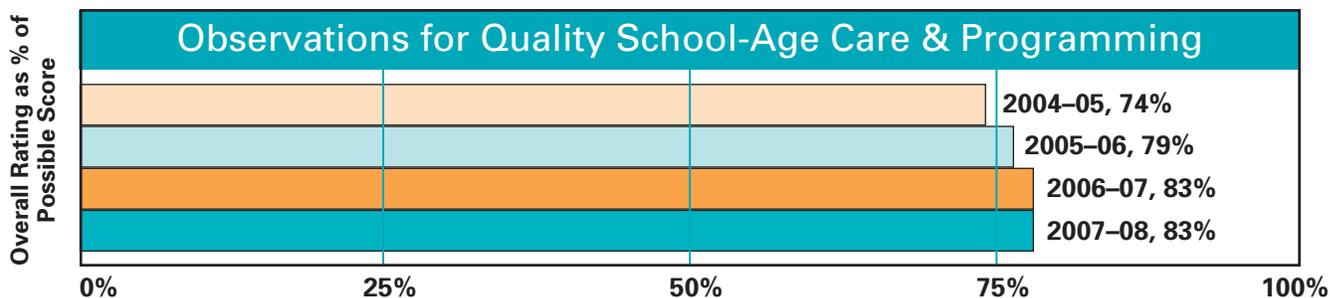
The afternoon begins with a healthy snack, milk or juice, and outdoor play. Basketball, jump rope, swinging ...students are having fun and exercising. After burning off some energy, students move into small, grade level groups to complete their homework, and receive tutoring assistance when appropriate. After homework has been completed, students move into choice activities for experiential learning. Art, cultural awareness classes, robotics, poetry writing, board games, chess, computer classes, singing, or Math Bingo might occur before students go home for the evening.

This year, the statewide evaluator completed first and fifth year grant site observations and local evaluators with demonstrated reliability independently completed observations of Years 2, 3, and 4 grantees. The tool measures outcomes in overall administration of the program, interactions among students and staff, support for family involvement and engagement, linkages between the school and community, general environment of the program, and observed program

content (e.g., homework, language, mathematics, science, fine and dramatic arts, and recreational activities). Ratings are on a 5-point scale with 5 equating to a practice which is consistently evident.

A total of 80 school sites were observed and rated in the winter of 2007-08. Of the 88 sites, 91% were observed and rated by the statewide evaluator and/or an external local evaluator. Eight sites were not observed or rated. Of these, all were located in two school districts which had been funded in the earliest cohorts of grantees. Some of these grantees had not budgeted for all sites to be evaluated annually. From this point forward, all sites will be evaluated annually.

Overall, ratings have generally continued to improve over the past four grant years on the *Observations for Quality School-Age Care & Programming* findings; however, this year overall ratings remained level. This year the average overall rating was 83% of possible score, compared to 83% last year, 79% in 2005-2006, and 74% in 2004-2005.





21st CCLC: Observations for Quality School-Age Care & Programming Ratings									
		Administration	Interactions	Families	School & Community	Environment	Program Content	Total Score	Overall Avg
n	Possible Score	60	35	25	40	45	55	260	5.0%
80	2007-2008 Statewide Average	51.78	29.55	19.60	33.99	39.21	41.21	215.34	4.14
80	2007-2008 Percent of Possible Score	86.29%	84.43%	78.40%	84.97%	87.14%	74.93%	82.82%	82.82%
57	2006-2007 Statewide Average	51.61	29.99	19.48	33.82	39.04	41.01	214.95	4.13
57	2006-2007 Percent of Possible Score	86%	86%	78%	85%	87%	75%	83%	83%
37	2005-2006 Statewide Average	49.5	29.8	18.1	31.9	38.2	38.9	206.2	3.97
37	2005-2006 Percent of Possible Score	83%	85%	72%	80%	85%	71%	79%	79%
12	2004-2005 Statewide Average	46.8	27.9	17	30.3	34.8	36	193.3	3.72
12	2004-2005 Percent of Possible Score	78%	80%	68%	76%	77%	65%	74%	74%

Compared to each of the previous grant years, 21st CCLC programs increased on most domains. The only domain to experience a slight decrease was “Interactions,” going from 29.99 last year to 29.55 on average across sites this year. The domains of *partnering with families* (78%) and *program content* (75%) continued to be rated lower. Item analysis on the observation data revealed

that statewide average scores on four items were rated at 3.50 or below, NDE’s Indicator of Quality. All of these items were in the Program Content domain. They included: mathematics (C4, 3.40), science (C5, 2.70), differentiated instruction (C9, 3.30), and leadership (C11, 3.50). Statewide technical assistance should focus on these program content areas in the next program year.

