Annual Evaluation Report

2011–2012 School Year

Nebraska
21st CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers
Soaring Beyond Expectations

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 schools with high needs. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) administers these grants 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 afterschool 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 overarching goals of this grant program are to: 1) improve student learning performance in one or more core academic areas; 2) improve student social and behavioral skills; 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. 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.education.ne.gov/21stcclc. The US Department of Education website is located at http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html.

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the 21st CCLC program evaluation is to provide: (a) descriptive information regarding the implementation of 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.education.ne.gov/CIPToolkit/).

Continuous Improvement Process

The overall design of the 21st CCLC Grant Program utilizes targeted academic and social/behavioral supports in before school, afterschool, full days when school is not in session, and summer school offerings. Local programs develop their own models to suit local needs, but must meet or exceed the parameters established in the grant application from NDE.

Programs must base their model on local needs assessment data, describe curricular and evaluation approaches, and participate in a comprehensive, continuous improvement evaluation process. Programs select an external 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 NDE 21st CCLC management team identified the elements of a quality afterschool program and began to incorporate them into the continuous improvement process for local programs beginning in

2007. Each year local evaluation data is submitted by June 15. The external statewide evaluator analyzes, verifies the accuracy of the submitted data, and develops "Continuous Improvement Process Data Snapshots" for each program. Indicators of quality were established on targeted data *process* areas (such as 90% return rates or greater on teacher, parent and student surveys) and on *outcome* areas (such as ratings of 3.50 or greater on observation domain categories). These snapshots include site level outcomes, grant program level outcomes, district level outcomes, and state level outcomes. The snapshot provides a summary of each school site's data outcomes and the overall program's data outcomes compared to state outcomes, and is color coded in yellow, orange or red to indicate any data outcome that does not meet the indicators of quality. Yellow highlighting signifies an outcome below the indicator of quality for the first time. Orange highlighting signifies an outcome below the indicator of quality for two or more consecutive years, but shows improvement from the prior year. Red highlighting signifies an outcome below the indicator of quality for two or more consecutive years and has not improved from the prior year.

Each year, during the months of August and September, the NDE 21st CCLC management team meets with management teams of grantees in year one or four of the five year grant cycle. The purpose of these meetings is to review the CIP Data Snapshot with the local management teams and facilitate discussions on local plans to improve programs. Grantee management teams completing years two, three, or five, meet with external local evaluators to complete the same CIP process. These management teams then work together to complete Continuous Improvement Process Meeting Summaries that identify areas of strength, areas below the indicators of quality, and action plans for improvement. Each local management team then implements the action plans proposed to improve their program. Data are then collected in the subsequent year to measure program improvement. In the case of red highlighted areas below the indicators of quality, the NDE management team reviews the proposed action plan and provides approval or recommendations for modification. Action plans are then closely monitored for improvement.

Technical Assistance and Professional Development. NDE provided technical assistance and professional development activities for 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 afterschool programs, the statewide evaluation findings, and discussions at each project's continuous improvement process meeting. Monthly grant management and evaluation conference calls are held with project directors. Recordings of the calls are posted online where others can access and review them, if they were unable to join the monthly call. When requested, resources were provided and some follow-up site visits occurred for program support in

areas identified. A password protected e-learning system, My21stCCLC, was utilized for data collection, grant management, communication, and provision of technical assistance. All of the Nebraska project directors were required to attend the Nebraska project director annual meeting in September. New grant administrators were provided with year-long outreach on the basics of grants management and evaluation. Technical assistance was offered to the new and veteran project directors on relevant topics including program planning and implementation, operation of an effective program, collaboration with families and community partners and alignment to school-day learning objectives. Vehicles for the delivery of technical assistance included both face-to-face meetings and technology (e.g., site visits, monthly webinars, regional workshops, formation of the Middle School Network).

To assist projects in their continuous improvement process, the 21st CCLC state management team developed The 21st CCLC *Elements of Quality*, aligning the elements with the observation tool used by evaluators. A website for grantees was organized with resources available in each of the domains on the observation tool and the Elements of Quality.

A major professional development initiative during the 2011-12 school year focused on building interest and expertise in teaching and learning STEM content (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). In the summer of 2011, the Nebraska 21st CCLC program received a four year Summer of Innovation Cooperative Agreement from the National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA). This initiative is titled Nebraska BLAST! (Building Lasting Afterschool STEM Teams) and targeted optional programming to traditionally underrepresented youth in grades 4-8. Content themes included Robotics, Aviation and Aeronautics, and Cosmic Connections to the Universe. Nebraska BLAST! was implemented through partnerships with the University of Nebraska and NASA Nebraska Space Grant. The Nebraska BLAST! program provided ongoing regional professional development for teachers and afterschool staff who then partnered to implement the content in their 21st CCLC sites. Professional development provided was focused on building expertise to teach STEM content, access and utilize NASA resources, build community and statewide partnerships, and most importantly strengthen collaborative working relationships between afterschool staff and classroom teachers.

Summary of data collection systems

Site level 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 Profile and Performance Information Collection Systems (PPICS) and in annual Continuous Improvement Process Summaries including action plans submitted by grantees.

