



Annual Evaluation Report

2008–2009 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. The website is located 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.education.ne.gov/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 children 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/>).

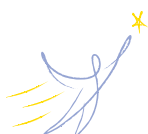
Continuous Improvement Process

The overall design of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program utilizes 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 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 evaluation plan and tools for the Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program were developed by the external statewide evaluator. Local grantees develop their own objectives, which must include an academic objective and a social/behavioral objective for students, and an objective for family/community engagement. 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 for local programs.

Each year 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. These snapshots include site level outcomes, grant program level outcomes, district level outcomes, and state level outcomes. The NDE 21st CCLC management team met with representatives of grantees completing years one or four across Nebraska during the month of August. The purpose of these meetings was to review the CIP Data Snapshots with their local

management teams and to facilitate discussions on local plans to improve programs. Other grantees completing years two, three, or five, met with external local evaluators to complete the same CIP process.

The state level management team and each of the local management teams implement the action plans proposed 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 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 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 occurred for program support in areas identified. Discussion forums were provided on topics of grant management, reporting, evaluation processes, embedding academics into activities, project-based learning, peer-support strategies, grant management, family engagement in student’s learning, and





discussion of the statewide evaluation report. A password protected e-learning system was utilized for data collection, grant management, communication, and provision of technical assistance. Monthly conference calls were offered on a variety of topics: after school activities in math, science, technology, arts and literacy, staff development, peer acceptance, summer school planning, grant management, evaluation, and the continuous improvement process. Project directors were required to attend the annual Nebraska project director meeting.

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. A website for grantees was organized with resources available in each of the domains on the observation tool and the Elements of Quality. 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 50 schools with 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

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 (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. First, we will begin with a summary of who was served in the 21st CCLC programs.

Description of Grantees, Sites, and Students Served

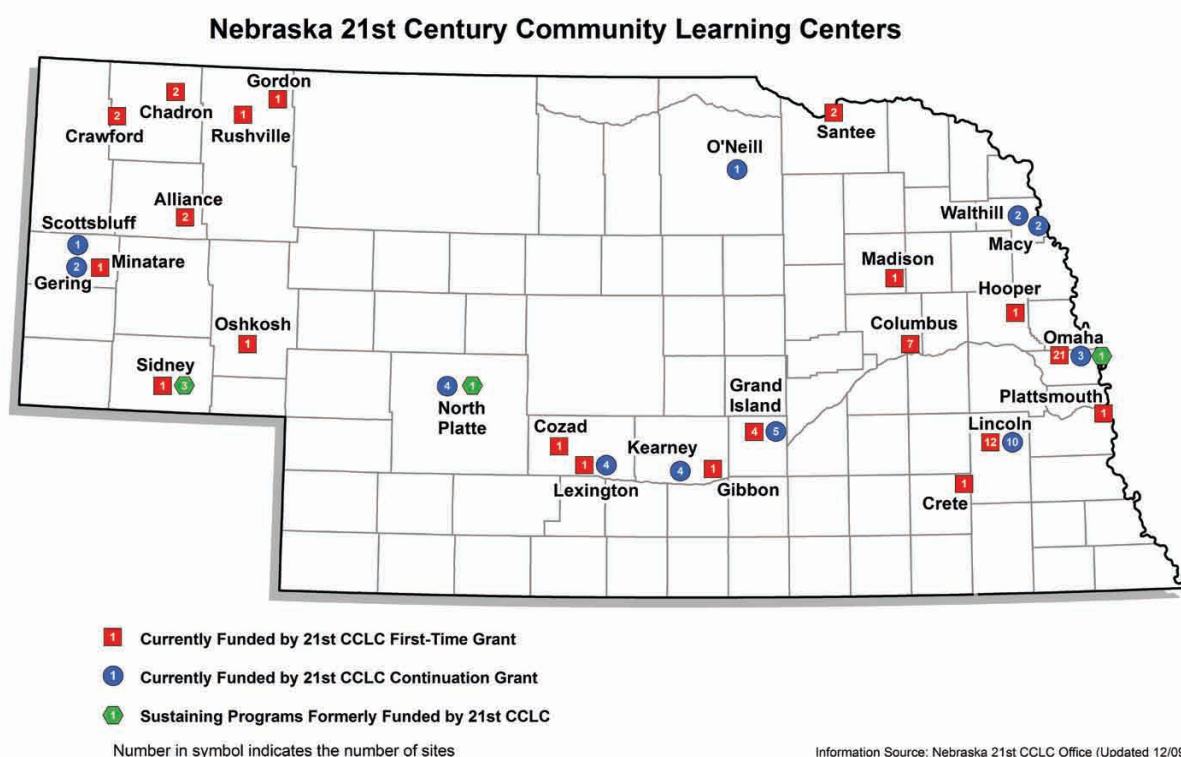
Project Demographics

There were a total of 107 Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) sites for 2008-2009. Sixty-four sites were funded by a First-Time grant, 38 sites were funded by a Continuation grant and 5 sustaining sites

were formerly funded by 21st CCLC. The map above reflects the location of each Nebraska 21st CCLC site. In the spring of 2009, the sixth year of funding for the 21st CCLC, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) awarded 9 new grants (3 First-Time grants serving 9 sites and 6 Continuation grants serving 23 sites).