Parent, Student & Teacher Ratings of Program Quality

Parent Ratings of the 21st CCLC programs. Parents of kindergarten through 12th grade students who were regularly 21st CCLC attendees across Nebraska were surveyed regarding their satisfaction with the 21st CCLC programs in order to assess the quality of services for their children. The statewide return rate for parent surveys was 43.89%.

Overall, parents rated the 21st CCLC programs more positively than ever with mean ratings between good to excellent (3.51 to 3.67). The most positive ratings

The program is a plus and I'm thankful that the schools have this program.

Parent Comment from Survey

were noted for parents feeling good to excellent about their child's personal safety, being comfortable working with program staff, and their overall rating of the program. Slightly less positive ratings were noted for communication between program staff and school day staff, viewing the program as helping the child, and parents' perception of their child's academic progress in school; however, these ratings were centered in the "good" range.

21st CCLC: Mean Parent (K-12th Grade students) Satisfaction Ratings					
Items	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
Has the program helped your child?	3.5	3.47	3.51	3.51	3.55
Were you comfortable working with program staff?	3.6	3.59	3.61	3.61	3.65
Was there good communication between the regular school staff and the program staff?	3.5	3.43	3.43	3.46	3.51
How do you feel about your child's personal safety?	3.7	3.61	3.61	3.62	3.65
How do you feel about your child's academic progress in school?	3.5	3.48	3.48	3.51	3.55
Overall, how would you rate the program?	3.6	3.65	3.65	3.62	3.67
n=	310	777	1,615	1,993	2,719

Ratings range from 4 (excellent) to 1 (poor)





Parents of younger students (kindergarten through third grade) tended to provide significantly more positive ratings than did parents of older students (fourth grade through sixth grade and middle/high school). For example, on overall ratings, the mean rating from parents of 1,650 kindergarten through third grade students was 3.72, whereas the mean ratings from parents of 894 fourth through sixth grade students was 3.60 and 3.56 from parents of 154 middle/high school students. NDE 21st CCLC staff facilitated conference calls with two middle school consultants this year in order to provide support to programs serving secondary students.

Elementary Student Ratings of the 21st CCLC programs. Students were asked to rate their perceptions of the 21st CCLC programs they attended. Students were asked to complete either an elementary

or middle/high school student survey. Results are reported separately for elementary and secondary students. For elementary students, programs were asked to administer the survey in the spring to those 3rd grade and older students who were served 30 days or more. The statewide return rate for elementary student surveys was 78.44%.

Students perceived that adults care about them and the program offers a safe environment. Students also reported that they like the people, the activities, and things they do at CLC. On average, answers on these items were rated 1.60 or greater (trending toward yes). Students were less confident about doing better in school since joining CLC and feeling accepted by other kids, with responses on average being at or below 1.5 (midway between sometimes and yes).

21st CCLC: Elementary Student (3rd-6th Grade) Mean Satisfaction Ratings				
Items	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
I like the people at CLC.	1.67	1.69	1.66	1.62
I like how we learn things at CLC.	1.66	1.59	1.58	1.54
I have fun at CLC.	1.70	1.71	1.66	1.63
The adults at CLC care about me.	1.76	1.80	1.81	1.80
I like the activities and things we do at CLC.	1.65	1.65	1.60	1.57
I'm doing better in school since I joined CLC.	1.56	1.56	1.50	1.45
I feel accepted by other kids.	1.45	1.44	1.39	1.42
I feel safe going to CLC.	1.73	1.81	1.77	1.75
Overall	1.65	1.65	1.62	1.60
n=	1,273	1,407	1,470	2,077

Ratings are 2=yes, 1 = sometimes, and 0=no



Significant differences were found when results on the elementary student survey data are analyzed by grade level. Specifically, fifth and sixth grade students (n=646, m=1.50) were assigned to one group and then compared with third grade students (n=749, m=1.60) and fourth grade students (n=628, m=1.60) on their relative rating of "I like the activities and things we do at CLC." Third and fourth grade students were significantly more satisfied than fifth and sixth grade students (p=.001).