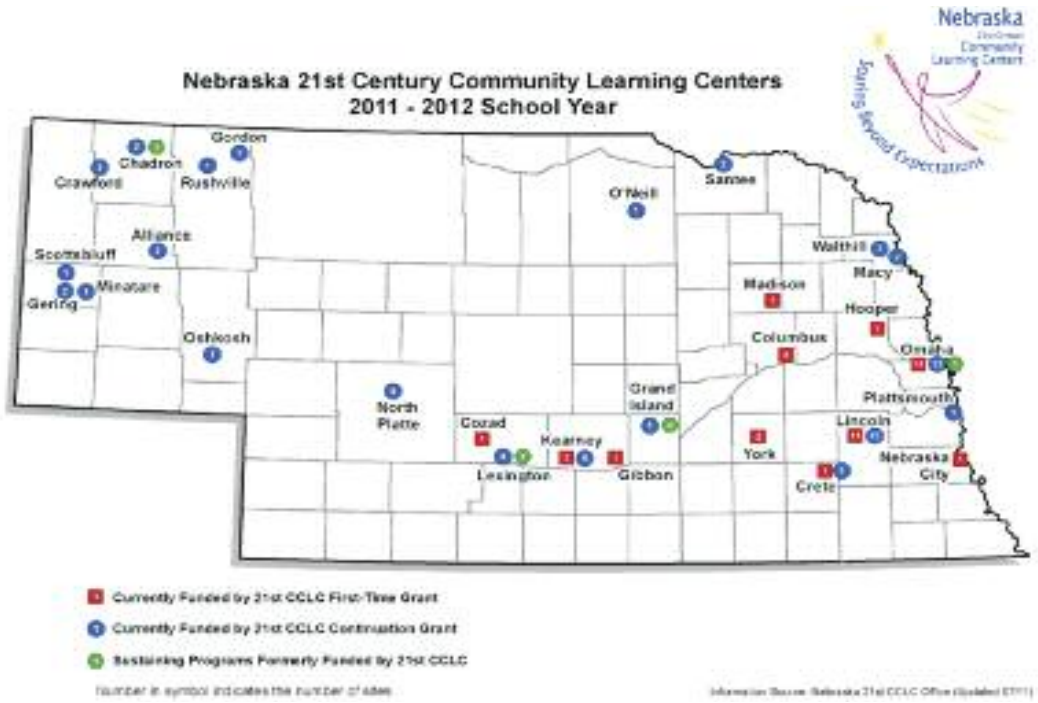
Program Evaluation Findings

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. This graphic provides a summary of the communities served in the 21st CCLC program for 2011-2012.

Description of Grantees, Sites, and Students Served

Project Demographics

Beginning in 2003-2004, NDE has conducted an annual grant competition to award five-year 21st CCLC federal grants for CLC programming. These 21st CCLC grant dollars are leveraged with other federal, state and local in-kind and matching funds to operate quality CLC programs. In 2011-2012 grant awards totaled $5,321,748 to benefit students in 28 Nebraska communities.



Two types of competitive grants were available. First-time grants are 100% grant-funded in years one through three, 80% in year four, and 60% in year five. Continuation grants (calculated at a daily rate that is 50% for first-time grants) are awarded to quality 21st CCLC programs with level funding for a five-year grant period, and are available only to school buildings which have successfully implemented 21st CCLC programming for five years.

Student Demographics

While a total of 15,743 students were served in afterschool or out-of-school days during the year by 21st CCLC sites, demographic information will be reported only for those students who were regularly served, referred to as regular attenders. The definition of a regular attender is a student attending 30 days or more during the school year. These programs served 9,221 regularly attending students during the 2011-2012 school year, which was an increase from 8,577 in 2010-2011; 8,061 in 2009-2010; 7,048 in 2008-2009; and 6,195 in 2007-2008.

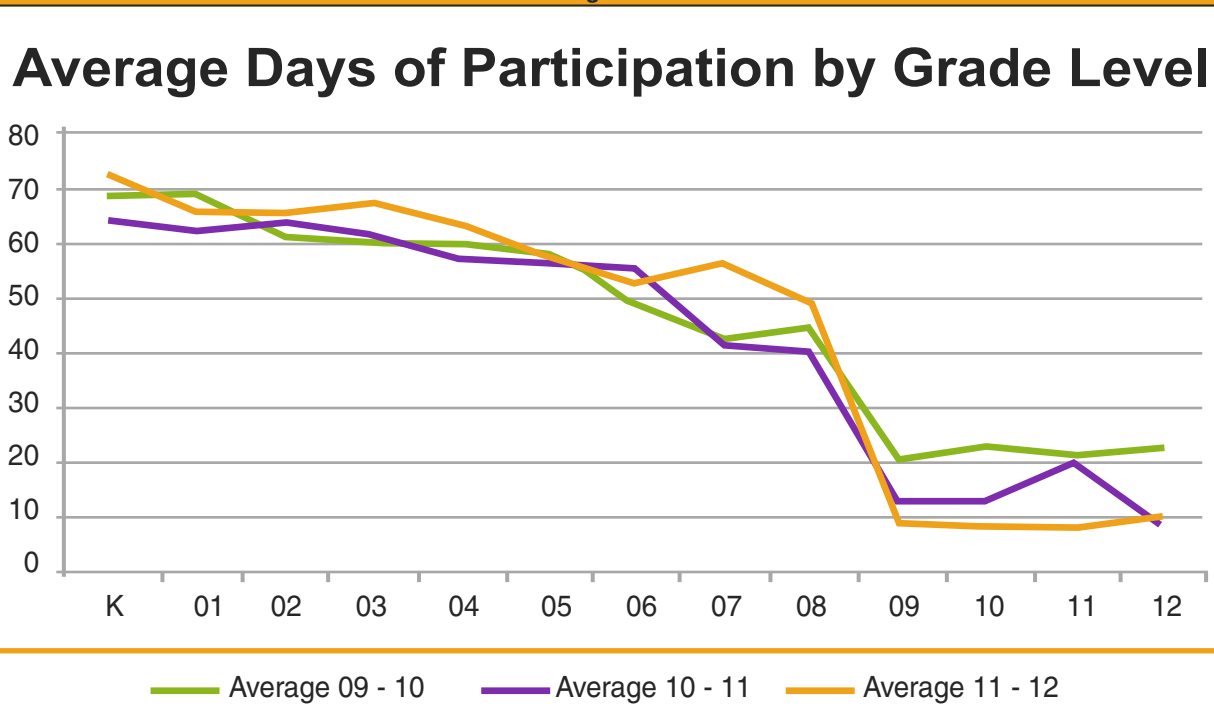
The programs were funded to serve 7,111 regularly attending students during the 2011-2012 school year. Because these programs served a greater number of regularly attending students (9,221), they served 130% of the students funded to be served during the school year.