Student Demographics

While a total of 11,811 students were served in before-, after-, or out-of-school days during the year by 21st Century Community Learning Center sites, demographic information will be reported 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 7,048 regularly attending students during the 2008-2009 school year, which was an increase from 6,195 in 2007-2008. The programs were funded to serve 5,620 regularly attending students during the

school year. These programs, therefore, served 125% of the students funded to be served during the school year.

Grade levels. The majority of students regularly served in 21st CCLC programs across Nebraska were in kindergarten through fifth grade (85%).

Grade Levels for Regular Student Attenders for Nebraska 21st CCLC

Grade Level	# of Regular Student Attendees	% of Regular Student Attendees
Kindergarten Students	1014	14%
First-grade Students	997	14%
Second-grade Students	1105	16%
Third-grade Students	1111	16%
Fourth-grade Students	1032	15%
Fifth-grade Students	714	10%
Sixth-grade Students	550	8%
Seventh-grade Students	216	3%
Eighth-grade Students	178	2.5%
Ninth-grade Students	44	0.6%
Tenth-grade Students	41	0.5%
Eleventh-grade Students	22	0.3%
Twelfth-grade Students	24	0.3%
Total	7,048	100%

Ethnicity for Regular Student Attenders for Nebraska 21st CCLC

Ethnicity	# of Regular Student Attendees	% of Regular Student Attendees
American Indian/Alaska Native	526	7.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	101	1.4%
Black/African American	1451	21%
Hispanic/Latino	1841	26%
White	3121	44%
Not Identified	8	0.1%
Total	7,048	100%





Ethnicity. The 21st CCLC programs served a diverse group of children and youth. The majority of students served (54%) were from an ethnic minority category.

Gender. Of the regularly attending students in the 2008-2009 school year 50% were female and 50% were male.

Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch. Of the regularly attending students in the 2008-2009 school year, 72% were eligible for free or reduced lunch compared to 38.35% of students in Nebraska's schools.

Eligibility for Other School Services. Of the students served regularly this year, 17% were English language learners. State report card data indicate that 6.31% of students in Nebraska's schools were identified as English language learners (2008-09 state report card data). For regularly attending students, 17% were verified for special education, compared to 15.21% (2008-09 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.

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, 2009); 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 five 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 grantee 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 an elementary 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 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.

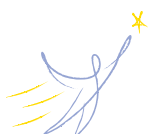
This year the statewide evaluator completed first and fifth year grant site observations and local evaluators with demonstrated reliability independently completed observations of Years 2, 3, and 4 grantees. The tool measures outcomes in overall administration of the program, interactions among students 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 92 school sites were observed and rated in the winter of 2008-09. This represented 100% of funded school sites. Overall, ratings have generally continued to improve on the *Observations for Quality School-Age Care & Programming findings*. This year the average overall rating was 88% of possible score.

Average domain ratings across programs were in the 4.0 to 5.0 range, suggesting that as a group the 21st CCLC programs were of good to excellent quality. More positive ratings were noted for Administration and for Environment, Safety & Wellness of Students. The lowest rated domain was Programming.

Domain	Avg Ratings
Administration	4.57
Relationships	4.43
Family Partnerships	4.25
School & Community Collaboration	4.47
Environment, Safety & Wellness of Students	4.52
Programming	4.16
Overall	4.40



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 4.72-4.86 range.

The six less positively rated items ranged from 3.54 to 3.96, suggesting that these were still positive ratings; however, not as positive as the others. Two of the six items were in the domain of Family Partnerships and four were in the domain of Programming. Statewide technical assistance should focus on Programming, with an emphasis on connecting program content and instructional goals, and on Family Partnerships.

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

The afternoon begins with all students going to their clubs, including singers, chess, student council, jazz band, Homework Zone, Girl Scouts, Culinary Club, Mad Scientist, and Education Talent Search. A healthy snack is served to all students while attending their club of choice. After clubs, students attend the core program which includes Histories Mysteries, CSI, and Awesome Art. During these rotations all students get to experience enrichment activities. For the last 30 minutes of the day students are able to make a choice in what activities they would like to do for the rest of the time. The choices include board games, drawing, art, reading corner, homework, and group games. On Friday's they do active games in the gym or outside for an hour. Occasionally, on Friday's a program might have guest speakers, special events, or field trips.