Middle/High School Student Ratings of the 21st CCLC programs. Middle and high school students were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the 21st CCLC

programs they attended, using the same 3-point scale as the elementary students. The statewide return rate for middle/high school student surveys was 63.04%.

The scores overall were lower than those of the elementary students. Overall, satisfaction levels reported by students averaged 1.42 on a 3-point scale with 0=no, 1=sometimes, and 2=yes to positive statements about the program. Middle to high school students positively rated adults at CLC caring about them and liking the activities (trending toward a rating of yes). The lowest ratings were noted for feeling accepted by others and perceiving that they are doing better in school since joining CLC.

21st CCLC: Middle/High School Student Satisfaction Mean Ratings				
Items	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
I like the people at CLC.	1.29	1.61	1.52	1.45
I like how we learn things at CLC.	1.27	1.49	1.51	1.40
I like the activities and things we do at CLC.	1.29	1.62	1.58	1.49
The adults at CLC care about me.	1.39	1.70	1.62	1.56
The activities we do at CLC are interesting or useful to me.	1.25	1.59	1.46	1.42
I'm doing better in school since I joined CLC.	1.19	1.35	1.39	1.25
I feel accepted by others.	1.37	1.44	1.37	1.39
Overall	1.29	1.54	1.49	1.42
n=	119	335	351	573

Ratings are 2=yes, 1 = sometimes, and 0=no



2007-2008 Middle School Success Story

**Names have been changed to pseudonyms*

Erin is in the seventh grade and entered the after-school program in the 07-08 school year. She is teased constantly by both other students and her older siblings. As a result, her self-worth seemed quite low. She avoided activities with students and did not feel she was a learner who could be successful.

She chose to start the after-school program because she “had nothing to do and her grades were bad.” She became involved in the after-school activities offered by the program and was helped with homework on a one-on-one basis. Her goal was to fill her time after-school in a way she enjoyed and to improve her grades.

As a result, Erin’s grades improved because her homework was finished and turned in and the activities helped her with self-esteem. She began to feel that she was accepted by the after-school group.

Erin was chosen to attend the Youth Leadership Conference on anti-smoking. When she returned with her group to school, she took charge of the anti-smoking activities and promoted the program to her peers. Erin has met her goals of improving her grades and finding a cause that made her feel successful in the school environment.

Teaching staff indicate she has improved in reading, writing, and math. Her parents have expressed their appreciation as they also felt unable to help her.

School Day Teacher Ratings of the 21st CCLC programs. School day teachers were asked to rate how well the 21st CCLC activities supported the student’s learning and development by complementing the school’s curriculum and district objectives. Surveys were collected from school day teachers who completed surveys for students served 30 days or more in the 21st CCLC programs. Surveys were collected on behalf of 5,176 regularly attending

students. This represented a statewide return rate of 83.55%.

Teachers provided an overall rating of 3.71 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being excellent. In the previous program year (2006-07), the overall average rating was 3.85. This suggests that while ratings are positive, there continues to be room for improvement for sites to more fully complement school curricula and district objectives.



Partner Ratings of Collaboration

Collaboration Survey Outcomes. A collaboration survey was used to measure the quality of collaboration between the program representatives, school administrators and community partners. Surveys were completed by school administrators and staff, partner agency representatives and others within the community from across all 21st CCLC programs. On average, grantees collected 15 surveys per grant program.

Individuals were asked to rate their level of agreement on seven statements regarding effective collaboration using a 5-point scale, with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree.