Figure 1

Grade Levels for Total and Regular Student Attenders for Nebraska 21st CCLC

Grade Level	# of Total Student Attenders	# of Regular Student Attenders	% of Regular Student Attenders
Kindergarten Students	1441	933	10.1%
First–grade Students	1807	1078	11.7%
Second–grade Students	1884	1129	12.2%
Third–grade Students	1975	1267	13.7%
Fourth–grade Students	1832	1138	12.3%
Fifth–grade Students	1711	972	10.5%
Sixth–grade Students	1641	971	10.5%
Seventh–grade Students	1526	954	10.3%
Eighth–grade Students	1209	717	7.8%
Ninth–grade Students	251	24	0.3%
Tenth–grade Students	156	15	0.2%
Eleventh–grade Students	148	11	0.1%
Twelfth–grade Students	162	12	0.1%
Total	**15743**	**9221**	**100%**

Figure 2



Grade levels. As delineated in Figure 1, the majority of students regularly served in 21st CCLC programs across Nebraska were in kindergarten through fifth grade (71%).

Participation by Grade Level. The participation of different grade level groups was examined. Figure 2 depicts average days of participation by grade level across all students who enrolled in 21st CCLC programs in 2009-2010, 2010-2011, or 2011-2012. Participation generally declined by grade level, although there were some grade levels where increases were observed (kindergarten through third grades, and seventh through eighth grades). Further exploration would need to occur to determine the reasons for this trend.

Ethnicity. The 21st CCLC programs served a diverse group of children and youth. The majority of students served (57%) were from an ethnic minority category (Figure 3).

Gender. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the regular attenders were female and 51% were male.

Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the regular attenders were eligible for free or reduced lunch. This is a significantly greater percentage compared to all of Nebraska's schools (42.58%, data source is NDE State of the Schools Report, 2010-11).

Figure 3

Ethnicity for Regular Student Attenders for Nebraska 21st CCLC

Ethnicity	# of Regular Student Attenders	% of Regular Student Attenders
American Indian/Alaska Native	455	4.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	219	2.4%
Black/African American	1836	19.9%
Hispanic/Latino	2498	27.1%
White	3923	42.5%
Multiple	290	3.1%
Total	**9221**	**100%**

Eligibility for Other School Services. Fourteen percent (14%) of the regular attenders were English Language Learners. NDE State of the Schools Report (SOSR) data indicates that 6.72% of students in Nebraska's schools were identified as English Language Learners (2010-11). Twenty percent (20%) of regular attenders were verified for special education, compared to 15.17% across Nebraska's schools (2010-11 SOSR data).

Quality of 21st CCLC Programs

Quality programs have been linked to immediate, positive developmental outcomes, as well as long-term positive academic performance (Beckett, Capizzano, Parsley, Ross, Schirm, & Taylor,

Figure 4

OQASP Domain	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Number of School Sites Observed	**92**	**102**	**102**	**104**
Administration	**4.57**	**4.66**	**4.65**	**4.75**
Relationships	**4.43**	**4.47**	**4.48**	**4.58**
Family Partnerships	**4.25**	**4.37**	**4.47**	**4.57**
School & Community Collaboration	**4.47**	**4.53**	**4.52**	**4.64**
Environment, Safety & Wellness of Students	**4.52**	**4.56**	**4.59**	**4.63**
Programming	**4.16**	**4.24**	**4.22**	**4.43**
Overall	**4.40**	**4.48**	**4.49**	**4.50**

5-point scale with 1=not evident and 5=consistently evident

2009; Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Bryant, and Clifford, 2000).

Observations of Program Quality. The Observations for Quality After School Programming (OQASP) tool was developed by the statewide evaluator and used for program observations for the past seven years. Each year, the statewide evaluator observes all Year 1, Year 5, 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.

Figure 5

More Positively Rated Items

#	Item Description	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
A13	A system is used to ensure there are sufficient materials to support program activities.	4.96	4.93	4.98
S3	The site supervisor is provided space at the school for lesson planning, communications, and data management.	4.89	4.87	4.91
E8	Meals and snacks are nutritious and adequate in portion to meet the needs of the students.	4.85	Not top 6	4.88
E3	The program's outdoor space meets the needs of students.	Not top 6	4.86	Not top 6
A4	Program policies and procedures are in place and are practiced as appropriate to support the safety of the students (fire drills, etc., should be practiced in the program, not just in the school day program, should be practiced or have a clear schedule for practice in summer).	Not top 6	4.84	4.89
A7	Program practices and policies ensure staff to student ratios not to exceed 1:15 and very few whole group activities.	4.82	4.84	Not top 6
S12	The school and program staff share in the process of recruiting and retaining students.	4.81	4.80	4.92
A2	Program policies and procedures are responsive to the needs of students and families in the community.	4.79	Not top 6	Not top 6
S9	The school, community, and program collaborate to ensure that materials, displays, and activities reflect the diversity of the community.	Not top 6	Not top 6	4.84

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 observation 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, recreational activities).

Figure 6

Less Positively Rated Items

#	Item Description	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
P5	Science activities include in-depth, hands-on investigations where systematic inquiry is encouraged.	3.48	3.28	3.83
P4	Mathematics is developed in students through the use of engaging learning games and activities, projects meaningful to students, or through technology which appears interesting to students.	3.90	3.72	3.97
F8	A representative group of parents are included in shared decision making on key issues related to student learning.	3.77	3.90	3.97
P7	Students can choose from a wide variety of activities each day.	3.95	3.96	Not lowest 6
F7	Staff provide, or connect parents to, opportunities designed to engage parents in supporting learning at home.	4.09	Not lowest 6	4.29
P9	A variety of instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of all students, including the needs of exceptional learners (special education to gifted).	4.12	Not lowest 6	Not lowest 6
E9	Staff ensure that students take steps to minimize health risks (score of up to 3 if hand sanitizers are used consistently, up to 5 with hand washing with soap and water).1	Not lowest 6	4.05	3.88
S5	The school and program regularly share staff development offerings.	Not lowest 6	4.16	Not lowest 6
S8	At least one program staff member participates on the school improvement team (or other key leadership council)	Not lowest 6	Not lowest 6	4.27

[1]CDC guidance on hand washing

Programs were found to be of high quality. A total of 104 school sites were observed and rated in the winter. This represented 97% of funded school sites. Three sites could not be observed and rated because programming was not offered this year at those buildings. Overall, ratings have generally continued to improve on the *Observations for Quality After School Programming (OQASP)* findings (Figure 4) and these ratings are greatly above the Indicator of Quality standard set by the Nebraska Department of Education (3.50 or greater on each domain and overall).