More positively rated items

#	Item	Avg Ratings
A2	Program policies and procedures are responsive to the needs of students and families in the community.	4.72
A4	Program policies and procedures are in place to protect and enhance the health and wellness of all students.	4.73
A13	A system is used to ensure there are sufficient materials to support program activities.	4.86
S3	The site supervisor is provided space at the school for lesson planning, communications, and data management.	4.86
S12	The school and program staff share in the process of recruiting and retaining students.	4.73
E8	Meals and snacks are nutritious and adequate in portion to meet the needs of the students.	4.82





Less positively rated items

#	Item	Avg Ratings
F7	Staff provide, or connect parents to, opportunities designed to engage parents in supporting student learning at home.	3.96
F8	A representative group of parents are included in shared decision making on key issues related to student learning.	3.73
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.	3.92
P5	Science activities include in-depth, hands-on investigations where systematic inquiry is encouraged.	3.54
P7	Students can choose from a wide variety of activities each day.	3.73
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).	3.95

Teacher, Parent, Student, and Collaborative Partner Survey Outcomes

Teacher Survey Outcomes. Statewide, teacher surveys were collected for a total of 6,223 students. Of these, 5,578 students were served 30 days or more during the 2008-09 school year. The return rate of teacher surveys for students who attended 30 days or more was 79%. 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 4-

point scale with 4 being advanced, 3 proficient, 2 progressing, and 1 beginning. Domains included reading (including reading, speaking, and listening), writing, and mathematics.

A one-way between subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) compared teacher ratings of student performance in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students were assigned to Group 1 (attended less than 100 days) or Group 2 (100 or more days). The alpha level for each ANOVA was 0.05.

Reading: A one-way between subjects analysis of variance compared teacher ratings of student performance by group assignment in reading. This test was found to be statistically significant, $F(1,5373)=24.548$, $p<.001$ ($r=.07$).





Students who attended 100 days or more were rated higher in reading ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.83$) than students who attended less than 100 days ($M=2.78$, $SD=0.83$).

Writing: A one-way between subjects analysis of variance compared teacher ratings of student performance by group assignment in writing. This test was found to be significant, $F(1,5309)=11.928$, $p=.001$ ($r=.05$). Students who attended 100 days or more were rated higher in writing ($M=2.73$, $SD=0.80$) than students who attended less than 100 days ($M=2.65$, $SD=0.81$).

Mathematics: A one-way between subjects analysis of variance compared teacher ratings of student performance by group assignment in mathematics. This test was found to be significant $F(1,5371)=26.991$, $p<.001$ ($r=.07$).

Students who attended 100 days or more were rated higher in writing ($M=2.95$, $SD=0.78$) than students who attended less than 100 days ($M=2.84$, $SD=0.80$).

Overall, students who attended greater than 100 days were rated significantly higher in reading, writing, and mathematics than students who attended after school programming less than 100 days.

Teacher Ratings of Student Behaviors			
Items	Statewide 21st CCLC – Students attending 30 days or more	Students attending < 100 days	Students attending 100 + days
Number of Surveys	5578	3457	2942
Turning in homework on time	0.80	0.72	0.89
Completing homework to your satisfaction	0.86	0.78	0.95
Participating in class	0.94	0.87	0.99
Volunteering	0.68	0.64	0.73
Attending class regularly	0.51	0.47	0.58
Being attentive in class	0.68	0.63	0.74
Behaving well in class	0.63	0.59	0.67
Academic performance	1.00	0.90	1.08
Coming to school motivated to learn	0.74	0.68	0.80
Getting along well with other students	0.68	0.63	0.74
Family support of student's learning	0.54	0.50	0.59
Average Change	0.73	0.67	0.80





Teachers were also asked to rate students on student behaviors (see chart on page 11) by reporting their level of change (if any) from fall to spring of the 2008-09 year. Surveys used a 7-point scale with 3 representing significant improvement, 2 moderate improvement, 1 slight improvement, 0 no change in behavior, -1 slight decline, -2 moderate decline, and -3 significant decline. Teachers were also allowed to mark 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.

Average ratings for all students who attended 21st CCLC programs 30 days or more are included under the column "Statewide 21st CCLC - Students attending 30 days or more." The next two columns include average outcomes for students who attended 1-99 days followed by average outcomes for students who attended 100 or more days. It is clear that greater participation was associated with higher average gains in all categories.

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. A new survey was utilized this year; therefore, comparison to prior years is not possible. The statewide return rate for parent surveys was 50%. 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. The following are their responses.

These data suggest that the majority of parents enroll their children for remediation or enrichment opportunities as their primary reason (48%) followed closely by supervision or child care (37%).

Why Enrolled	Statewide 21st CCLC
Extra help in school	32%
Extension activities	16%
Supervision or child care	37%
Recreation	5%
Multiple reasons	10%



The next table reflects parent ratings of eight items relevant to 21st CCLCs. These ratings are arranged on a 4-point scale with 4 indicating “agree” and 1 indicating “disagree” with the identified statement.

Parents rated all items more positively for students who attended 21st CCLC programs 100 or more days than for students who attended fewer than 100

days. Greatest differences appeared to be in the areas related to communication (Items 3 and 8). Overall, the most positively rated items were “The 21st CCLC program is a great benefit to my child/youth” with a rating of 3.91 for regular attenders.