Overall, collaboration ratings continue to be positive, with all means found to be at or above 4.49 on a 5-point scale. Nearly all ratings were more positive than were found in the spring of 2007. This suggests that 21st CCLC programs are effectively collaborating with school and community partners.

21st CCLC: Collaboration Survey Results					
Items	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
Provides a high quality school-age care program.	4.3	4.47	4.52	4.58	4.72
Is viewed as a helpful resource to families in the community.	4.3	4.59	4.59	4.68	4.70
We work together to effectively coordinate services for children, youth, and/or families.	4.1	4.45	4.51	4.52	4.66
The 21st CCLC staff has made me aware of its programs and services.	4.0	4.35	4.36	4.49	4.49
Communication with the 21st CCLC program staff is effective.	4.1	4.27	4.40	4.51	4.58
The 21st CCLC staff is willing to share information and resources.	4.3	4.51	4.61	4.63	4.67
The 21st CCLC program is a significant asset in our community.	3.7	4.63	4.74	4.72	4.86
Overall collaboration rating	4.2	4.47	4.53	4.59	4.67
n=	109	251	296	436	495

5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree





Outcomes 2 and 3: Student Academic and School Related Behavioral Outcomes

Multiple methods were used to evaluate the impact of participation in 21st CCLC programs on students' academic and behavioral outcomes. Outcome data were collected for students who participated in the program for at least 30 days. Outcome data was obtained through parent and teacher ratings of students' academic progress. Students were also surveyed on their perceptions of their own academic progress.

Percentage of students meeting or exceeding district standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. In the late spring, school day teachers were asked to rate whether students who attended the 21st CCLC program 30 days or more met or exceeded district standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. Teacher

surveys were collected for 5,176 regularly attending students.

A greater percentage of students met or exceeded district standards in the 2007-08 year in each of the content areas (reading, writing, and mathematics) than in each of the previous three program years. Data are not reported for the 2003-04 program year because a different survey was utilized at that time. It was not until late 2004 that Learning Point Associates and the U.S. Department of Education implemented a standard Teacher Survey form for use by 21st CCLCs.

School day teacher ratings of student gains in school-related behaviors from fall to spring. In the late spring, teachers completed the federal 21st CCLC teacher survey designed to assess impact on ten behaviors typical of or demonstrating school success, and one item related to family support of learning implemented only in Nebraska. These were completed

21st CCLC: Percentage of Students Meeting/Not Meeting District Standards								
Content Area	2004-2005		2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008	
	Met	Not Met						
Reading	58%	42%	59%	41%	61%	39%	64%	36%
Writing	50%	50%	54%	46%	55%	45%	58%	42%
Mathematics	61%	39%	65%	35%	67%	33%	69%	31%



21st CCLC: 2007-08 Teacher Ratings of Student Behavioral Changes

Category of Behavioral Change	Already Excellent No Need for Improvement	No Improvement	Improvement
Turning in homework on time	33.18%	27.51%	39.31%
Completing homework to your satisfaction	31.61%	26.78%	41.61%
Participating in class	29.90%	26.22%	43.88%
Volunteering	31.14%	36.41%	32.45%
Attending class regularly	43.98%	32.02%	24.00%
Being attentive in class	28.69%	32.31%	39.00%
Behaving in class	30.19%	33.20%	36.61%
Academic performance	26.08%	24.94%	48.98%
Coming to school motivated to learn	30.62%	32.19%	37.19%
Getting along well with other students	31.14%	32.68%	36.18%
Family has changed their behavior to better support this student's learning	29.84%	35.05%	35.11%
Overall	31.49%	30.85%	37.68%

for students attending the 21st CCLC program 30 days or more during the school year. The rating scale ranged from +3 (significantly improved) to -3 (significantly decreased). Ratings compared behavioral change from fall to spring. If a student was already excellent on a particular behavioral item, teachers could mark "No change needed because the student was already excellent in this area." Teacher surveys were collected for 5,176 regularly attending students. This represents a statewide return rate of 83.55%.