Domain Level Analysis. Average domain ratings across programs were in the 4.4 to 4.8 range, suggesting that as a group the 21st CCLC programs were of good to excellent quality. More positive ratings were noted for all areas. The lowest rated domain was *Programming*; however, it also showed the greatest improvement from the prior year (increase of 0.21). Sites with a domain rating of less than 3.50 were required to develop action plans for continuous improvement. Analysis of outcomes by item on the observation tool noted the six items with the highest ratings and the six items with the lowest ratings on average across all sites (see Figures 5 and 6).

Item Level Analysis. Item analysis on the observation data revealed that statewide average scores on most items were in the 4.0 to 5.0 range. The six more positively rated items were in the 4.84 to 4.98 range.

The six less positively rated items ranged from 3.83 to 4.29. Although all of these ratings surpassed the Indicator of Quality—a score of 3.50 or greater—when compared to the higher scoring items, these scores indicate areas to improve. A programming domain relating to science activities received the lowest score, a 3.83, representing an increase compared to the prior year. This score is now above the state's Indicator of Quality.

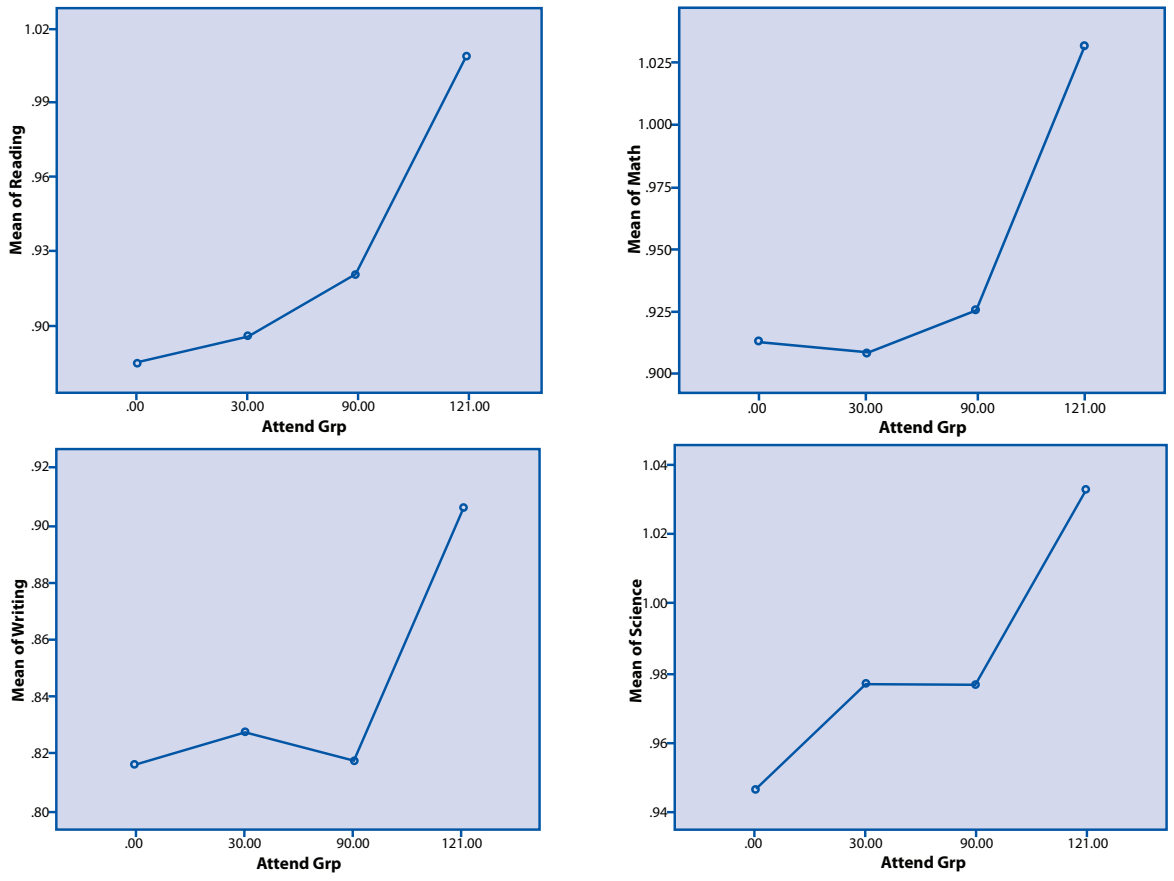
Programs are rating so positively on this external measurement tool that it will be recommended that other observation or evaluation measures of quality be considered and piloted in the next program year in order to continue to drive ongoing improvement of programs.

Teacher, Parent, Student, and Collaborative Partner Survey Outcomes

Teacher Survey Outcomes. The return rate of teacher surveys for students who attended 30 days or more was 80%, which was similar to the two previous years (85% and 86%). The targeted return rate for teacher surveys was 90%. Grantees not meeting the 90% return rate were required to develop an action plan to meet this requirement.

School day classroom teachers were asked to rate each student's performance on district objectives/standards on a 3-point scale with 3 being exceeded standards, 2 being met standards, and 1 being below standards. Domains entailed reading (including reading, speaking, and listening), writing, and mathematics.

Figure 7



A one-way between subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) compared teacher ratings of student performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Students were assigned to Group 1 (attended less than 30 days), Group 2 (30-89 days), Group 3 (90-120 days), and Group 4 (121 more days). The alpha level for each ANOVA was 0.05.

Analysis of variance compared teacher ratings of student performance by group assignment in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Students who attended 121 days or more were rated significantly higher in all areas ($p<.001$).

The mean score in reading, writing, mathematics, and science was significantly greater for students who had participation in the 21st CCLC program of 121 days or more (see Figure 7).

For those readers who are interested, the descriptive data from analyses are included in Appendix 2.