Parents were also asked to identify types of parent involvement activities they demonstrated during the past program

Parent Survey Outcomes				
Rating		Statewide 21st CCLC	Students attending < 100 days	Students attending 100 + days
Number of Regular Attenders		7048	NA	NA
Number of Surveys Collected		3537	1807	2231
Return Rate		50%	NA	NA
1	The 21st CCLC program is a great benefit to my child/youth.	3.91	3.89	3.92
2	The 21st CCLC staff are excellent (caring, reliable, skilled).	3.85	3.84	3.87
3	The 21st CCLC staff communicate with me regularly about my child’s progress in the program.	3.49	3.37	3.59
4	The 21st CCLC program is a safe place, physically and emotionally.	3.87	3.85	3.89
5	The activities offered are good and my child enjoys them.	3.88	3.87	3.90
6	My child learns more by participating in the 21st CCLC program.	3.78	3.74	3.81
7	The 21st CCLC program helps my child build and maintain friendships.	3.82	3.79	3.85
8	My child’s behavior is handled well in the after school program and I am kept informed about strengths and challenges.	3.67	3.57	3.73
Overall Average		3.78	3.74	3.82

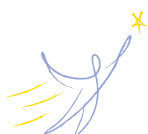
1=Disagree, 4=Agree

year. Parents responded either “Yes” or “No” to the following items. The table depicts the percentage of parents indicating “Yes.”

Parents of students attending 100 or more days reported greater levels of participation on every measured item. Parents of children with greater rates of participation in 21st CCLC appear to also be more involved in supporting their children’s learning across multiple domains: communication, supporting learning at home, supporting learning at school, and sharing decision-making.

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. Statewide, there were 2,857 eligible 3rd through 5th grade students who attended 30 days or more. There were a total of 2,023 elementary student surveys collected yielding an average return rate of 71%. 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. Students were asked to rate each item with no (0),

Percentage of Parents Responding Affirmatively				
Items		Statewide 21st CCLC	Students attending < 100 days	Students attending 100 + days
1.	Read newsletters from school	83%	78%	85%
2.	Talk to or exchange e-mails with school teacher or teachers at least monthly	38%	36%	42%
3.	Visit school during parent events (like parent-teacher conference, back to school night, etc.)	86%	83%	89%
4.	Review homework every day, even if it is finished in the after school program	75%	73%	81%
5.	Volunteer (help teacher, field trip, school events, help with book fairs)	30%	28%	33%
6.	Support learning at home (extra learning activities, board games, family outings, computers, internet, reading)	81%	77%	86%
7.	Participate in advisory groups (PTA, school improvement committees, parent advisory groups, PIRC councils).	21%	19%	23%
8.	I share important information about my child with the 21st CCLC and/or school staff.	58%	51%	64%



Elementary Student Survey Outcomes

Items		Statewide 21st CCLC	Students attending < 100 days	Students attending 100 + days	P
Number of surveys		2023	907	1196	
Number of eligible students (3rd-5th grade, attended 30 days or more)		2857	NA	NA	
Return Rate		71%	NA	NA	
1.	Getting good grades in school is important to me.	1.90	1.88	1.91	.02
2.	I feel accepted by other kids in the 21st CCLC program.	1.43	1.47	*1.40	.01
3.	I feel accepted by other kids in school.	1.50	1.54	*1.48	.04
4.	I feel safe in the 21st CCLC program.	1.73	1.76	*1.70	.01
5.	I get my homework done in the 21st CCLC program.	1.47	1.47	1.47	
6.	I talk to my family about my homework or what I'm learning in school.	1.35	1.35	1.35	
7.	I'm getting good grades in reading (or language arts) at school.	1.63	1.63	1.64	
8.	I'm getting good grades in mathematics at school.	1.63	1.62	1.64	
9.	I follow the rules at school.	1.68	1.67	1.68	
10.	I follow the rules in the 21st CCLC program.	1.69	1.70	1.68	
11.	I get along well with the other students in the 21st CCLC program.	1.51	1.55	*1.47	<.01
12.	I get along well with the other students in school.	1.56	1.58	*1.54	.03
13.	I like the activities in the 21st CCLC program.	1.55	1.61	*1.51	<.01
14.	I like how we learn things in the 21st CCLC program.	1.55	1.60	*1.52	.01
15.	The adults in the 21st CCLC program care about me.	1.75	1.78	*1.71	<.01
16.	I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program.	1.89	1.88	1.89	
Overall Average		1.61	1.63	1.60	

0=No, 1=Sometimes, 2=Yes

sometimes (1) or yes (2).

Results of the Elementary Student Survey were mixed. The most positively rated item was "Getting good grades in school

is important to me" with a rating of 1.90, followed closely by "I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program" (1.89). Lower rated items included "I talk to my family about school or homework"





with a rating of 1.35, followed closely by “I feel accepted by other kids in the 21st CCLC program” (1.43). Analysis of variance was used to test for statistical significance. Values for p are listed in the right column when the p values were significant.