Analysis was performed to identify the percentage of students who were rated

as already excellent in the fall and therefore no gain would be expected, those who were rated as not improving or declining, and those with reported improvement. More students were rated overall as improving (37.68%). Slightly less than a third of the students served were already excellent in the fall (31.49%) and did not need to make improvements. Also slightly less than a third (30.85%) did not improve or declined on the behavioral categories. This suggests that while more students improved, more progress could be made in decreasing the percentage of students who did not improve.





Parent ratings of student behavioral changes. Parents and/or adult family members were asked to assign two ratings (beginning of year/end of year) of their children and youth on behaviors typical of school success. Behavioral items included desire to learn, homework, attendance, behavior, academics, and social interactions. A total of 2,719 parent surveys were collected for students served 30 days or more in the 21st CCLC programs. The return rate was 43.89%. Outcomes were analyzed to assess whether students significantly improved.

Using a paired t test to analyze the outcomes, students significantly improved on all behaviors, $p_s < .001$, two-tailed. These results suggest that families saw significant, positive outcomes for their children and youth on all behavioral indicators. Greatest gains were noted in academic outcomes, including demonstrating desire and willingness to learn, meeting or exceeding academic requirements in reading, as well as in homework completion.

As a secondary analysis, parent ratings of student behaviors in the spring of the

21st CCLC: Parent Ratings of Student Behavioral Changes					
Behavioral Indicator	Mean Gain	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Demonstrated desire and willingness to learn	.25464	.64047	20.226	2587	.000
Completed assigned work and homework on time	.26008	.65442	20.186	2579	.000
Attended class regularly	.08873	.44577	10.112	2580	.000
Met the behavior standards of the school	.19223	.55604	17.543	2574	.000
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in reading	.26434	.58005	23.148	2579	.000
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in writing	.24942	.56293	22.497	2577	.000
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in mathematics	.23856	.57035	21.237	2577	.000
Got along well with other students	.19961	.54694	18.556	2584	.000





21st CCLC: Mean Spring Parent Ratings of Student Behaviors (Multiple Years)

Behavioral Indicator	2006	2007	2008
Demonstrated desire and willingness to learn	3.43	3.45	3.46
Completed assigned work and homework on time	3.37	3.38	3.41
Attended class regularly	3.61	3.60	3.62
Met the behavior standards of the school	3.43	3.42	3.45
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in reading	3.32	3.37	3.41
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in writing	3.29	3.33	3.35
Met or exceeded the academic requirements in mathematics	3.32	3.38	3.38
Got along well with other students	3.46	3.44	3.47
n=	1,615	1,872	2,719

4-point scale, 1=poor to 4=excellent

past three program years were compared to measure whether parent perceptions of student behaviors in the spring are improving over multiple years.

Parents rated students more positively this year than in past years. Parents rated students positively on all items. The most positively rated item was *“Attended class regularly.”* The least positively rated item, although still in the *“good”* rating

area, was *“Met or exceeded academic requirements in writing.”*

Elementary Student Perceptions of Outcomes. Surveys were collected from 2,077 regularly served elementary students (third grade and older) in the late spring. Students were asked to mark 0 (No), 1 (Sometimes) or 2 (Yes) to a number of statements.

21st CCLC: Elementary Student Perceptions

Items	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
1. Getting good grades in school is important to me.	1.7	1.88	1.86	1.87
2. I feel accepted by other kids.	1.4	1.45	1.38	1.42
3. I feel safe going to CLC.	1.7	1.81	1.77	1.75
4. I talk to my family about school and homework.	1.4	1.44	1.42	1.40
5. I can do most tasks at school.	1.6	1.67	1.67	1.67
6. I follow the rules at school.	1.5	1.67	1.70	1.66
n=	1,273	1,407	1,470	2,077

Ratings are 2=yes, 1 = sometimes, and 0=no



More positive ratings by students were found in the areas of identifying that getting good grades is important to them and they feel safe going to the 21st CCLC

program. Less positive ratings were found in student perceptions of *"I feel accepted by other kids"* and *"I talk to my family about school and homework."*

2007-2008 Elementary School Success Story

**Names have been changed to pseudonyms*

On Dec. 3, 2007 Tami Robinson enrolled her son Dean (who is in first grade) in the after-school Program. Dean had been identified with autism. He demonstrated aggressive behaviors when confronted with new situations. He responded well to consistent expectations and strategies from adults. With all this being said, Dean is highly intelligent and reads two grade levels above his grade-level placement. Dean's mother approached the 21st CCLC staff expressing interest in his participating in the after-school program. His mother felt the wide variety of opportunities and experiences the after-school program provides would be beneficial to his self-esteem.