Teachers were also asked to rate students on the following student behaviors by reporting their level of change (if any) from fall to spring (see Figure 8). Results were limited to students with unique Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS)

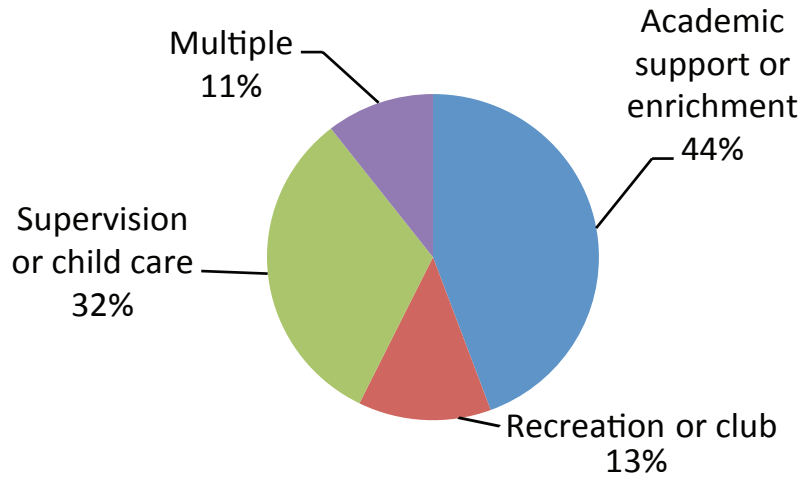
Figure 8

Teacher Survey – Ratings of Change

Items	Students Attending Statewide 21st CCLC Analysis of Gain Scores			
	0-29 days	30-89 days	90-120 days	121+ days
Number of Surveys	938	3328	1365	2783
Turning in homework on time	0.46	0.59	0.61	0.67
Completing homework to your satisfaction	0.51	0.61	0.63	0.72
Participating in class	0.68	0.70	0.63	0.79
Volunteering	0.49	0.48	0.75	0.57
Attending class regularly	0.37	0.39	0.49	0.49
Being attentive in class	0.44	0.45	0.48	0.50
Behaving well in class	0.40	0.41	0.41	0.50
Academic performance	0.62	0.65	0.71	0.79
Coming to school motivated to learn	0.54	0.49	0.51	0.63
Getting along well with other students	0.54	0.49	0.51	0.59
Family support of student's learning	0.47	0.45	0.45	0.53
Average Change	0.50	0.52	0.56	0.62

7-point scale ranging from -3=significant decline to +3=significant improvement

Figure 9



numbers. Teachers were also allowed to note if a student was already excellent in a particular area in the fall or if an area was not applicable, such as homework in some kindergarten classrooms.

Overall, students demonstrated improvement according to teacher ratings. Those with greater participation demonstrated significantly higher gains overall ($p<.05$).

Parent Survey Outcomes. Parents of kindergarten through 12th grade students who were regular 21st CCLC attenders across Nebraska were surveyed regarding their ratings of the 21st CCLC programs on a number of different areas in order to assess the quality of services and perceived outcomes for their children. The statewide return rate for parent surveys was 63%, which was a decline from the prior two years (70% and 65%). The targeted return rate for parent surveys was 90%. Grantees not meeting the 90% return rate were required to develop an action plan to meet this requirement.

Parents were asked to identify their primary reason for enrolling their child or youth in the 21st CCLC program. Figure 9 displays their responses.

These data suggest that the majority of parents (44%) enroll their children for academic support or enrichment opportunities as their primary reason.

Figure 10 reflects parent ratings of eight items relevant to 21st CCLCs.

Figure 10

Parent Survey Data

Rating		Students Attending Statewide 21st CCLC			
		0-29 days	30-89 days	90-120 days	121+ days
Number of Surveys Collected		598	2283	1134	2420
1	The 21st CCLC program is a great benefit to my child/youth.	3.90	3.84	3.88	3.90
2	The 21st CCLC staff are excellent (caring, reliable, skilled).	3.88	3.84	3.86	3.87
3	The 21st CCLC staff communicate with me regularly about my child's progress in the program.	3.47	3.42	3.60	3.62
4	The 21st CCLC program is a safe place, physically and emotionally.	3.91	3.83	3.85	3.87
5	The activities offered are good and my child enjoys them.	3.92	3.84	3.86	3.89
6	My child learns more by participating in the 21st CCLC program.	3.82	3.73	3.75	3.81
7	The 21st CCLC program helps my child build and maintain friendships.	3.85	3.78	3.81	3.85
8	My child's behavior is handled well in the afterschool program and I am kept informed about strengths and challenges.	3.66	3.64	3.73	3.76
	Overall Average	3.80	3.74	3.79	3.82

1=Disagree, 4=Agree

Greater participation was associated with higher ratings on most items. The most positively rated item was that the program is a great benefit to their child. The lowest rated item was related to communication about their child's progress. Programs with parent ratings below the indicator of quality (ratings below 3.50) on any item or overall were required to develop action plans to address program improvement.

Parents were also asked to identify types of parent involvement activities they demonstrated during the past program year. Parents responded either "Yes" or "No" to the following items. The table depicts the percentage of parents indicating "Yes."

Parents of students with the greatest levels of participation were often, but not always, the group with the greatest

Figure 11

Parent Survey Data – Ratings of Involvement

Percentage of Parents Responding Affirmatively to items		Students Attending Statewide 21st CCLC			
		0-29 days	30-89 days	90-120 days	121+ days
1.	Read newsletters from school	73	73	76	81
2.	Talk to or exchange e-mails with school teacher or teachers at least monthly	45	43	43	48
3.	Visit school during parent events (like parent-teacher conference, back to school night, etc.)	75	79	80	85
4.	Review homework every day, even if it is finished in the afterschool program	69	67	70	78
5.	Volunteer (help teacher, field trip, school events, help with book fairs)	34	26	26	31
6.	Support learning at home (extra learning activities, board games, family outings, computers, internet, reading)	72	73	76	81
7.	Participate in advisory groups (PTA, school improvement committees, parent advisory groups, PIRC councils).	27	19	19	21
8.	I share important information about my child with the 21st CCLC and/or school staff.	51	51	59	62
9.	Overall	55.75	53.88	56.13	60.88

percentages of "yes" to reading newsletters from the school, visiting school during parent events, reviewing homework every day, volunteering, supporting learning at home, and sharing important information about their child with program or school staff (see Figure 11). Overall ratings of parent participation were significantly greater for parents with student participation of greater than 121 days in the 21st CCLC programs ($p<.05$).