When ratings for students who attended less than 100 days compared to those who attended 100 or more days, the results did not follow previous patterns displayed with teacher and parents survey results. There were 1196 surveys for students who attended 100 days or more and 907 surveys for students who attended less than 100 days. Attenders with 100 days or more attendance represented 57% of all students. In the table above, an asterisk (*) has been placed next to results where the students who attended 100 days or more reported lower ratings (by more than .01) than students who attended fewer than 100 days. Items related to feeling accepted in the program and in school, as well as getting along with other students in the program and in school, were all rated less positively by students who attended 21st CCLC 100 days or more.

This raised additional questions to be addressed. Are there differences between students who attend the most? Are students less satisfied with certain

areas of programming if they attend more often? To address differences in student populations, the evaluators analyzed the student demographic data of students in both groups. There were no significant differences in gender, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, English proficiency, or special education status. There was also no difference in the percentages of elementary students 3rd through 5th grade (40% for group 1 and 40.9% for group 2).

Additional information will need to be collected if the evaluators are to assist in identifying why the results are different and particularly why the group with greater rates of participation reported lower quality ratings on items related to relationships with others and one item on liking the activities in the program.

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. Statewide, there were 1,075 eligible sixth grade and older students. There were a total of 647 middle/high school student surveys collected, yielding an average return rate of 60%. 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.



Middle/High School Student Survey Outcomes

Items		Statewide 21st CCLC	Students attending < 100 days	Students attending 100 + days
Number of Surveys Collected		647	600	193
Number of Eligible Students (6th-12th grade, attended 30 days or more)		1075	NA	NA
Return Rate		60%	NA	NA
1.	Getting good grades in school is important to me.	1.81	1.79	1.88
2.	I feel accepted by others in the 21st CCLC program.	1.59	1.61	*1.56
3.	I feel accepted by others in school.	1.58	1.60	*1.53
4.	I feel safe in the 21st CCLC program.	1.74	1.73	1.79
5.	I get my homework done in the 21st CCLC program.	1.41	1.33	1.51
6.	I talk to my family about my homework or what I'm learning in school.	1.20	1.18	1.23
7.	I'm getting good grades in reading (or English) at school.	1.56	1.58	*1.53
8.	I'm getting good grades in mathematics at school.	1.51	1.51	1.51
9.	I follow the rules at school.	1.61	1.59	1.68
10.	I follow the rules in the 21st CCLC program.	1.68	1.66	1.73
11.	My friends encourage me to make good choices.	1.51	1.50	1.58
12.	I get along well with the other students in the 21st CCLC program.	1.58	1.60	*1.57
13.	I get along well with the other students in school.	1.54	1.56	*1.53
14.	I like the activities in the 21st CCLC program.	1.59	1.60	*1.57
15.	I like how we learn things in the 21st CCLC program.	1.50	1.49	1.50
16.	The adults in the 21st CCLC program care about me.	1.71	1.71	1.71
17.	I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program.	1.86	1.84	1.90
18.	I would like to go to college some day.	1.80	1.79	1.84
19.	I am involved in community service or other activities to help others.	1.15	1.06	1.23
20.	There are ways I can make my community a better place.	1.65	1.60	1.73
Overall Average		1.58	1.57	1.61