At first, the students in the after-school program were afraid of Dean, due to his erratic behavior, aggressive touching and uniqueness, in general. The after-school staff visited with the principal to develop a plan. He asked the kids to join him as they sat in a circle and shared background perspectives on autism. The topics included: What is autism?, What type of "things" promote Dean's aggressive behavior?, How can we all help Dean? He met with this same group of students a short time later in the school year and once again they sat together in a circle. This time, he read the book My Friend With Autism, written by Beverly Bishop.

Our school has a special education teacher who is trained in autism and other significant behavioral issues. She met with the after-school staff and shared helpful information.

When Dean first came to us he was confused as to why he was there and we were not sure what to expect. One of the teachers in the after-school program volunteered to work with him. She soon learned that he loved to sketch and a sketching pad was purchased for him. The sketching kept him calm, but also had the added benefit of drawing the other children to him. They were fascinated by how talented he was. As time went on we included Dean in more and more activities. He sometimes needed his "breaks" as we called them, and a space was given to us to use in the special education classroom.

By the end of the year Dean had really blossomed. On the second to the last day he even got in front of the class and led them all in a dance. He and the other children felt he had become one of them.





21st CCLC: Middle/High School Student Perceptions of School and 21st CCLCs

Items	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
1. I look forward to going to school.	1.35	1.37	1.41	1.37
2. I feel confident about doing well in school.	1.53	1.56	1.53	1.51
3. I feel accepted by others.	1.37	1.44	1.38	1.39
4. I would like to go to college someday.	1.63	1.81	1.69	1.76
5. I get good grades at school.	1.54	1.49	1.33	1.35
6. I follow the rules at school.	1.42	1.53	1.50	1.49
7. I treat all people with respect.	1.37	1.52	1.55	1.51
n=	119	335	351	573

Ratings are 2=yes, 1 = sometimes, and 0=no

Middle and High School Student Perceptions of Outcomes. Surveys were collected from middle school and high school students in the spring. Students were asked to mark no, sometimes, or yes to a number of statements concerning school and the 21st CCLC programs.

Middle and high school students rated “I would like to go to college someday” most positively. The less positively rated areas were “I get good grades at school,” and “I look forward to going to school.”

2007-2008 High School Success Story

**Names have been changed to pseudonyms*

Mary is very proactive and ambitious. As a result of the relationships developed with staff and other students in the program, she has made tremendous improvements in her attitude and behavior.

The old Mary was usually angry and expressed her emotions negatively. She would speak disrespectfully, pout, walk out of class without permission, shove desks around, or tune everyone out. Her negative attitude also had a negative effect on her grades and attendance. Because her attendance was plagued with tardies, full day absences, truancy

continued...



continued...

from classes, and school suspensions, Mary had a GPA of 0.875 and she passed only 50% of her classes. If she did not like a class or the teacher, she would not attend, consequently resulting in the failure of the class. For example, Mary did not like her physics teacher and was convinced that he did not like her as well. She skipped his class 23 times in the first semester and failed this course, among others.

Mary became a participant in the spring semester of the 2006-2007 school year. Mary's grades, attendance, and GPA improved as her attitude improved. After joining the program, Mary passed 85% of her classes. Her full day absences and class truancy decreased significantly, and her semester GPA improved to 1.86, compared to the 0.875 the prior semester. She proved more successful during summer school. Mary graduated in the spring of 2008.

Mary has spoken to representatives of the Board of Education about the success she has achieved. She attributes this success to the relationships developed with staff and peers in the program.