Elementary Student Survey Outcomes. Surveys are collected from students 3rd grade and older attending elementary programs and who have attended 30 days or more during the school year (see Figure 12). The return rate of 82% was similar to the prior two years (83% and 78%). The targeted return rate for student surveys was 90%. Grantees not meeting the 90% return rate were required to develop an action plan to meet this requirement.

As was also noted in last year's evaluation report, results were mixed on student survey outcomes. Greater levels of student participation in the program (greater number of days attended) were associated with a range of outcomes

reported by students on various items. Programs with student ratings below 1.50 (the indicator of quality) were required to write action plans to address program improvement.

Middle/High School Student Survey Outcomes. Surveys are collected from students in middle or high school who have attended 30 days or more during the school year (see Figure 13). Student survey collection resulted in an average return rate of 82%, a strong improvement from the two prior years (69% and 68%). The targeted return rate for student surveys was 90%. Grantees not meeting the 90%

Figure 12

Elementary Student Survey Data

Items		Students Attending Statewide 21st CCLC			
		0-29 days	30-89 days	90-120 days	121+ days
Number of surveys		306	1052	517	1053
1.	Getting good grades in school is important to me.	1.94	1.88	1.93	1.89
2.	I feel accepted by other kids in the 21st CCLC program.	1.72	1.61	1.50	1.55
3.	I feel accepted by other kids in school.	1.70	1.62	1.54	1.54
4.	I feel safe in the 21st CCLC program.	1.86	1.82	1.83	1.77
5.	I get my homework done in the 21st CCLC program (when I have homework).	1.61	1.61	1.62	1.60
6.	I talk to my family about my homework or what I'm learning in school.	1.59	1.43	1.37	1.34
7.	I'm getting good grades in reading (or language arts) at school.	1.73	1.67	1.64	1.66
8.	I'm getting good grades in mathematics at school.	1.76	1.67	1.65	1.68
9.	I follow the rules at school.	1.85	1.76	1.71	1.73
10.	I follow the rules in the 21st CCLC program.	1.89	1.82	1.75	1.76
11.	I get along well with the other students in the 21st CCLC program.	1.79	1.68	1.59	1.58
12.	I get along well with the other students in school.	1.75	1.66	1.60	1.63
13.	I like the activities in the 21st CCLC program.	1.83	1.74	1.66	1.63
14.	I like how we learn things in the 21st CCLC program.	1.82	1.74	1.65	1.58
15.	The adults in the 21st CCLC program care about me.	1.93	1.86	1.83	1.81
16.	I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program.	1.97	1.93	1.91	1.94
Overall Average		1.80	1.72	1.67	1.67

0=No, 1=Sometimes, 2=Yes

Figure 13

Middle/High School Survey Data

Items		Students Attending Statewide 21st CCLC			
		0-29 days	30-89 days	90-120 days	121+ days
Number of Surveys Collected		216	1084	331	474
1.	Getting good grades in school is important to me.	1.86	1.84	1.86	1.91
2.	I feel accepted by others in the 21st CCLC program.	1.73	1.65	1.58	1.61
3.	I feel accepted by others in school.	1.67	1.61	1.56	1.56
4.	I feel safe in the 21st CCLC program.	1.68	1.78	1.67	1.74
5.	I get my homework done in the 21st CCLC program (when I have homework).	1.42	1.41	1.37	1.39
6.	I talk to my family about my homework or what I'm learning in school.	1.23	1.26	1.13	1.29
7.	I'm getting good grades in reading (or English) at school.	1.62	1.65	1.60	1.74
8.	I'm getting good grades in mathematics at school.	1.56	1.50	1.44	1.55
9.	I follow the rules at school.	1.66	1.66	1.61	1.67
10.	I follow the rules in the 21st CCLC program.	1.72	1.70	1.68	1.70
11.	My friends encourage me to make good choices.	1.57	1.51	1.40	1.43
12.	I get along well with the other students in the 21st CCLC program.	1.67	1.62	1.58	1.58
13.	I get along well with the other students in school.	1.73	1.61	1.51	1.56
14.	I like the activities in the 21st CCLC program.	1.46	1.56	1.51	1.47
15.	I like how we learn things in the 21st CCLC program.	1.46	1.51	1.42	1.48
16.	The adults in the 21st CCLC program care about me.	1.69	1.75	1.71	1.74
17.	I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program.	1.91	1.88	1.89	1.91
18.	I would like to go to college someday.	1.89	1.87	1.87	1.90
19.	I am involved in community service or other activities to help others.	1.17	1.18	1.16	1.20
20.	There are ways I can make my community a better place.	1.71	1.66	1.58	1.59
	Overall Average	1.62	1.61	1.56	1.60

0=No, 1=Sometimes, 2=Yes

return rate were required to develop an action plan to meet this requirement.

Middle and high school student survey results were mixed. Programs with student ratings below 1.50 (the indicator of quality) were required to write action plans to address program improvement.

Partner Ratings of Collaboration

Collaboration Survey Outcomes. Collaboration surveys were used to measure the quality of collaboration between the program representatives, school teachers and administrators, and community partners. Sites were required to survey school staff (predominantly school administrators and teachers) and community partners to measure ratings of collaboration. Return rates are difficult to calculate, given widely varying school sizes and community contexts.

Statewide, a total of 3,100 collaboration surveys were collected. On average, each grantee collected 29 collaboration surveys—24 school partner surveys and 5 community partner surveys. It is difficult to calculate a return rate for school and community partners. To estimate a calculation, one would need to consider the number of staff in each school building in which a 21st CCLC site is operating (school partners). To estimate for community partners, one would need to consider at least those who serve on the management team, share planning, serve as a subcontractor (such as a local evaluator, community agency, etc.), or provide some level of programming for students. Therefore, return rate targets are not established for these data.