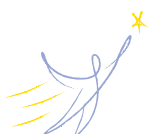
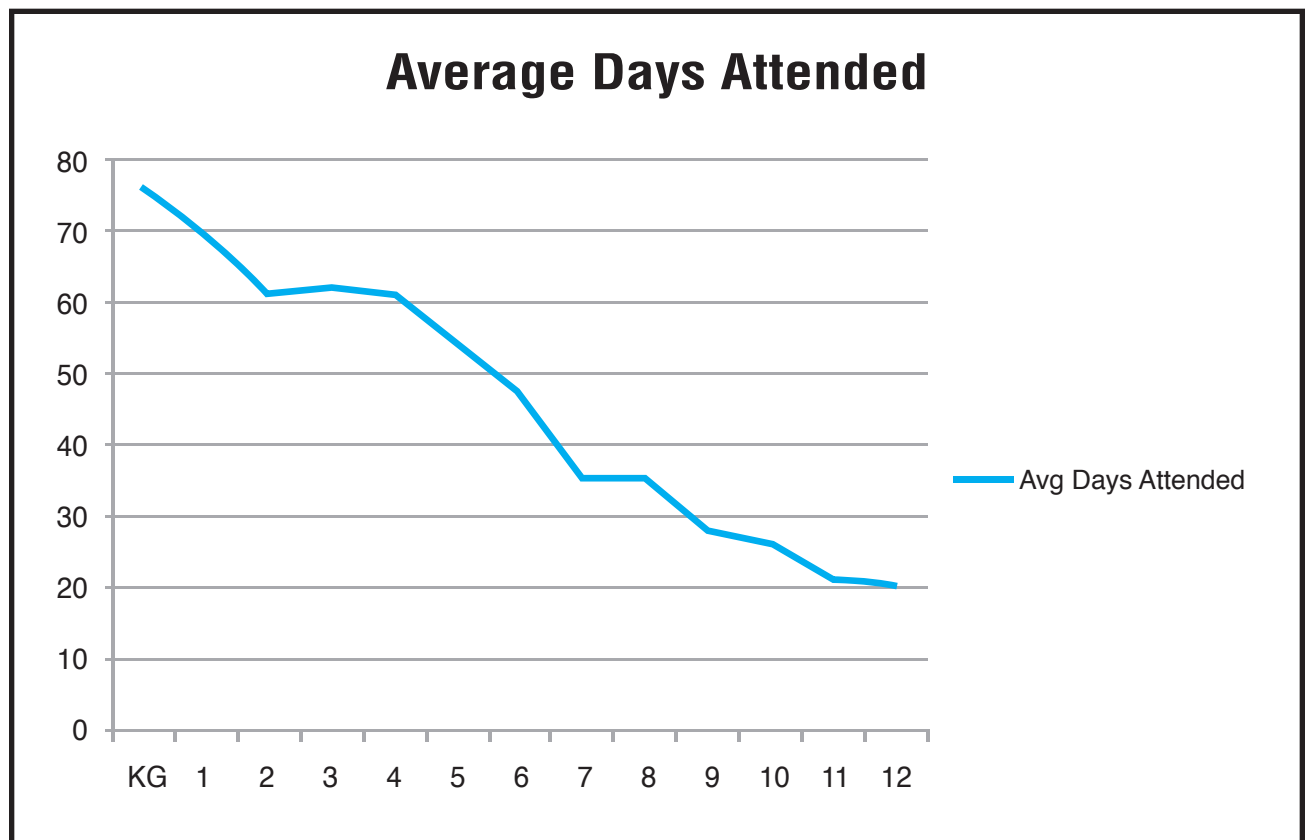
0=No, 1=Sometimes, 2=Yes



In a similar pattern as was observed in the Elementary Student Survey outcomes, middle and high school student results were mixed. The two most positively rated items by regular attenders statewide were “I have a safe way to get home from the 21st CCLC program” (1.86) and “I would like to go to college some day” (1.80).

The evaluators then separated the students by those who attended 100 days or more (193 students) and those who attended less than 100 days (600 students). With the middle/high school

students, the 100 day or more attenders represented 24% of the students. When comparing the two groups (those who attended less than 100 days and those who attended 100 or more days), items related to feeling accepted or getting along with other students in the 21st CCLC program or school were rated lower by students in the 100 days or more group. When ratings were greater than .01 lower in the higher attendance group, they were noted with an asterisk (*). Again, why these ratings are different is unknown. There are no measured differences in the two groups.





Grade	Avg Days Attended	Grade	Avg Days Attended
KG	76	07	35
01	69	08	35
02	61	09	28
03	62	10	26
04	61	11	21
05	54	12	20
06	47		

The average number of days attended declined from kindergarten through 12th grade.

In separating the data by attendance groups, however, it was noted that while 56% of elementary students had attended the program 100 or more days, only 24% of middle/high school students had attended 100 or more days. This resulted in further analysis to determine average days of attendance by grade level of students.

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. Grantees 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 the widely varying school sizes and community contexts.

Statewide, a total of 1,115 collaboration surveys were collected. On average, each grantee collected 24 school partner surveys and 8 community partner surveys. It is difficult to calculate a return rate for school and community partners. To estimate a calculation, one should 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 should 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. Surveys were set up on a 5-point Likert Scale with "5" being strongly agree and "1" being strongly disagree.





Partner Ratings of Collaboration

Items		21st CCLC Statewide	
		School Partners	Community Partners
	Number	869	246
1	The 21st CCLC program provides an after school program that strengthens student academic achievement.	4.40	4.74
2	The 21st CCLC program provides support for student social and behavioral development.	4.35	4.68
3	The 21st CCLC program helps to engage families and the community.	4.23	4.49
4a	The 21st CCLC program appropriately uses classroom spaces, gym or cafeteria spaces, media center, computer labs, and outdoor space.	4.44	NA
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).	NA	4.25
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.).	3.67	NA
5b	We work together to connect after school programming to content offered during the school day, yet make sure the learning is offered differently in after school (hands-on more than paper and pencil tasks).	NA	4.55
6a	I view the 21st CCLC as a part of our school, not a program offered by an outside agency or staff.	4.46	NA
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.	NA	4.33
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.	4.19	4.47
8	School staff and 21st CCLC program staff systematically share information to support student homework completion.	3.87	4.26
9	We regularly share staff development offerings or training opportunities.	3.50	3.94
Overall Average		4.12	4.41