The new Mary is a positive, creative, self-controlled, and determined individual. She still has some rough edges, but continues to work diligently and allows the sand paper of truth and encouragement to smooth out those edges. Mary is much more receptive to instruction and has developed positive coping skills for difficult situations. She has always been "book smart" but has now added an improved attitude and behavior to equal future success. Mary has many goals and ambitions and plans to take full advantage of any opportunity to go to college on scholarship or for an internship.

Outcome 4: Active Family Involvement

Parents/adult family members were asked to identify the primary reason for enrolling their child or youth into the community learning center program. A total of 2,719 parent surveys were collected. More parents responded that they enrolled their child/youth for extra

help with school work (38.48%). This was the second program year in which more parents enrolled their child or youth for this reason. In previous years, parents reported enrolling their child for the purpose of obtaining child care. The selection of extra help with school work was followed closely by child care as their primary motivation (30.19%). Fewer families selected extension activities (18.15%) or recreational offerings





21st CCLC: Percent of Families Reporting on Types of Parent Involvement			
Types of Parent Involvement	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
Read newsletters from school	75.8%	74.3%	79.4%
Talk to my child's teacher or teachers at least monthly	48.1%	54.6%	57.7%
Visit school during school hours	30.8%	33.2%	35.3%
Visit school during parent events (like parent-teacher conferences, back to school nights, etc.)	76.7%	78.4%	82.8%
Review my child's homework regularly	74.5%	78.5%	81.7%
Volunteer for school activities	23.0%	26.1%	26.3%
Teach child at home (computers, internet, reading)	68.0%	67.7%	72.2%
Participate in parent groups (PTA, committees, parent advisory groups, parenting classes)	17.0%	18.3%	18.3%
n=	989	1,993	2,719

(6.59%). A small number checked multiple reasons or did not respond to the question this year (6.59%).

Henderson and Mapp (2002) found that parent involvement that is linked to student learning has a greater impact on student achievement than other forms of involvement. For this reason, parents were asked to identify a variety of ways in which they might support their child's learning, ranging from reading school newsletters to participating in PTA programs. In most categories this year, a greater percentage of parents reported affirmatively. Most participate in reviewing their child's homework or visiting the school during special events.

Greater than half of families reported having at least monthly communication with their child's teacher or teachers. The percentage of parents volunteering or joining parent groups remains small (18.3%). As a second measure of changes in family support of student learning, school day teachers were asked to rate whether families adapted their behavior to better support the student's learning. The rating scale range is +3 (significant gain) to -3 (significant decrease).

A total of 5,176 surveys were collected in the spring from school day teachers. Teachers reported that 35.1% of families improved in supporting learning during





21st CCLC: Teacher Rating of Change in Family Support of Student's Learning

Item	Spring 2006 Percentage	Spring 2007 Percentage	Spring 2008 Percentage
Significant decrease	0.8%	0.5%	0.7%
Moderate decrease	1.3%	0.8%	1.0%
Slight decrease	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%
No change	33.1%	34.7%	30.8%
Slight gain	15.9%	14.6%	17.0%
Moderate gain	11.9%	12.6%	12.4%
Significant gain	5.3%	6.2%	5.8%
Already excellent; no need to improve	29.1%	28.6%	29.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n=	3,355	4,215	5,176

the 2007-08 school year compared to 33.4% in 2006-07. Many families were also rated as not having a need to improve because they were already active in supporting their child's learning (29.8% this year compared to 28.6% in 2006-07). Teachers rated 30.8% of families as showing no change in behavior (compared to 34.7% in 2006-07). Very few were rated as decreasing in supporting their child's learning.

These data demonstrate that adult family members are becoming more involved in supporting their children's learning. For this program year, 65% of these children and youth are experiencing positive or improving educational supports at home. This is improved compared to the

percentages found in the 2006-07 program year (62%), the 2005-2006 program year (62.2%), and the 2004-05 program year (58%).

Summary and Recommendations

The eighty-eight school-based 21st Century Community Learning Center sites served 6,195 students at least 30 days in their after-school programs. Most students were in elementary schools (85%). Fewer were served in middle schools (12%) or high schools (3%). Most students were from an ethnic minority category (53.56%). Most were eligible for free or reduced lunch (70.23%). Some were classified as





English language learners (14.01%). Some were verified for special education services (17.77%). The 21st CCLC program sites served a greater percentage of students at academic risk than are generally found in the Nebraska student population.