Both school and community partners provided very positive ratings of the program addressing student academic achievement, supporting social/behavioral skills, and supporting family engagement (the overarching goals of the Nebraska 21st CCLC program). Generally, ratings were greater from community partners than from school partners. All community partner ratings and most school partner ratings were above the indicator of quality rating—3.50 or greater. Two areas were below the indicator of quality for ratings by school partners: *'I work with the 21st CCLC staff to connect programming to content offered during the school day (e.g., connects to standards, offers extension of an activity or concept taught earlier in the day, etc.)' and 'We regularly share staff development offerings or training opportunities.'* (see Figure 14).

Statewide, additional technical assistance should be provided to address helping school staff and program staff to connect content offered after school to school day curriculum and shared staff development resources.

Programs with ratings below 3.50 on any item were required to develop action plans to address continuous program improvement.

Figure 14

Collaboration Survey Data

Items		21st CCLC Statewide	
		School Partners	Community Partners
	Number	2578	522
1	The 21st CCLC program provides an afterschool program that strengthens student academic achievement.	4.24	4.74
2	The 21st CCLC program provides support for student social and behavioral development.	4.27	4.76
3	The 21st CCLC program helps to engage families and the community.	4.17	4.49
4a	The 21st CCLC program appropriately uses classroom spaces, gym or cafeteria spaces, media center, computer labs, and outdoor space.	4.32	
4b	The 21st CCLC program has sufficient resources to support students and families (physical space, materials, adequate budget, and at least are working toward a sustainability plan).		4.23
5a	I work with the 21st CCLC staff to connect programming to content offered during the school day (e.g., connects to standards, offers extension of an activity or concept taught earlier in the day, etc.).	3.48	
5b	We work together to connect afterschool programming to content offered during the school day, yet make sure the learning is offered differently in afterschool (hands-on more than paper and pencil tasks).		4.43
6a	I view the 21st CCLC as a part of our school, not a program offered by an outside agency or staff.	4.31	
6b	I view the 21st CCLC as a collaborative effort of the school, the program, and our agency. We have regular meetings to share planning and to review outcomes.		4.21
7	Communication with the 21st CCLC program staff is effective. I know when the program is being offered, who is attending, what's occurring, and am notified when there are changes.	3.94	4.36
8	School staff and 21st CCLC program staff systematically share information to support student homework completion.	3.76	4.13
9	We regularly share staff development offerings or training opportunities.	3.37	3.78
	Overall Average	3.98	4.35

1= strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree

Summary and Recommendations

Benefits for All Students

Participation in Nebraska's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs) makes a difference in student achievement for students at risk. A total of 15,743 students were served this year, and 58% (9,221 students) were regular attenders in after school programming. Seventy-two percent (72%) of these students receive free/reduced lunches, 14% were English language learners, and 20% were verified for special education. A significantly greater number of students who attended programming 121 days or more met or exceeded standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students who attended 121 days or more were also rated more positively by teachers in key behaviors related to learning: homework, participation, attendance, behavior, motivation, general academic performance, getting along with other students, and family support of student learning.

External ratings by qualified evaluators found Nebraska's programs to be of high quality (4.50 overall rating on a 5.00 scale, with an Indicator of Quality standard set by the Nebraska Department of Education at a rating of 3.50 or greater). Programs have continued to grow in quality overall since the beginning of Nebraska's 21st CCLC programs. In 2004, the overall ratings on the tool averaged 3.70 overall, compared to this year's 4.50 overall. Thus, it will be recommended that other observation and evaluation strategies to measure and promote continuous improvement of programming should be explored and piloted in the next program year. One tool being implemented as a pilot next year has already been identified: *The Classroom Assessment and Scoring System* or CLASS (Pianta, et al). This tools measures teaching interactions related to instructional support, emotional support, and organizational climate. It is going to be piloted for elementary programs (K-3 or K-5), and in the future, the secondary CLASS will also be piloted.

Parents primarily enrolled their children for academic support and enrichment, and reported that these programs benefited their children. Forty-four percent of parents reported they chose the 21st CCLC program for academic support or enrichment. Parents overwhelmingly reported the program was a great benefit to their child (3.90 on a 4.00 scale indicating strong agreement). Parents of students who attended 121

days or more reported significantly greater family engagement than parents of students in the lesser tiers of participation.

Responses from student surveys were mixed. Students with the greatest levels of participation in the programs did not always report higher ratings on items related to academics (getting good grades is important, I'm doing well in reading, I talk to my family about homework or what I'm learning in school etc.). Nor were there consistent patterns found on more relational items such as feeling accepted by others, feeling safe in the programs, getting along well with others, feeling the adults in the programs care about them, etc. The highest positive response was found, though, for secondary students who participated 121 days or more to the item, "I would like to go to college someday" (rating of 1.90 on a 2.00 scale, with 2.00 indicating yes). It will be recommended that focus group evaluation methodology be piloted with students to explore reasons for variations in their responses to items. For example, for items written around the concept of "acceptance" by others, what does acceptance mean to these students? What can the programs do to better support these students?

Future Directions and Continuous Improvement

Recommendations for continuous improvement are developed from areas where statewide averages do not meet the indicators of quality, where statewide averages are approaching the ceiling of measurement for a tool consistently over time, or where a review of the implementation of the program statewide suggests an area for improvement.

1. It is recommended that exploration occur to learn more about why the average days of participation generally decline by grade level. This, combined with the mixed results on student surveys, suggests the need for additional or alternative evaluation methodology to dig deeper into student perceptions. This exploration might take the form of focus groups, interviews, or supplemental surveys with older students.

2. It is recommended that statewide professional development focus on strategies for:
   a. Improving science programming,
   b. Fostering peer acceptance,
   c. Connecting students and their families on what students are learning in school,

d. Providing service learning or community service options for middle and high school students,
e. Ensuring school day and after school staff work together to connect after school programming to content and curriculum of the school day and sharing professional development resources,
f. Assisting programs in determining how best to include a representative group of parents in shared decision making on key issues related to student learning,
g. Providing strategies for schools and programs to work together to ensure that at least one after school program staff member participates on school improvement teams.