Summary and Recommendations

The 92 school-based 21st Century Community Learning Center sites served 7,048 students at least 30 days in their after school programs. Most students were in elementary schools (85%). Most students were from an ethnic minority category (54%). Most were eligible for free or reduced lunch (72%). Some were classified as English language learners (17%). Some were verified for special education services (17%). 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 Quality School-Age Care & Programming* tool. Statewide, grantees earned an average rating of 88% of possible score, compared to 83% last year, 83% in 2006-2007, 79% in 2005-2006 and 74% in 2004-2005. These comparisons must be considered with caution, however, because the Observation tool was revised this past year. Item analysis showed six items rated below 4.0 (on a 5-point scale). Four of these were in Programming, with

particular emphasis on linking program content to school day instructional activities (such as science, mathematics, offering students choices, and differentiating activities to suit diverse learning needs). Two of these were in Family Partnerships (sharing decision-making and helping parents support learning at home). **Therefore, it is recommended that NDE focus statewide technical assistance to grantees to align with the school day programs in the areas of mathematics and science; offering students choices; varying instructional strategies to suit diverse learners; and partner with family engagement technical assistance groups to provide strategies to help families support learning at home.**

Student Achievement and Social/Behavioral Changes. It appears that these 21st CCLC programs are recruiting the students most at risk, based on the demographics of the regularly attending students compared to Nebraska schools statewide (72% eligible for free/reduced lunch compared to 38% statewide across Nebraska Schools). School day teachers reported that regularly attending students made gains





in academic performance, participating in class, and completing homework in a timely and satisfactory manner. Results were significantly more positive for students who attended the program 100 days or more. This suggests that greater participation in 21st CCLC programming is significantly associated with more positive outcomes.

Because fewer elementary students reported feeling accepted by other students in the 21st CCLC programs compared to in their schools, **it is recommended that statewide technical assistance focus on supporting positive student-to-student connections, particularly at the elementary level.**

Family/Community Engagement.

Indicators related to Family/Community Engagement suggest that while some progress is being made in strengthening these partnerships, there is still room for improvement. The lowest rated item reported by parents was in the area of 21st CCLC staff communicating with them about their child's progress in the program (3.49). Only 58% of families reported that they share important information about their child with the 21st CCLC program or school staff. The lowest rated item reported by students was "I talk to my family about my

homework or what I'm learning in school" (elementary students=1.35 and middle/high school students=1.20 on a 2-point scale). **Therefore, it is recommended that the Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Center program increase its collaborations with family engagement resource agencies to offer additional technical assistance to grantees in the area of strengthening family partnerships.**

In conclusion, this year's 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

- Beckett, M., Borman, G., Capizzano, J., Parsley, D., Ross, S., Schirm, A., & Taylor, J. (2009). *Structuring out-of-school time to improve academic achievement: A practice guide* (NCEE #2009-012). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides>.
- 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.



Appendix 1: Success Stories submitted by Grantees

Names have been changed to pseudonyms

#1 Elementary Success Stories

Dillon

Dillon is an African American male in the fifth grade; he comes from a low-income, single parent household, and first began CLC in the fall semester of 2008.

Dillon has a very reserved demeanor, however, in time, a fun-loving, hilarious young man is revealed, but Dillon also has a very short temper. On several occasions during CLC, he would explode: he would spit out foul words to staff and students if he felt in any way disrespected. He hated to be the brunt of any joke; if he was made to feel like he wasn't smart enough or athletic enough the temperamental side of Dillon came out.

To solve Dillon's temper issues, we introduced him to the lead staff of Highland's CLC program, Anne, who took the time to assess the issues Dillon was experiencing. She then found that Dillon was failing the majority of his courses in school, had 2 weeks worth of incomplete assignments, had no one at home to help

him with his work, was staying up until 4 in the morning playing video games, and was walking to school late every day. She offered to tutor Dillon everyday during the CLC program and get him on a schedule. For example, if he was having a bad day he was able to turn to her so it would not lead to another explosion during the program.

In addition to an out-of-control temper, Dillon has attention span issues. Within 20 minutes of beginning a task, he becomes burnt out, antsy, and distracted; he also has trouble initiating work. At home, he has no one to make sure his work is being completed at all, so many times the work is left untouched. During his tutoring sessions, his CLC teacher noticed that he would eyeball a book he carried that was full of facts about every comic book character imaginable. In response she gave him an incentive: 20 minutes worth of work for 7 minute lapses of reading from his book. It worked for him, and he came to understand that work does not have to be tackled in masses; instead, it can be completed in smaller chunks.



Anne also took the time to discuss Dillon's progress in school and make sure he understood that hard work pays off. She let him know the reality that as he gets older, school gets harder, and second chances are rarely granted; that his dream of becoming a lawyer would not be attainable if he didn't make grades, and that meant doing the work not because she sat there and made sure he did, but because he needed to do it for his future; that he had to be responsible enough to know that staying up until 4 a.m. playing video games wouldn't ensure success; that he needed to start being responsible when it came to school. She also got him a clock with an alarm so he could make it to school on time every day. Dillon got caught up in class, has remained caught up, only stays up until 11 p.m. playing video games, and gets to school on time!!