Quality. These programs offered a range of educational, positive youth development, and recreational services. The quality of programming was monitored through the *Observations for School-Age Care & Programming* tool. Statewide, grantees earned an average rating of 83% of possible score, comparing to 83% last year, 79% in 2005-2006 and 74% in 2004-2005. Compared to last year, improvements were noted in the categories of Administration, Partnering with Families, School & Community Collaboration, Environment, and Program Content. Despite these improvements, item analysis showed four items in Program Content with a statewide average rating at or below the indicator of quality (a score of 3.50).

Therefore, it is recommended that NDE focus statewide technical assistance to grantees in the areas of mathematics, science, leadership, and utilizing differentiated instructional strategies (all under the domain of *Program Content*).

Parents/adult family members, teachers, and students positively rated satisfaction with the quality of 21st CCLC programs. Overall, teachers rated the programs at 3.71 on a 5-point scale for complementing the district's curriculum and standards. Families provided overall ratings of 3.67 on a 4-point scale for overall satisfaction with their local 21st CCLC. Students continued to provide very positive ratings of adults caring about them, reporting a safe environment, and liking the activities of the 21st CCLC programs.

Student Achievement and Social/Behavioral Changes. The majority of students are meeting or exceeding district standards in reading (64%), writing (58%), and mathematics (69%). Teachers reported that regularly attending students made strong gains in academic performance, participating in class, and completing homework in a timely and satisfactory manner. Parents also reported significant gains. Since "feeling accepted by peers" continued to be among the lowest rated items reported by elementary and secondary students, **it is also recommended that statewide technical assistance focus on supporting positive student-to-student connections.**



Family/Community Engagement. In terms of family engagement, teachers reported that 65% of children and youth experienced positive or improving educational supports at home. Parents reported being more actively involved in partnering in the learning process, with gains reported in every type of parental involvement activity measured. On the other hand, a slightly smaller percentage of students reported working with their family on homework. The 21st CCLC grantees have improved their collaborations with community partners and school administrators dramatically from the 2003-2004 year. Overall collaboration ratings have increased to 4.67 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being strongly agree. Because the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program partners with the Nebraska State Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC) program, no recommendations will be made for the area of family and community engagement. The State PIRC partner will continue to provide technical assistance to schools which also have 21st Century Community Learning Center grant programs. Currently, the Nebraska State PIRC is serving 37 schools with a 21st CCLC program.

In conclusion, the 2007-2008 evaluation of Nebraska's 21st Century Community Learning Centers has documented

progress on each of the four outcomes for this grant program: quality, student achievement, student social/behavioral changes, and family/community engagement.

References

- Burchinal, M., Peisner-Feinberg, E., Bryant, D., & Clifford, R. (2000). Children's social and cognitive development and childcare quality: Testing for differential associations related to poverty, gender, or ethnicity. *Applied Development Science, 4*, 149-165.
- Henderson, A. & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Austin, TX: National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- Nebraska Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (2007). Evaluation Guidebook. Lincoln, NE.
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/21stcclc/EvaluationGuidebook2007.pdf>.



Lisa St. Clair, Ed.D.

Assistant Professor, Pediatrics
Department of Education & Child Development
Munroe-Meyer Institute
University of Nebraska Medical Center
985450 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-5450
Lstclair@unmc.edu
(402) 559-3023



Funding for the external evaluation and this publication was provided by federal funds under No Child Left Behind, Title IV B (2001 Amendment to ESEA) and administered by the Nebraska Department of Education.



21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program

Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South, Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987
Phone: (402) 471-0876
Fax: (402) 471-2434
Web Site: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/21stcclc>

The contents of this Annual Evaluation Report are available online at
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/21stcclc/EvaluationReport.pdf>.

©2008 Nebraska Department of Education. This publication may be reproduced without further permission as long as it is not altered. If any part of the contents of this publication are altered in any way and used in a compilation or derivative work, prior written permission must be obtained from the Nebraska Department of Education.