3. It is recommended that alternative measures for program quality measurement be explored and piloted. Programs across Nebraska have reached the ceiling of quality on the external observation measure being used since 2004. When programs begin to consistently score at the highest end of a tool (4.5 on a 5.0 scale overall this year on average), it is time to add or change measures.
   a. The Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (Pianta et al) will be piloted at the elementary level. This tool measures teaching and learning interactions relative to instructional support, emotional support, and organizational climate. The secondary level will be added later.
   b. Other program quality measures will be explored and possibly piloted, such as modifying the existing tool to become a program quality self-assessment, adding or modifying individual items where growth/continuous improvement opportunities are truncated due to most sites achieving the highest possible rating.

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Appendix 1: Success Stories submitted by Grantees

Names have been changed to pseudonyms

#1 Elementary Success Story

One of the girls in the program is a girl named Mary who is a fourth grader. She qualified for the Free/Reduced lunch program. In the past, her home situation has made it difficult to get homework done. That has impacted her self-confidence and self-esteem. It manifested itself in her being reluctant to participate in class and in general achieve below her potential.

But since Mary began participation in the 21st CCLC program, she is getting more of her assignments completed than she would if she did not go to CCLC (approximately 90% of assignments vs. 65% pre-intervention). Because success breeds success, her self-concept and confidence is increasing and that multiplies her learning through the verbal interactions in class. Working with the afterschool teachers has given the classroom teacher more insight into her needs and abilities. The 21st CCLC staff are good about communicating with her teacher about how Mary is working with them.

Her teacher simply feels that this support to her integrity and confidence is vital to her growth. This confidence has created a condition where she is performing closer to her anticipated performance levels.

#2 Elementary Success Story

"Hey we need to read with fluency like Ms. T said." J is aware of and constantly asks me about his reading skills. J is a second grade African-American student who lives in the school area. He is seven years old and has been attending the school since pre-kindergarten. He has been a student in the CLC program since last year.

Program staff started the school year off with the idea of increasing students' vocabulary. On a daily basis they used strategies such as sight word bingo, vocabulary hangman, reader's theatre, and Story Time to increase vocabulary and reading fluency.

J has a genuine curiosity for words and loves to be read to. He does not spend much time reading or being read to at home. J is always checking out books from the

school library for staff to read during CLC Shared Reading Time. The CLC program gives J the opportunity to receive assistance with his love of reading and with homework assignments. Most importantly, students are provided with many opportunities to improve upon vocabulary development with the aid of shared reading time, readers' theatre, and vocabulary hangman. J's word knowledge, reading fluency, and an interest in reading has been nurtured and developed through the CLC program.

#3 Secondary Success Story

Joanna is in the 6th grade and lives at home with her father and his girlfriend. She is new to our community and moved from a larger, urban community.

Initially, it seemed to be a "random hit and miss" with her getting into trouble either during school or during the after school program. It also took her a while to become totally involved. Her initial presenting behaviors included her not going directly home after school and often fighting with other girls. During the school day she would often talk back to the teachers, get into verbal and physical fights with other girls, and was removed from class multiple times.

Joanna became involved in the after school program after she was failing her classes and the 6th grade teaching team met with her father, and as a result her father decided that she would be attending initially for support with homework. Initially she didn't want to come, but now we can't keep her away. Another barrier at the beginning was that her peer group would often try to encourage her to keep getting into trouble and leaving club. But we "hooked" her interest by developing one-on-one relationships with her and getting her to trust the staff more. She responded well to positive reinforcement, such as high fives and candy as a reward for her positive behavior.

We have talked to Joanna's father on the phone and have shared that things are starting to get better with her. Together, we became strict in enforcing that if she was disruptive in the after school program she would get sent home. We also set boundaries and worked on relationship building with her.

Since her involvement in the after school program, she has become much better with communicating with peers and staff. Her end-of-year outcomes include getting good grades and having a positive group of friends. She was even overheard telling other students in the program to "stop talking so we can get our work done".

Joanna was also interviewed. She said that she attends the program every day. She

said that she enjoys being involved in the program, because she gets to work on homework and get help with it. She also enjoys getting to make different things in the cooking club. She also said that she now gets good grades. She also shared that she used to get into trouble, but now she doesn't get into trouble and that if she does while in the after school program she will be removed and miss out on lots of fun stuff. She also said that sometimes she will tell her dad about things that they are doing and that her dad likes that she is coming here. She also said that sometimes she will tell other students about the program and say "It's fun and you should come to it."

Our ongoing goals for her include keeping her in a positive behavior mode and continuing to earn good grades.

Appendix 2

Descriptives							
						95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Reading	.00	920	.8848	.71650	.02362	.8384	.9311
	30.00	3276	.8956	.70771	.01236	.8714	.9198
	90.00	1349	.9207	.69468	.01891	.8836	.9578
	121.00	2732	1.0088	.72255	.01382	.9817	1.0359
	Total	8277	.9358	.71331	.00784	.9205	.9512
Writing	.00	920	.8163	.66627	.02197	.7732	.8594
	30.00	3272	.8276	.65998	.01154	.8050	.8503
	90.00	1348	.8175	.64311	.01752	.7831	.8519
	121.00	2732	.9059	.66199	.01267	.8811	.9308
	Total	8272	.8506	.65968	.00725	.8364	.8648
Math	.00	887	.9132	.65861	.02211	.8698	.9566
	30.00	3166	.9084	.65730	.01168	.8855	.9313
	90.00	1320	.9258	.63909	.01759	.8912	.9603
	121.00	2687	1.0320	.65582	.01265	1.0072	1.0568
	Total	8060	.9530	.65629	.00731	.9386	.9673
Science	.00	839	.9464	.53134	.01834	.9104	.9824
	30.00	2885	.9768	.54717	.01019	.9568	.9968
	90.00	1228	.9764	.53585	.01529	.9464	1.0064
	121.00	2454	1.0326	.52627	.01062	1.0118	1.0534
	Total	7406	.9918	.53739	.00624	.9795	1.0040

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