Dillon has truly blossomed. He still has issues with his temper, and sometimes he becomes so engrossed in going outside to play or trying out the newest video game that he tries to put off doing his work, but he seems to have a new perspective on school and what it means for his future; he has developed a relationship of mutual respect for Anne and will often times show her that he's staying on task! His grades have improved drastically and he has

developed a greater sense of self and accomplishment. He is truly a success!

Jorge

Jorge entered school in 2005 with no English-speaking abilities; his parents were separated, and he lived with his mom and two older sisters. Jorge's mom indicated that she has appreciated the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program (CCLC) because it is a safe place for him to go after school while she works. Jorge was extremely shy at first, probably because of his lack of English-language abilities and a slight speech defect, but the extra time spent with Jorge after school has given him confidence to seek friends.

Jorge's teacher indicated that she was really worried when the 5th grade study hall was discontinued this year: it had always served as a crutch for students like Jorge who entered school with no English. However, since becoming a part of the before and after-school programs, Jorge has learned some great organizational and study skills that have helped him greatly with his grades. His teacher pointed out that Jorge can be a follower, and that the examples of good conduct and citizenship taught in the after school program have been invaluable! She also revealed that "the after school





program staff have helped Jorge understand that what he does in school is important to them.”

Early in the school year Jorge never volunteered to read but now begs to read during class; in his language class, there is a lot of writing but his teacher shared that “Jorge could hardly write a sentence in the beginning and now he writes paragraphs with correct punctuation and form. Whenever I need Jorge to review skills or rewrite something, I send it to the afterschool staff. Jorge has made huge academic gains this year; I credit much of his success to the support systems provided by the after school learning program.”

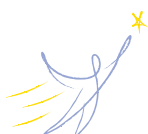
#2 Middle School Success Story

Abbey is in her first year of attending the 21st CCLC program in her building. Her math teacher and the 21st CCLC site coordinator nominated her as a student who has made major strides in social behavior and academics this year. At the beginning of the year, she was in the district’s Newcomer program. She said that at first she was afraid to raise her hand in class and ask for help.

As a sixth grader, she struggles to connect class instruction and implementation of those strategies in her

homework. Her mother, speaking via an interpreter, said that there was no help for her at home. Earlier for three or four weeks, she stopped coming to the afterschool program. The Site Coordinator talked with her and contacted her mom. Abbey returned and has gradually become more willing to ask for help from the 21st CCLC staff, who are mostly her classroom teachers. She has developed a friendly relationship with her math teacher who praises her as she wrestles with her math. It has become her favorite subject.

Her grades were poor at the beginning of the year, and they are still not where she would like them to be. Her subject area teachers say that she has made good progress though school continues to be difficult for her. Although she tries to do the “right thing” and has a “good attitude,” her teachers say that it is easy for Abbey to become distracted. Their goal for Abbey has been to help her in every way to “keep her head above water” in this first year of middle school. Everyone agrees that she is more comfortable and outgoing in the middle school setting at this point in the year and has good friends, as well as, brothers and sisters also attending the After School program. Her personal goal for the future is to try to get good grades that exceed this year’s marks.



When asked about what she especially enjoys doing in the After School program, Abbey's enthusiasm for the learning enrichment choices and being with her friends after school light up her face. Her hands move expressively as she lists one by one the activities she likes to do at the After School program.

#3 High School Success Story

(Written in the first person by a high school participant)

The program staff began working with me at the beginning of my junior year of high school. My home life was a little shaky, and I wasn't doing well in school. Had I not been a part of this program, I would not be walking across the stage in May with the rest of my class.

When I first arrived I needed attention and goals that I could easily achieve; the plan, then, was to attend after school and earn my credits: I was trying to get credits in English 1, English 5, Chemistry 2, Biology 1, and Physics 1.

With the help of the staff I was able to complete all my classes! Even when they weren't really sure how to do it themselves they still helped me to the best of their ability.

The program had a huge impact on me! The staff showed me that even when I

didn't feel it at home, someone still cared about me and what I was capable of. They also helped me conquer my biggest fear in high school: my peers. I didn't have many friends before I started the program, and I came out of it with many different friends.

I know that I was hard to deal with at times but the staff still stood by me and helped me, and they still are! So for everything that this program has helped me do I'm very grateful! I want every staff member to know that I'm thankful, and that they will all have a special place in my heart. Everything I've learned from them has truly helped me to become a young adult, and prepared me for life after high school!!



Lisa St. Clair, Ed.D.

Assistant Professor, MMI & Pediatrics
Munroe-Meyer Institute
University of Nebraska Medical Center
985450 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-5450
Lstclair@unmc.edu
(402) 559-3023 (office) and (402) 677-2684 (cell)



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.education.ne.gov/21stcclc>

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

©2009 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.